

samsn

SURVIVORS & MATES SUPPORT NETWORK

Annual Report



2024–2025

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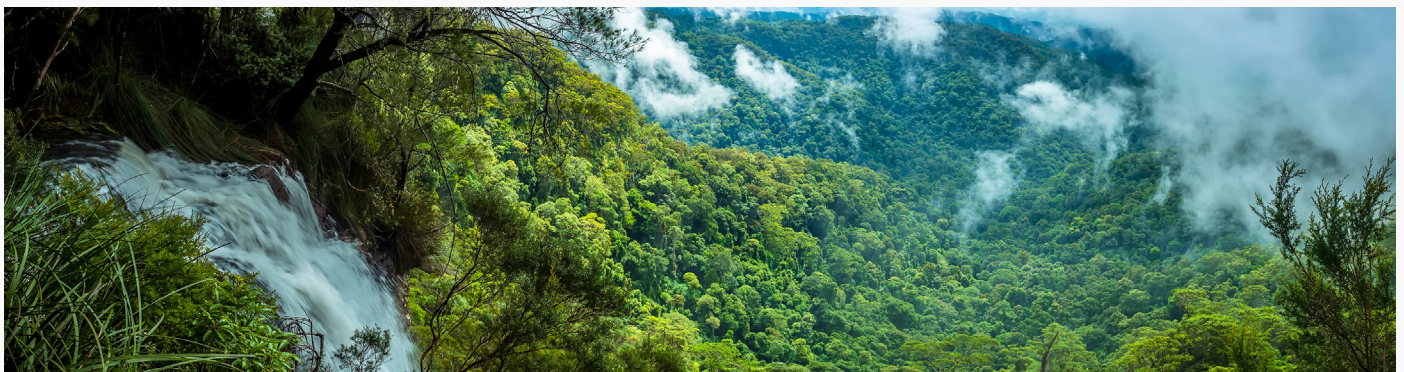
Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement of Country

SAMSN acknowledges the Dharug people who are the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work. We express our deepest gratitude for their protection and conservation of this beautiful Country. We offer our respects to the Elders who have gone before us, the Elders who are with us today and the Elders who will continue to teach us about the importance of cultural practices, land management and the preservation of

their deep spiritual connection. SAMSN endorses the development of initiatives that value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage, cultures and peoples, and recognises their unique position as the original custodians of Australia.

SAMSN is committed to providing a culturally safe environment to support the healing journey for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



Support acknowledgement

SAMSN gratefully acknowledges the funding and support received from the:

- Australian Government through the Department of Social Services and the National Partnership Agreement
- NSW Government through Victims Services and NSW Health

We also acknowledge with thanks and gratitude all donations received.



Acknowledgement of survivors

We honour the lived and living expertise of all victims and survivors of child sexual abuse and thank them for sharing their unique insights and learnings with us.

We commit to addressing the harm of child sexual abuse now and in the future, continuing to do all we can to respond to the ongoing impacts through our practice, advocacy, research and training.

Who we are

SAMSN is the only organisation in Australia dedicated to working with male survivors of child sexual abuse. Survivor founded and led, we provide free support and information to adult male survivors and their supporters. We also offer trauma-informed training for professionals working with child sexual abuse survivors.

We are a not-for-profit charity and are not affiliated with any religious organisation.

SAMSN exists for male survivors regardless of ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, religion or expressions of male gender identity.

We want every survivor to know that the abuse was not their fault and that healing and recovery are possible.



Our tricycle logo

SAMSN's logo represents a rite of passage for many children. A tricycle opens a young child's world; learning to ride helps to build confidence, safety, independence and initiative.

Our purpose

To build a support network that gives voice and agency to survivors and their supporters.

Our belief

Survivors of childhood sexual abuse can recover, support others to thrive and be leaders for change.

Our vision

A world in which male survivors of childhood sexual abuse can easily access support and find understanding and acceptance.

Our values

Hope

The courage to believe in what's possible

Dignity

We honour each other's inherent worth

Connection

Together we achieve

Community

Engaging the power of networks for growth

Our tricycle logo is a reminder that adult male survivors were once children. SAMSN walks alongside men and their supporters to restore safety, self-belief and joy in people's lives.

Services snapshot 2024-2025

7,416

Phone calls, emails,
planned support sessions

304

Peer Support
Phone Line calls

327

Counselling
sessions

10

Eight-week
Support Groups
with 103 participants

21

Monthly
Drop-in Meetings

12

Service Provider
Workshops with
340 participants

335

National Redress
Scheme clients

57

National Redress
Scheme applications
completed

19

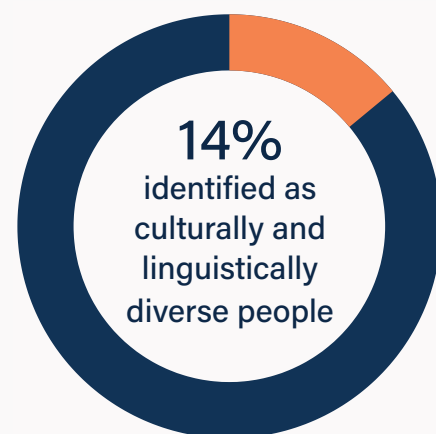
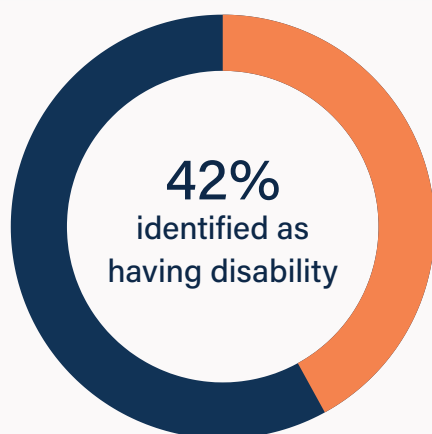
Work Development
Orders assisted

840

SAMSN clients
supported



Client snapshot - Client age range: 19-81



Chair and CEO report

This year, SAMSN celebrated the delivery of our 100th Eight-week Support Group, a testament to the enduring need for our services and the trust placed in us by more than 1,000 men over the past 14 years. Our Peer Support Phone Line saw a 30% increase in calls, with 85% of new callers choosing to access additional SAMSN services. These numbers reflect not only the growing reach of our programs but also the courage of survivors in stepping forward to seek support.

Our commitment to accessibility and inclusion has never been stronger. The second phase of our accessibility project, guided by our Disability Inclusion Action Plan, has led to significant improvements in our systems, processes, and resources. We have created accessible formats for our group materials, enhanced our website, and ensured that all staff participate in disability awareness training. These efforts are designed to ensure that every survivor and supporter can engage with SAMSN's services from the outset.

SAMSN's Planned Support Team and counsellors have continued to provide trauma-informed, counselling and practical support to survivors and their supporters. Our work with the National Redress Scheme has enabled us to assist hundreds of survivors in navigating complex systems and accessing the redress they deserve. Notably, our involvement in supporting survivors of the Ashley Youth Detention Centre class action demonstrates our commitment to standing alongside those seeking justice and healing.

Our advocacy efforts have also remained robust. We have contributed to key law reform reviews in NSW, including the prohibition of claim farming practices and the

use of character references at sentencing. Through submissions and community education, we continue to champion the rights and needs of male survivors and their families.

SAMSN's financial position remains strong, with government grants, workshops, and generous donations enabling us to deliver and expand our services. We are deeply grateful for the support received from the Commonwealth and NSW Governments, as well as from our donors and partners. This collective support is vital to our mission and the ongoing impact we achieve together.

Looking ahead, our vision remains clear: a world in which male survivors of childhood sexual abuse can easily access support, find understanding, and experience acceptance. In the coming year, we aim to further expand our outreach, particularly to regional and remote communities, and to continue improving the accessibility of our services.

We will also deepen our advocacy efforts, working with policymakers and community partners to drive systemic change and improve outcomes for survivors. Our team of hard working and passionate individuals continues to be guided by our unwavering commitment to fostering hope, dignity, connection and community for male survivors, their families and supporters. We look forward to building on the strong foundations laid this year.

Thank you for your ongoing trust and partnership. Together, we are making a meaningful difference in the lives of many.

Karen Lindley AM | Chair

Craig Hughes-Cashmore | CEO/Co-founder

Board and Practice Advisory Committee

We are honoured and deeply grateful for the wisdom, time and generosity of the members of our Board and our Practice Advisory Committee.

Board of Directors

July to September 2024:

- Tanem Taskin – Chair
- Karen Lindley AM
- Dr Jed Horner

September 2024 to June 2025

- Karen Lindley AM – Chair
- Margie Austin
- Professor James Elliott

Practice Advisory Committee

SAMSN's Practice Advisory Committee (PAC) provides expertise and direction on matters related to programs undertaken and proposed. The committee is a collaboration between professionals, community representatives and people with lived expertise.

- Gail Frank – Chair
- Lindsay Gardner (until November 2024)
- Professor Patrick O'Leary
- Dr Gary Foster
- Tracy O'Hearn
- Mark Williams



Staff

As of 30 June 2025, SAMSN's dedicated team includes 9 full-time, 8 part-time and 16 casual staff.

Management team

Chief Executive Officer
Craig Hughes-Cashmore

Chief Operating Officer
Karin Waldmann

**Policy, Advocacy and
Stakeholder Relations Manager**
Prue Gregory OAM

Senior Practitioner
Rachel Hart

Office Manager
Vivianne Fatu

Programs and operations team

Receptionist and Administration Officer
Gabby

Intake Officer
Loren

Planned support workers
Alex, David, Joey, Holly, Raj and Rina

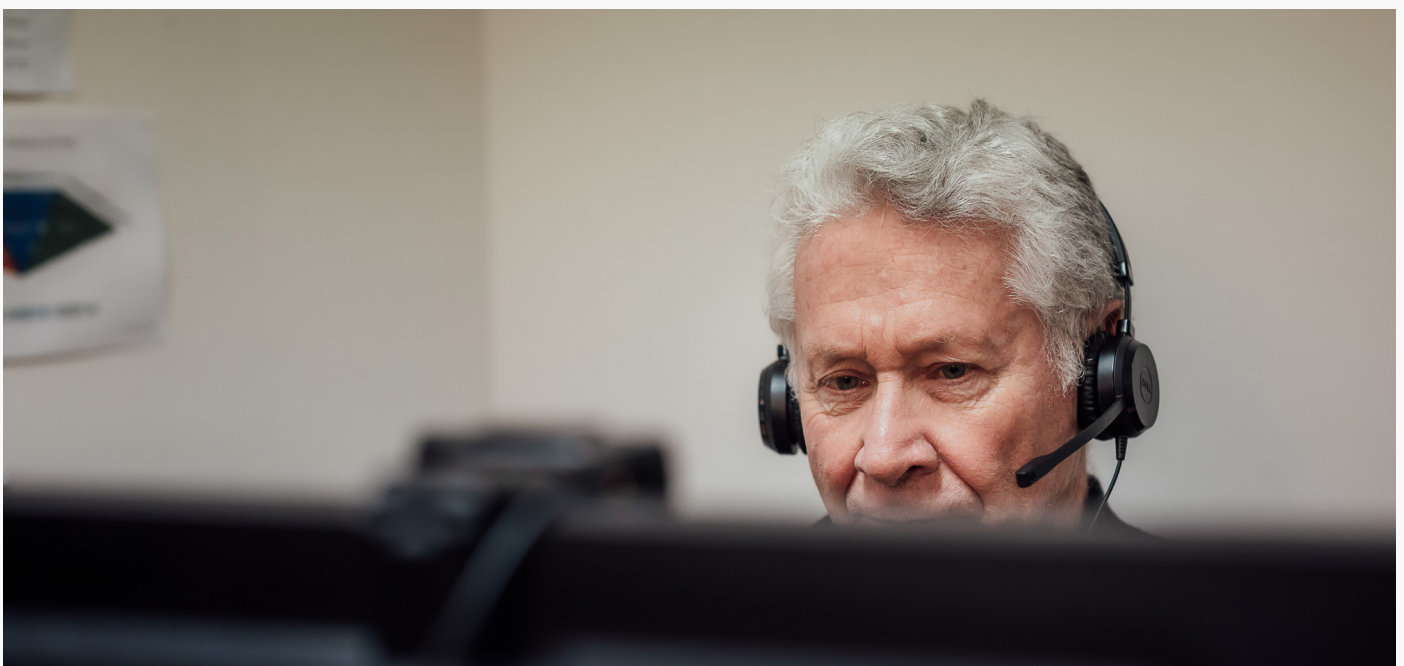
Counsellors
David, Gill and Rachel

Programs Coordinator
Dave

Executive Assistant
Rocio

Project Coordinator
Joan

Peer Support Phone Line workers
16 peers



2024-2025 highlights

We ran our 100th Eight-week Support Group with more than 1,000 men guided through the healing and recovery program over the past 14 years.



To celebrate our 100th group, we held a BBQ feast and Open Day at SAMSN HQ for our survivors and supporters.



Our Peer Support Phone Line saw an increase of 30% in calls. 85% of new callers chose to access other SAMSN services and programs.



A class action of 129 survivors of institutional abuse (122 men and 7 women) against the Tasmanian Government where each person was supported by SAMSN staff during their individual financial counselling and financial advice sessions.



CALD Project: We translated our brochure and factsheets into 3 different languages – Vietnamese, Arabic and Dari.



“I was so thankful that I had the opportunity to be part of this group. Wish I knew about it years ago.” Matthew

Peer Support Phone Line

Our Peer Support Phone Line (PSPL) has expanded its reach in the past year with an increase of 30% more callers to the service. SAMSN's PSPL is a confidential service connecting male survivors of child sexual abuse, giving men the opportunity to speak with peers who identify with issues commonly faced by survivors.

It was also pleasing to see 85% of new callers accessing other support services within our Planned Support or Counselling teams.

We've welcomed 4 new casual staff into the team, taking our peer numbers to 16. This has included bilingual peers to enhance our support for culturally and linguistically diverse survivors.

Our peers are SAMSN alumni who have completed one of our Eight-week Support Groups. In addition to their lived experience our peer support team have comprehensive training in Mental Health First Aid, Suicide Awareness and customised SAMSN training to prepare them for the PSPL role. They also receive monthly peer supervision.

Also joining the PSPL team this year was a Programs Coordinator who supports the administration side of the service, as well as coordinating the Eight-week Support Groups.

Accredited by Suicide Prevention Australia, SAMSN's PSPL offers calls on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

Program feedback

'It's such a different experience talking to a fellow survivor, as opposed to talking to my counsellor. It has given me a stronger insight into my behaviour and some things I could do to try and address some issues in my life.'

Brian (Peer Support Phone Line caller)

'I continue to be a part of the Peer Support Phone Line because on an ongoing basis I see and hear of the positive impact we as a team have on the lives of those we call. Peer support through SAMSN changed the trajectory of my recovery journey in 2015 and in working and training with the PSPL team my journey is constantly enriched. I am stoked to be able to do that for our peers.'

Martin

(Peer Support Phone Line worker)

'The PSPL is post-traumatic growth in a conversation.'

Chris

(Peer Support Phone Line worker)

Peer interview

Glenn is one of our Peer Support Phone Line workers.

What has changed for you and your recovery as a result of your work on the PSPL team?

I feel that I am more empathetic and can relate better with people. I have also gained additional skills in being able to deal with my flashbacks.

What is the best thing about being part of the team?

For me, meeting guys from so many different backgrounds with different stories and different recovery journeys. Being a part of this group reminds me that we are not alone, we work together, but most importantly, we are all working to help other guys just like us.

What is the best part about taking the calls from other survivors?

Most importantly, letting the guys know that they are not alone – it can give them a sense of belonging for the first time.

Being the first point of contact for a guy that has just started his journey of recovery is pretty special. That feeling of knowing you make a difference is hard to describe.



The PSPL has helped me sow seeds of connection; to know and to help others to know that we are not alone in this experience. Talking with someone who understands is life changing.'

Damon (Peer Support Phone Line caller)

Eight-week Support Groups and Monthly Drop-in Meetings

As we celebrated the delivery of our 100th Eight-week Support Group this year, we also marked the milestone with an update of our group manual and supplementary information. SAMSN's professionally facilitated support groups offer practical guidance and foster supported discussion to assist participants in their healing and recovery. Now in their 14th year, more than 1,000 men have completed a group.

The sessions are delivered face to face in Parramatta and Erskineville and are also available online to reach men living in regional and remote locations. To further support accessibility, an iPad library is offered at no cost. Upon completing an Eight-week Support Group, participants are encouraged to maintain their connections by attending SAMSN's Monthly Drop-in Meetings. These meetings provide ongoing opportunities for survivors to connect and focus on enhancing their recovery.

In response to participant feedback, as well as advancements in the understanding and treatment of childhood trauma, SAMSN initiated a comprehensive review of its support group materials and content. In 2023, the University of Sydney School of Education and Social Work was commissioned to conduct an external review. Internally, SAMSN also examined over thirteen years of participant feedback and engaged with a range of stakeholders through interviews. Following these reviews, SAMSN's Practice Advisory Committee approved a series of proposed updates, which have been integrated into the program over the past year.

The updated program now includes expanded, trauma-informed information about the processes and impacts of childhood trauma and sexual abuse, places a greater emphasis on psychological and emotional safety, and offers additional guidance on practical strategies and techniques that men can use to improve psychological regulation and manage post-traumatic symptoms.



I was amazed at how comfortable I felt in the group after only a few weeks. When I joined I was very apprehensive, but quickly felt a sense of kinship with the other men within a very short period. I put this down to the skilled guidance of the facilitators who led everyone with such care through this very delicate subject matter.'

Liam (Eight-week Support Group participant)

Individual Planned Support

Often the first contact survivors and/or supporters have with SAMSN is with a member of the Planned Support Team. This year we have welcomed into this team an intake worker.

Having an intake worker was trialled initially for 6 months. However, it quickly became apparent that the intake worker freed up the time of the other team members to provide support. In fact, the increase in available time to provide this support was by 30%. The intake worker's position is now permanent.

The members of the Planned Support Team work with survivors and/or supporters to establish safety, connection with other supports and help with the navigation of complex systems, while respecting individual privacy and autonomy.

The Planned Support Team comprises qualified and experienced male and female practitioners from human services backgrounds, including social work, psychology, counselling and psychotherapy.

Survivors and/or supporters are supported to navigate complex systems such as:

- Working with government agencies such as Centrelink, Housing, Victim Support Services and the National Redress Scheme;
- Referrals relating to criminal and civil legal services;
- Providing support with Work and Development Orders (WDO's);
- Supporting reporting to police or the online Sexual Assault Reporting Option (SARO);
- Survivors and/or supporters are also supported to access short term SAMSN counselling, if that is requested.

“You have supported me in the biggest transitions in my life and really helped me turn a corner.”

George

Counselling

At SAMSN, we offer short-term, trauma-informed counselling for both survivors and their supporters. Our team of experienced male and female counsellors come from diverse backgrounds, including:

- Disability support
- Acute mental health
- Prisons
- Trauma and sexual assault support for women
- Child and youth services
- Crisis and homelessness support

Additionally, we have counsellors who are skilled in managing and navigating Centrelink services. All our practitioners and counsellors are supported by our Senior Practitioner, a clinical supervisor with over 20 years of experience working with male survivors and in other trauma-related fields.

Our counselling services extend to supporters—valued partners, spouses, parents, children and friends of survivors. We understand that supporters may sometimes feel unsure about how to best support their loved ones or may be confused about a recent disclosure and its impact on their relationship. This is where SAMSN counsellors can help.

We offer 6 to 8 counselling sessions focused on the nuances of male childhood sexual assault and its impact on both survivors and their supporters. Sessions are available face-to-face at our Parramatta office or remotely via video or phone calls.

‘Thank you I feel so much calmer after talking today.’

Julia (Supporter)

‘I feel relieved speaking with someone that I trust.’

Sam (Survivor)

‘It is good to talk, and you have made a big difference and helped me.’

Amir (Survivor)



National Redress Scheme Application Support

The National Redress Scheme (the Scheme) acknowledges the harm caused to people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse. Through this Scheme survivors of institutional abuse can access counselling and psychological care services, a direct personal response or apology and a redress payment.

As a Redress Support Service, SAMSN provides free assistance to people considering applying to the Scheme and provides support to survivors who have applied to the Scheme and are awaiting their outcome.

Our services are provided by members of the Planned Support Team. In keeping with trauma-informed best practice, our team encourages survivors to take the lead on pacing the application process. Survivors can also choose their preferred mode of contact that best suits their needs; this can be in person, by phone or video call or by email.

It usually takes 10 to 15 sessions with a member of the Planned Support Team to complete a Redress application.

In the past year SAMSN has supported 335 survivors navigate the Scheme, assisting 57 survivors complete their application.

SAMSN has also delivered, in collaboration with other Redress Support Services, five Redress Information Sessions.



Civil claims, class action - support provided by SAMSN

Ashely Youth Detention Centre

SAMSN was offered and accepted a unique opportunity to support survivors following their success in a class action against the Tasmanian Government for abuse experienced at the Ashely Youth Detention Centre. SAMSN's social workers supported each of the class members in their sessions with financial counsellors and financial advisors. The support provided by the social workers included preparation for the sessions and debriefing after.

The financial sessions provided important information about the compensation payments being received by each member of the class. Having our social workers present during these sessions, ensured the survivors felt safe and more confident in making choices about their ongoing financial situations.

There was overwhelming positive feedback from each of the sessions. The sessions were held online and face to face in Tasmania, South Australia, Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. Sessions were also provided to survivors who were in prison.



Service Providers Workshops

SAMSN delivered 12 day-long workshops this year. These workshops were designed for frontline staff supporting male survivors. The workshops were delivered in New South Wales, South Australia and Tasmania, reaching over 350 people.

The workshops addressed the dynamics and impacts of child sexual abuse, covering in particular:

- Trauma-informed processes for engaging with and supporting male survivors towards recovery, addressing feelings of guilt and shame;
- The prevalence, dynamics and impacts of child sexual abuse;
- Responding to disclosures;
- Navigating justice systems including the criminal, civil and redress systems; and
- Supporting personal and professional self-care and resilience.

‘The entire workshop was so informative. I was captivated by the combined knowledge.’

Pete (Workshop participant)

‘So much valuable information in 1 day. Thank you for sharing. So many references to look up.’

Nicola (Workshop participant)

‘Engaging and knowledgeable presenters, skilled incorporation of lived experience.’

Allan (Workshop participant)



Accessibility project – phase 2

The second phase of our accessibility project continues our commitment to enhancing access to, and engagement with, SAMSN's services. This ongoing work is designed to ensure that our services are inclusive and accessible for all members of the community.

Our efforts are guided by the Disability Inclusion Action Plan, which provides a comprehensive framework for our accessibility initiatives. The plan focuses on four key areas:

- Fostering inclusive attitudes and behaviours within the organisation
- Promoting inclusive employment practices
- Ensuring our systems, processes, and information delivery methods are accessible to everyone
- Contributing to the creation of liveable and inclusive communities

In February, SAMSN established a dedicated governance committee to oversee the implementation of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan and steer the rollout of accessibility improvements. This committee plays a vital role in maintaining focus and accountability throughout the project.

Over the past year, phase 2 of the accessibility project has achieved several milestones:

- All staff participated in a disability awareness session, increasing understanding and fostering a culture of inclusion.

- The Disability Inclusion Action Plan was added as a standing agenda item for all management and team meetings, ensuring ongoing attention and discussion.
- Our efforts around accessibility and inclusion have been communicated both internally and externally, raising awareness and promoting transparency.
- Managers and team members discuss reasonable adjustments during individual supervision sessions, ensuring supportive and responsive work environments.
- A project coordinator was appointed to address feedback regarding inaccessible internal systems, including reviewing current systems and advising on structural improvements.
- We have further improved the accessibility of our website, building on the progress made in the first phase of the project.
- Accessible format versions of our Eight-week Support Group and Monthly Drop-in Meeting reading materials have been created, making these resources available to a wider audience.
- Our intake process has been adjusted to comply with accessibility guidelines, ensuring that everyone can engage with our services from the outset.



Leadership and advocacy

SAMSN is the leading advocate for understanding and addressing the needs of male survivors and their supporters. We seize opportunities to educate the community and build awareness, while also making submissions on related areas of law reform.

This year we remained active across two key reviews of NSW law: character references and claim farming. In April the NSW Parliament passed the *Claim Farming Practices Prohibition Act 2025*, which outlaws unsolicited contact with potential personal injury claimants—a change SAMSN has long supported.

Our advocacy against the use of good character references at sentencing continues. SAMSN made preliminary and

final submissions to the NSW Sentencing Council and are hopeful for legislative change that prohibits the use of good character references at the sentencing of sexual violence offenders.

SAMSN has also made submissions to the statutory review of the Victims Rights and Support Act 2013. One of the key areas under review is the Victims Registers, which track and notify victims about the status of offenders. The amendment aims to improve how victims are registered and kept informed, enhancing the system's transparency and accessibility.

Additionally, SAMSN provided information on the support needs of child sexual abuse survivors, their families, and supporters to the South Australian Royal Commission into Domestic, Family, and Sexual Violence.



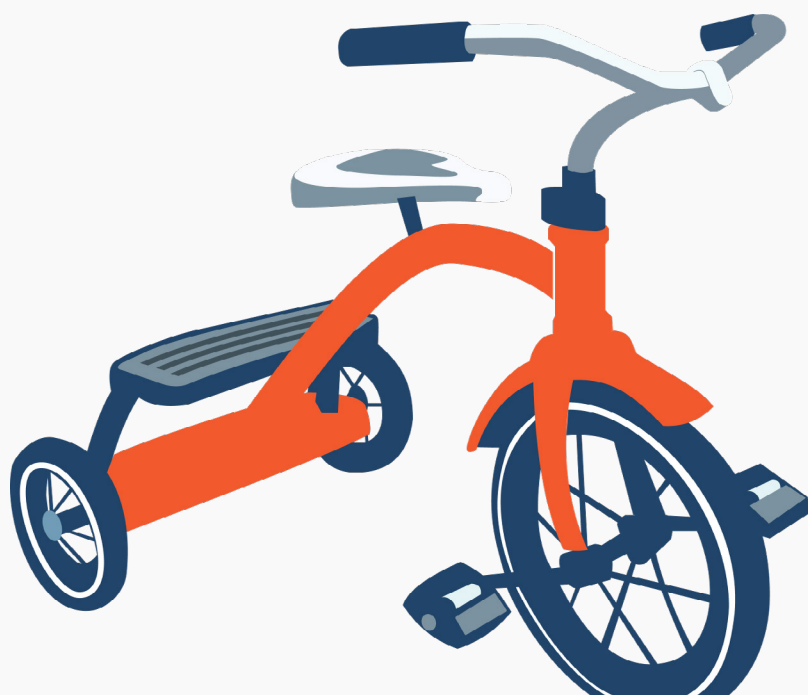


‘I soon noticed that for the first time in my life I was surrounded by people who did not judge me. No one in the room ever made me feel, “That guy is an angry guy” or “that guy is too emotional, etc etc”. And at times I definitely was angry, and I definitely was emotional. But everyone knew that is not who we really are. Nowhere else in society has ever offered me this space. It felt like coming into an oasis from the desert... I would definitely never have expected it to have had such a positive effect on my relationships and the world outside of the group. But it did.

Conversations with loved ones that once were stilted, softened into gentle opportunities. Both parties sharing deeply and safely. Big problems were let go of.

Work relationships suddenly got easier as my mind and body relaxed through old tensions. I allowed people in. I could now see that more often than not; most people were trying to be kind also. It was humbling and so beautiful.’

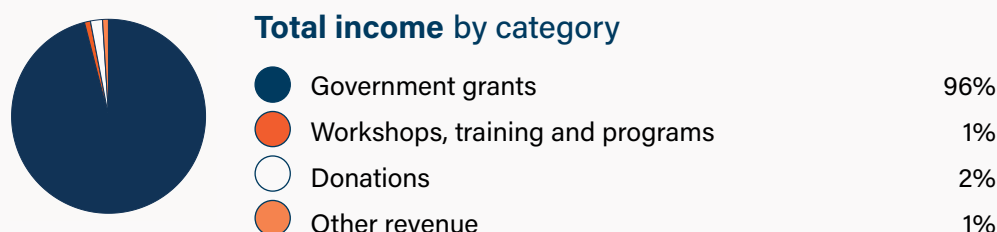
John (Eight-week Support Group participant)



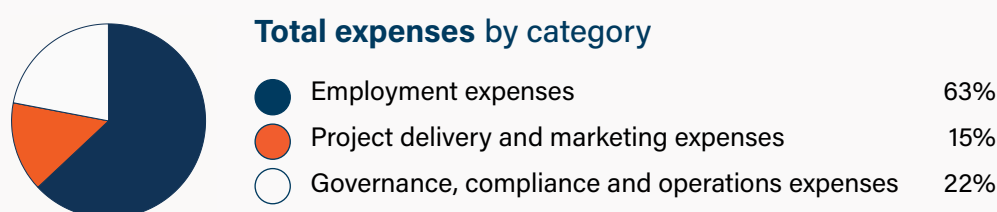


2024-2025 Financial Report

Revenue	2025	2024
Government grants	2,597,164	2,301,015
Workshops, training and programs	14,010	40,492
Donations	53,768	53,776
Other revenue	36,584	35,069
Total revenue	2,701,526	2,430,352



Expenses	2025	2024
Employment expenses	1,698,196	1,282,722
Project delivery and marketing expenses	391,494	557,869
Governance, compliance and operations expenses	578,360	482,612
Total expenses	2,668,050	2,323,203



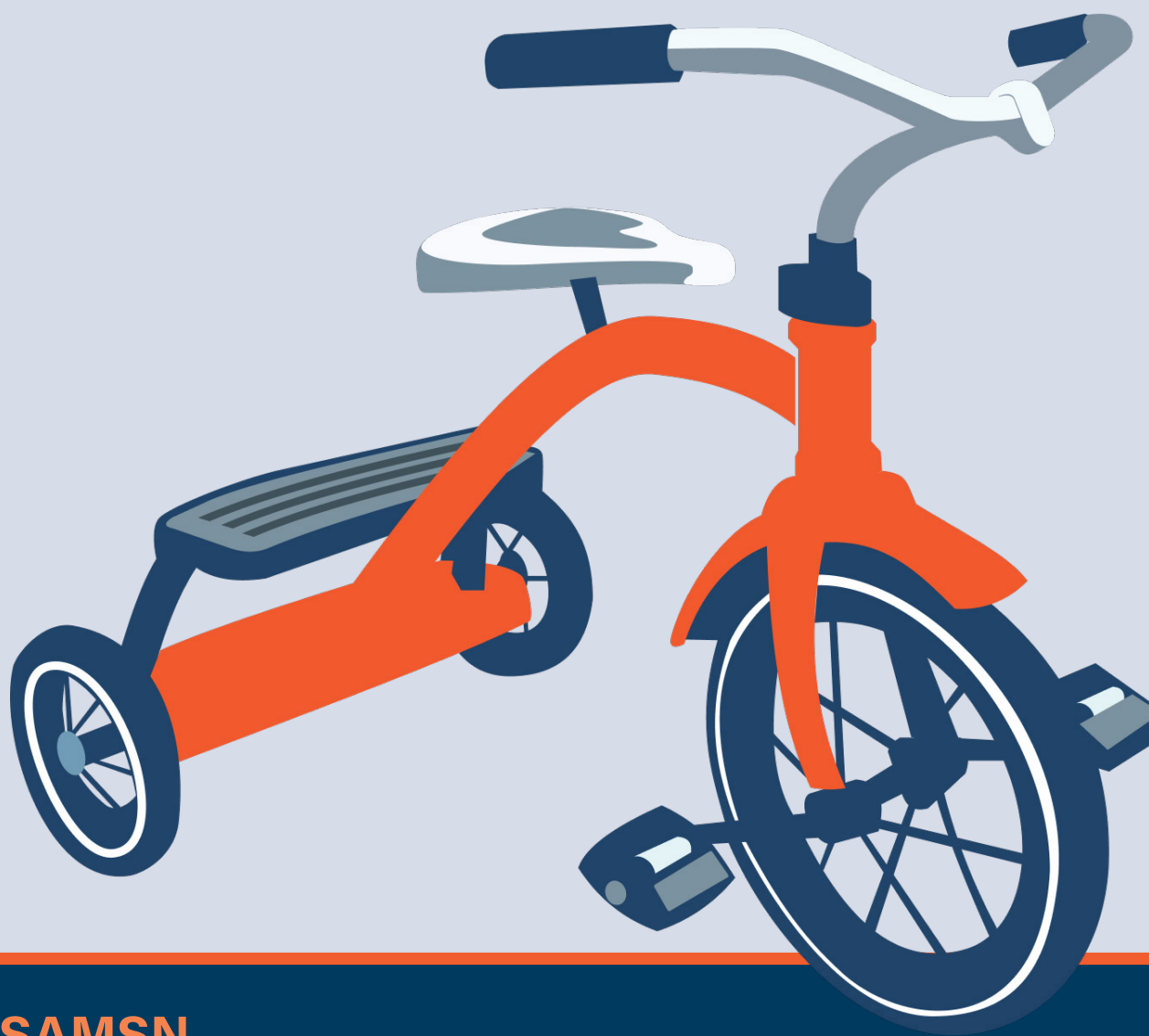
Net Surplus	33,476	107,149
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Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2025	2025	2024
Total Assets	1,446,740	987,532
Total Liabilities	1,283,022	857,290
Net Assets	163,718	130,242

Please visit the [ACNC website](#) to view our full financial statements for this period.

Information above are derived from the Signed Audited Statement FY2025





Contact SAMSN

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SURVIVORS & MATES SUPPORT NETWORK

