National Community Hubs Program

2018 Year in Review

Community hubs
Connect. Share. Learn.

What are community hubs?

Community hubs are welcoming places where migrant and refugee families, particularly mothers with young children, come to connect, share and learn.

Hubs bridge the gap between migrants and the wider community. They connect women with schools, with each other, and with organisations that can provide health, education and settlement support.

The hubs are mainly embedded in primary schools and leverage existing school infrastructure and government and community services in local communities.

Community hubs:

- engage families in culturally diverse communities
- connect preschool children into playgroups and prepare them for school
- help women and children learn and practice English, and
- build pathways to volunteering and employment.

Community hubs are operated under the National Community Hubs Program (NCHP).

Who funds the hubs?

Community hubs are funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services, in partnership with the Scanlon Foundation, state and local governments and Community Hubs Australia Incorporated (CHA).

Local schools and private and community sector organisations provide additional financial and in-kind support.

The program is one of Australia's largest and most effective partnerships between philanthropy, government, and the corporate and community sectors.

About Community Hubs Australia

CHA delivers the national hubs program on behalf of our funding partners, with assistance from several specialist support agencies in each state.

CHA works to develop a socially cohesive Australia. Our goal is to help culturally diverse people, however they come here (refugee, migrant, temporary visa), to integrate into Australian communities.

We work in partnership with government, businesses, philanthropy, other not-for-profits, and community organisations to fund and facilitate locally generated programs that reduce isolation and increase connection.

Playtime in a Hume hub.

“The laughter and love in the place is awesome.”

Lisa Gobo, Hub Leader, Colyton Public School Hub, Blacktown, NSW

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Opposite: Victorian hub families enjoy a combined playgroup experience inside the MPavilion event space in the heart of Melbourne.

What we do – at a glance

2018 participation

Engagement

- On average, **5,300** families visited the hubs each term.
- **79,776** adult attendances were recorded at hub programs.
- Hub families come from **118** nations and speak **80** languages.
- **89%** of hub attendees visited at least once a week.

Examples of programs and services

- Special interest and social groups
- Healthy living and other life skills workshops and groups
- Whole-of-school events
- Breakfast clubs
- Volunteering opportunities
- Field trips and group excursions

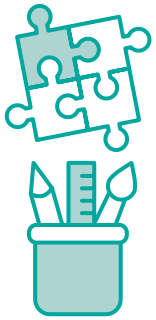
393,769 attendances by adults and children at hub activities

Early childhood

- Children accessed language and literacy programs **34,888** times.
- **49%** of people came to the hub to bring their child to a playgroup.

Examples of programs and services

- Early years programs support transitions into kindergarten and school
- Mother and child language programs
- Father-child and grandparent-child activities
- Paid and volunteer child minding
- Referrals to early intervention, health and other support services



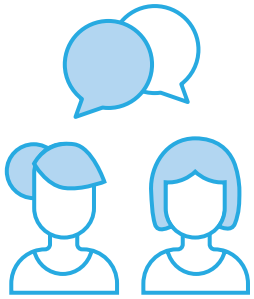
81,497 attendances by children at playgroups and early years sessions

English

- **38%** of attendees came to the hub to improve their English.
- **71%** of those who have difficulty speaking English came to the hub to improve their language skills.

Examples of programs and services

- Providing formal English tuition, with an emphasis on 'everyday English'
- Providing informal opportunities to practise English conversation
- Increasing access to classes and practice by providing childminding
- Increasing confidence in English, resulting in greater participation in the school, community and workforce



28,222 attendances at English classes

Vocational pathways

- Adults attended a formal training course in the hubs on **10,267** occasions and an informal training course or session on **9,847** occasions.

Examples of programs and services

- Formal vocational training in partnership with TAFEs and registered training organisations. For e.g. certificates in childcare, early childhood education, aged care, floristry, beauty therapy and first aid
- English language tuition and practice
- Computer skills classes and support
- Informal skills development workshops and presentations
- Volunteering and paid work opportunities in the hubs, schools and wider community

Adults attended formal and informal training courses in the hubs on **20,114 occasions**

What we achieve – at a glance

Program outcomes

The national hubs program aims to strengthen social cohesion and inclusion in targeted communities by achieving four core outcomes:

Child outcomes	Migrant children enjoy and succeed in school and achieve optimal health, development and wellbeing.
Family outcomes	Migrant families function well, have the capacity, confidence and skills to nurture child learning, and are connected, active participants in the community and workforce.
School outcomes	Schools respond to the needs and aspirations of migrant children and families.
Community outcomes	Community services respond early and effectively to migrant child and family needs.

Key outcomes in 2018

For children

- Hubs continued to increase **school readiness** through playgroups and early years programs.
- **Playgroups** were the main reason people came to the hubs.
- **Hubs filled a major service gap:** 2/3 of hub parents with a child under the age of five have not taken their child to any other early learning services outside the hub.
- **1,746 referrals** were made to external early years services such as preschool/kindergarten and maternal child health services.

For families

- **183 jobs** were secured as a result of being connected with a hub.
- Hubs facilitated **9,021 volunteering** opportunities.
- **Spending time with other people** was one of the main reasons why families visited a hub.
- In the first six months of offering federally funded childminding, hubs improved parents' English and job skills, thereby **increasing their confidence in looking for a job by 22%**.

For schools

- **58** government schools
- **12** Catholic schools, and
- **2** independent schools are better equipped to respond to the needs of children and families from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Migrant and refugee children are arriving at kindergarten and school ready to socialise and learn.
- Parents are more actively engaged in school activities.

For communities

- Hubs served as safe and welcoming gateways, connecting services with hard-to-reach migrant families.
- **12,748** referrals were made to additional services and support, such as family support, maternal child health services, preschool and community health services.
- Hubs partnered with **523** external organisations and services.

From our Chair

Peter at a playgroup in MPavilion.

"Everyone benefits when newly arrived migrants and refugees experience a caring and effective transition into Australian society."

It is 10 years since the Scanlon Foundation became involved in community hubs.

In 2008, our early research into social cohesion in Australia revealed a significant service gap in the support available to migrant and refugee women caring for preschool children. The research also indicated that community-level, place-based approaches were essential for achieving successful settlement outcomes in culturally diverse communities.

Hume City Council was experimenting with a promising early years hubs program, and the federal government wanted to increase the capacity of services to work together to support vulnerable migrant women and children.

Everything gelled when the government approached us in the hope that involving an external organisation would provide the catalyst for collaboration. Our ground-breaking partnership developed the Community Hubs Model, established the national hubs program and CHA, and continues to the present day.

Ten years on, we have more than 70 hubs embedded in local communities across four states. We have attracted funding from all levels of government, and we are having an impact on important policy debates. We are changing lives, schools and communities for the better.

This success is underpinned by an enduring cross-sectoral partnership, our focus on local implementation and local decision making, and the exceptional frontline delivery and support teams we have in place across the hubs network.

I wish to acknowledge and thank our partners across the three tiers of government, particularly the federal Department of Social Services, and our many service, philanthropic and corporate supporters.

I also want to thank the leadership teams in our host schools for coming on this journey with us. It is great to see the hubs returning such immense value to these schools and their communities.

This is just the beginning. I look forward to watching the community hubs network develop and deepen its impact even further over the next 10 years.

Peter Scanlon AO
Chairman
Community Hubs Australia

From our CEO

Sonja and Victorian hub leaders.

"The past year was another period of growth for the national community hubs program – a testament to the durability and adaptability of our model."

We have now successfully introduced hubs into more than 70 diverse local communities across four states; into public, Catholic and independent schools; and into metropolitan suburbs and regional areas; without losing the essence of what we do and who we support.

Embedding hubs in primary schools means each new hub has immediate access to local families and community leaders. This ready-made, place-based advantage means hub leaders can focus on providing an immense depth of personalised support to families.

CHA secured two complementary federal grants in 2018 that helped increase the reach and depth of the hubs' programs even further. DSS provided funding to pilot the delivery of English language programs across the hubs network. And the Office for Women in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet funded the provision of childminding during English classes and vocational training programs.

The impact of these whole-of-network initiatives has been palpable. Attendance at English and vocational courses in the hubs increased significantly.

While the hubs model is deceptively simple, its implementation is not. It takes a special kind of person to manage the competing demands of families, schools and community services. Our hub leaders, aided by their national and regional support teams, have ensured that the hubs achieve this.

It has been wonderful to see several hub leaders recognised with local community service awards during the past year. This highlights the leadership, passion and commitment they bring to their roles and the positive impact they are having on their communities.

I hope you enjoy reading this report, which highlights some of the life-changing activities and achievements across the national hubs network during 2018.

We look forward to continuing this impact and supporting the development of local communities for many years to come.

Dr Sonja Hood
Chief Executive Officer
Community Hubs Australia

The National Community Hubs Program: a 10-year journey

The year 2018 marked the 10th anniversary of the visionary partnership between the Australian Government and the Scanlon Foundation, which laid the foundations for the community hubs network.

The partners explored the most effective ways to address the causes of disadvantage within communities with a high proportion of newly arrived migrants and refugees.

Their community-level approach, and a practical trial in Hume local government area (LGA) in outer northwestern Melbourne, led to the place-based Community Hubs Model, which underpins the operations of the national program to this day.

Rigorous monitoring and evaluation produced an evidence base that clearly demonstrates the efficacy of the model.

2008–09

- The Australian Government asks the Scanlon Foundation to help it explore how to address the causes of disadvantage for new arrivals.
- Hume LGA becomes the focus community; the local council, schools and services have been trialling a promising early years hubs program.
- Community development consultants are appointed.
- Hume community ideas symposiums help identify and prioritise local needs.

2010

- The Scanlon Foundation, Australian and Victorian governments, and Hume City Council partner to fund a formal trial of early years hubs in local primary schools.

2011

9 trial hubs

- The 3-year Supporting Parents–Developing Children Project (SPDC Project) begins, trialling nine hubs in Hume LGA.

2013

9 hubs

- The SPDC Project wins a National Local Government Strength and Diversity Award.
- The Community Hubs Model is developed based on insights from the trial.
- The Australian Government commits funding to establish 30 hubs in Victoria, NSW and Queensland. This marks the start of the national program.
- The Scanlon Foundation commits to funding the program's ongoing governance and management.
- Scanlon-Monash social cohesion research identifies priority communities.

2014

42 hubs

- Specialist support agencies are appointed in the three states.
- 30 new hubs open in metro Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, in addition to the existing Hume hubs.
- An independent process evaluation by Charles Sturt University (CSU) finds hubs are reaching migrant families with children and responding to their needs.

"The Committee is of the view that ... funding should be increased to expand the program nationally and with greater flexibility of service delivery." [1]

2015

42 hubs

- DSS provides funding to keep the 42 hubs operating until 2018.
- An independent outcomes evaluation by CSU finds that hubs are having a significant positive impact on children, families, schools and local communities.

2016

40 hubs

- The Australian and NSW governments commit funding to support and expand the network by another 30 hubs.
- An independent review by Murdoch Childrens Research Institute finds the hubs are helping children from CALD backgrounds become school ready.

2017

63 hubs

- The national hubs network grows by 55% in 12 months.
- The first regional hubs open in Wollongong.
- The Victorian and Queensland governments commit funding for more hubs in their states.
- Federal Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Migration recommends increasing funding to expand the community hubs program nationally[1].

2018

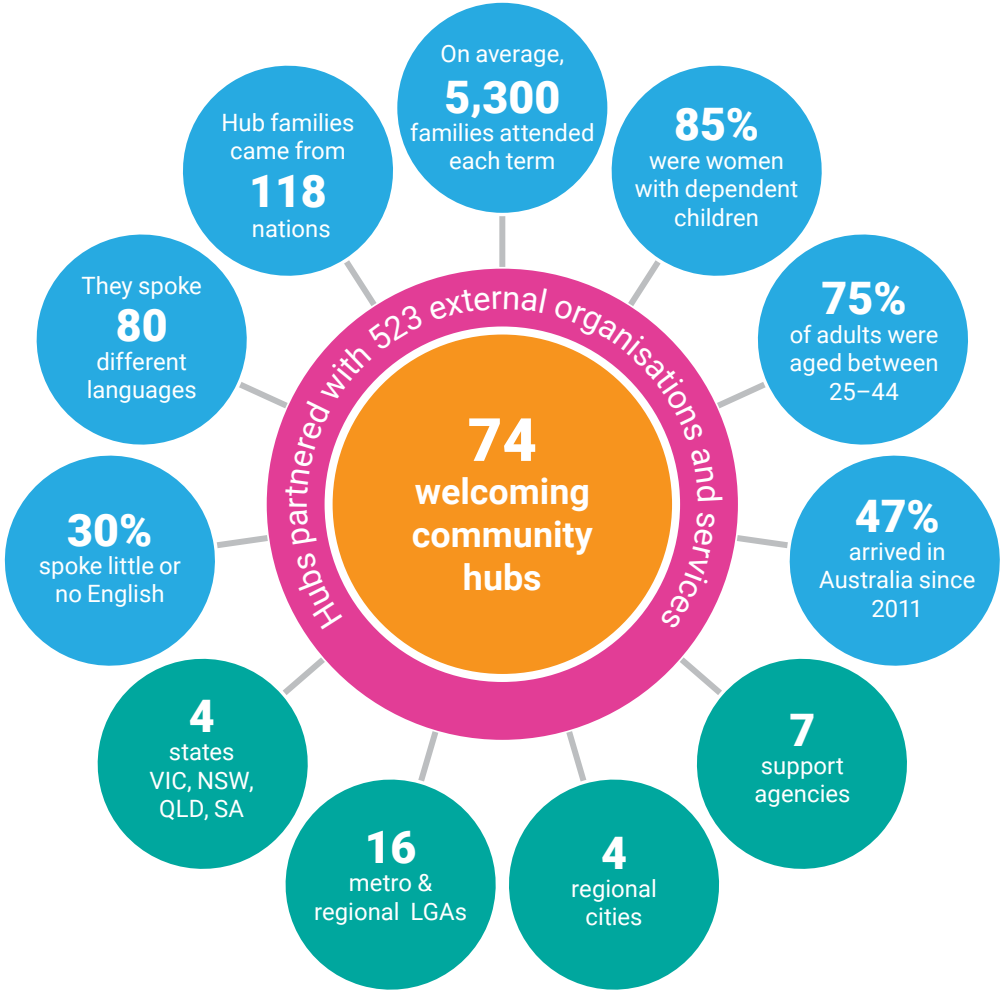
74 hubs

- South Australia joins the national hubs network, with seven hubs opening across Port Adelaide Enfield and Salisbury LGAs.
- Hubs open in Geelong and Shepparton in regional Victoria.
- CHA secures major federal grants to increase English tuition and childminding across the hubs.
- Three more hubs are announced for Western Sydney (Liverpool LGA), to open in 2019.

Images opposite and on this page: early photographs from some of the first hubs in the national program.

[1] Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, Joint Standing Committee on Migration. *No-one teaches you to become an Australian: Report of the inquiry into migrant settlement outcomes* (2017) p56

The 2018 hubs network and who it reached



Who comes to hubs and why?

Reaching and supporting CALD women

Our second annual Hubs Census again confirmed that community hubs are reaching the target demographic of women from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds who are caring for dependent children.

The main reasons they come to hubs are to bring their children to playgroups, spend time with others and improve their English.

About half the people who visit the hubs do not have existing connections with the school, suggesting that hubs are succeeding in attracting participants who may otherwise be very socially isolated. Almost 90% visit at least once a week.

Who comes?

91%	are women
85%	have dependent children
83%	have migrated to Australia
59%	of those with children under the age of five do not take their children to services outside the hub
89%	visit the hub weekly

Main reasons for visiting the hub^

49%	Playgroup
47%	Spend time with others
38%	Improve English
27%	Learn of services
22%	Other skills
20%	Job skills
18%	Volunteer

^ 2018 Census respondents could select multiple reasons.

English proficiency

30%	of adults attending hubs can speak little or no English
28%	can read little or no English
76%	speak a language other than English at home

Around 70% of hub attendees who cannot speak and/or read English well say one of the main reasons they come to the hub is to improve their English skills.

Almost half the people who do not speak English at home reported that they'd never attended English classes anywhere outside the hub.

Work profile

80% of adults visiting hubs are not in paid employment.

One in three would like more work, particularly those who have good English language skills and/or are volunteers.

20% of adult attendees want to improve their job skills through the hub.

Source: The 2018 Hubs Census survey was completed in August and received 1,951 responses from 59 hubs.

A growing network of support

The national network of school-based hubs continued to grow during 2018, with 13 new hubs established in Adelaide and the Victorian regional centres of Shepparton and Geelong.

Overall, 74 hubs operated in 16 LGAs across four states.

Launching the hubs

New hubs usually have a 'soft opening' followed by an official launch event several months later, once their operations and relationships with host schools and communities are well established.

In 2018, formal launch events were held for hubs in:

- Ipswich
- Wollongong
- Fairfield in Western Sydney, and
- South Australia

More hubs in the pipeline

Another Western Sydney LGA has joined the community hubs network, with three hubs due to open in schools in the City of Liverpool in early 2019.

We welcome Liverpool City Council into the hubs network as the support agency for these hubs.

The hub leader community

Our hub leaders, supported by their school principals and teams in our partner agencies, are the lifeblood of our hubs network.

A hub leader needs the skills to be able to do everything from connecting with a lonely mother at the school gate, through to negotiating with a local service to come and operate out of the hub. Across the country, the quality, dedication and passion of our hub leaders are second to none.

Our national, state and regional support partners work hard to ensure that hub leaders are properly supported and networked. We provide hub leaders with professional development opportunities and peer support that gives them the practical skills and knowledge to respond to the diverse needs of their communities.

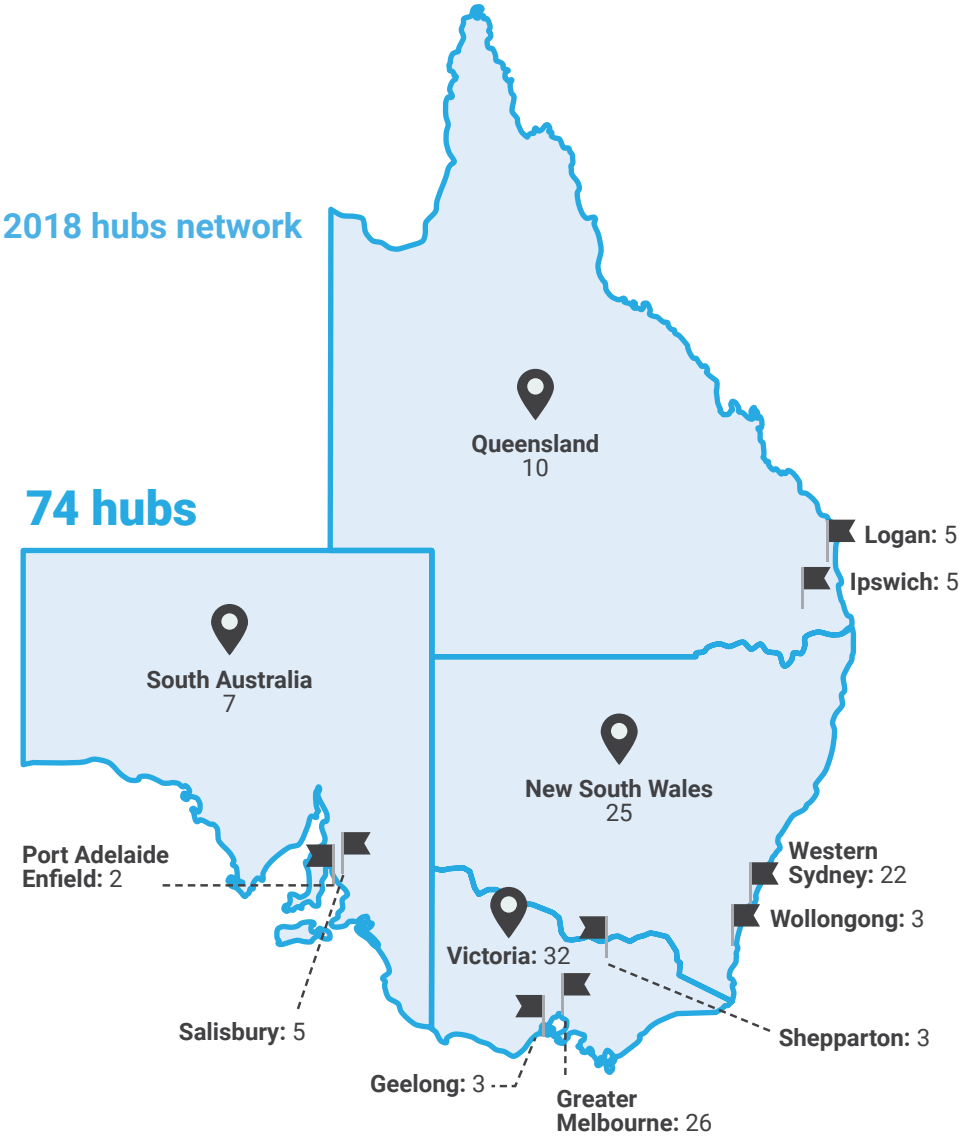
Often, the answer to a problem lies within the hub leader network, not in a training manual. This became truly evident during our ABCD (Asset Based Community Development) workshops last year, led by Bank of I.D.E.A.S. guru Peter Kenyon, which helped hub leaders to identify and work with the strengths in their communities – including each other.

It is important to recognise that working with families who are struggling emotionally, socially and physically can be challenging – but helping families connect with services that can help them can be incredibly empowering. In 2018, our hub leaders continued to find unique ways to engage with families and respond to their needs to build mutual trust and respect.

Top: Cutting the ribbon to officially launch the hubs in Ipswich in April. Bottom: NSW's Minister for Multiculturalism the Hon Ray Williams MP, speaks with a hub attendee during the official launch of the Fairfield hubs in February. Photo: Simon Bennett, *Fairfield Champion*. Used with permission.

Top: Children enjoy fun outdoor play activities during the Ipswich hubs launch. Middle: The Ipswich launch attracted coverage from ABC TV, Channel 7 and QUT TV news. Bottom: NSW hub leaders and principals at their annual meeting in November, hosted by Bass Hill Public School.

The 2018 hubs network



72 host schools

2 host community centres

What we do: Engagement

The Community Hubs Model is a grassroots community engagement and development approach that puts people at the centre of everything we do.

This requires hub leaders to plan around local needs and actively encourage social interaction and participation. The aim is to connect women, children and families with each other; increase engagement between parents and the school; link families into appropriate support services; and create opportunities to participate in the wider community.

Zonta partners in Ipswich

The Zonta Club of Ipswich has been an enthusiastic supporter of the five Ipswich hubs since they opened. Zonta International is a human rights organisation focusing on women and children.

The club provided financial and volunteer support for hub programs, including donating new sewing machines, material and sewing kits to each of the hubs. Club members volunteered in the hubs to run weekly sewing sessions for hub mums.

Zonta members identified sewing projects in which the hub women could also give back to the community, such as sewing breast pads for women who have had mastectomies.

The sessions also helped develop business skills and ideas, with some women interested in sewing shopping bags to sell at local markets.

Zonta volunteers also supported the delivery of English classes at Staines Memorial College Hub.

Engaging to promote health and wellbeing

Four women from Meadows Primary School Hub in Hume were trained to be Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) champions within the school. The HEAL course was delivered by DPV Health, a non-profit health care organisation.

The four mothers then applied their new knowledge and skills at the school's Sustainability Expo by presenting an energy workshop, showcasing ideas for healthy lunchboxes and giving cooking demonstrations to more than 100 people.

Walking for health and friendship

A number of hubs run walking groups to encourage women to combine exercise with social interaction.

Walking is a convenient and low-impact form of exercise in which women with prams or strollers can easily participate.

For example, women attending Banksia Road Public School Hub started stepping out of the school grounds together early in the year. Hub leader Marina Boutros said some hub mums had been finding it difficult to muster up the motivation to get outdoors and exercise.

Since the walking group began, they have mentioned how easy and enjoyable it is to exercise "when you have lovely people to do it with".

Above: Women at Fairfield West Public School Hub try on costumes they made during a sewing class. Top right: Families from Granville Public School Hub travelled from Western Sydney to Canberra to explore the Australian capital. Bottom right: Members of the Zonta Club of Ipswich hand over donated sewing equipment to local hub leaders and parents.

What we do: Early childhood

Hubs run playgroups and other early years programs that help prepare preschoolers from CALD backgrounds for kindergarten and school.

Bringing children to hub playgroups is the main reason parents visit our hubs. Attending a playgroup also teaches parents the importance of providing learning opportunities for their young children in the home.

Research shows that children from non-English speaking backgrounds, and children in families facing significant socioeconomic disadvantage, are some of the most developmentally vulnerable children in our community. Many children in hub communities are experiencing both these forms of disadvantage.

Hubs provide timely support to develop their language skills and other areas required for school readiness.

Supporting refugee and asylum seeker children

Around 40% of the children in Logan City, south of Brisbane, do not attend a kindergarten program before starting school. Logan children are also below the national average for being 'developmentally on track' (70% are on track in Logan compared to 78% across Australia).

For many of the CALD children attending playgroups and other early childhood activities at the five Logan hubs, their hub visits will be the only preschool sessions they experience.

The Queensland Government Department of Education funded Access Community Services, our support agency in Queensland, to deliver a pilot program aimed at improving early childhood outcomes for at-risk children in Logan.

A major component of the 18-month Refugee & Asylum Seeker Early Childhood Pilot Program was bringing specialist teachers into the hubs to deliver English as a Second Language and early learning programs to improve outcomes for children.

MPavilion

The Victorian hubs took part in a 5-week early years literacy activity at the MPavilion architectural events space in Melbourne's Queen Victoria Gardens during Term 4.

More than 500 families from 17 hubs travelled into the city to enjoy performances, storytelling and hands-on activities supported by the MPavilion initiative, Playgroups Victoria and State Library of Victoria. Hub leaders reported that the parents appreciated the opportunity to visit a venue outside their local area, and the children loved the songs and stories, and having space to dance and run around.

Improving playgroups in Hume

Funding was secured from Uniting VIC TAS to improve and expand playgroups across the 15 hubs in Hume City.

The project aimed to:

- improve the transitions of young children into kindergarten and school by developing their skills, especially their social and emotional skills, and
- reduce the vulnerability of young migrant and refugee children in Hume City by exposing them to high quality early learning opportunities.

Key activities and outcomes during the year included:

- establishing six new playgroups at six hubs
- providing training and 1:1 coaching for hub playgroup facilitators. Four local parents also attended the training.
- refreshing toy stock – more than 150 preloved toys were donated and distributed among the hubs, and
- introducing the Playgroup Victoria Standards for Good Practice to hub coordinators, with resources and support to help them implement the standards in each hub.

Above: Enjoying a healthy snack at St Pius X Primary School (Himilo Community Connect Project) hub in Banyule. Right: Storytime at an MPavilion combined playgroup session in central Melbourne.

What we do: English

Hubs provide migrants, particularly women, with peer motivation and opportunities to learn English and practice their language skills in conversational settings.

Improving English skills is one of the main reasons people attend their local hub. Across the network in 2018, 30% of hub participants could not speak English well or at all and 28% could not read English well or at all.

Women caring for young children face significant barriers to accessing language tuition and practising conversational English. Having poor English limits each woman's ability to confidently communicate her needs, access services, build community connections, find work or even speak with her child's teachers.

English programs in the hubs pilot

In mid-2018, DSS provided CHA with 12 months' funding to pilot the delivery of English language programs across the hubs network. The pilot is being conducted with support from AMES Australia and has three broad intentions:

- provide English classes in hubs, with a focus on conversational English;
- develop a volunteer program to support further language development; and
- provide professional development (provided by AMES) to enable hub leaders to incorporate English language across all hub activities.

A national working group was established to support the pilot's roll out. At the end of the calendar year, English language and volunteer programs were being trialled across the hubs network.

The programs are being evaluated by CHA and AMES to measure the number of classes offered, attendance, retention, self-reported ability to read and write, and impacts on participants' confidence in seeking work.

Additional grant funding was obtained from the federal government's Office for Women to provide childminding in hubs while mothers attend English classes and other courses.

English grows Shakera's confidence

Shakera is a 38-year-old mother of five from Afghanistan. She arrived in Australia in 2005 and started attending AMEP classes. However, she stopped attending classes after becoming pregnant.

When Shakera started attending a sewing group at one of the Queensland hubs, she was very timid and spoke almost no English. After gentle but persistent persuasion from the hub leader and the sewing group volunteer, she joined an English class at the hub in early November. She was extremely introverted at first; too shy to speak with her teachers or classmates.

By the end of term, just five weeks later, Shakera had become a regular student who never missed a class. As she grew in confidence, she demonstrated a high level of spoken English, using a wide variety of vocabulary to describe her life events, daily routines and pastimes. She was even confident speaking in front of the class.

Although Shakera arrived in Australia with limited literacy, she is eager to develop her reading and writing skills, which have improved significantly.

A poetic hub moment

Students in the Language for Life English class at Stevensville Primary School Hub shared stories and memories from their lives before coming to Australia, which they incorporated into this poem.

Smiles of the past

Smiles of the past
Are back.
To play.

I stop. I'm smiling.
I'm seeing you my new friend
Your eyes are smiling, too.

Dark time has passed,
Memories of my land are packed tightly in my heart.
For now.

At night,
Of Screams, of Fire,
Of Dignity suspended
Security shattered.
My mind still sees.

Of gentle picnics in the sun,
Of soft mother's arms
And her sweet apple scent.
Of desert heat and humid air.

And today.
For now,
In this moment of Belonging and Friendship.

My smile revisits,
And although I am full
Of my past.
And I am my past.
The cracks have given back my hope.
And I smile...

Top: Women in an English class from Dandenong Primary School Hub on an excursion with their children to the Australian Garden in Cranbourne. Bottom: A Stevensville Primary School Hub Language for Life class in action. The poem on this page was created by the students.

What we do: Vocational pathways

Only one fifth of hub attendees are in any form of paid work. While this is understandable given that most are primary carers for young children, many of these women would like to work more – now or in the future.

Hubs offer a wide range of vocational training courses, as well as English classes, to build women's confidence and open up pathways to employment.

Minding children so mothers can learn

The Office for Women in the Department of Prime Minster and Cabinet provided grant funding over two years to make childminding available during English and skills training programs across the national hubs network.

This grant is enabling eligible hubs to pay for childminding to support women's attendance at classes. The aim is to reduce barriers to women's participation in the workforce, especially in sectors where women are under-represented.

Hub leaders are encouraged to employ hub participants in childminding roles where possible, as this also provides women with employment experience in Australia (another common barrier to obtaining ongoing work).

In Term 3 2018, 32 hubs used the grant funds to provide childminding for programs and 30 people were employed as childminders, seven of whom were hub participants. In Term 4, 44 hubs used the funding to pay for childminding, which will be available to support hub programs until 2020.

In one of many examples, one hub that introduced childminding part way through an existing English program experienced a 35% increase in attendance – from 115 to 155 attendees.

"I like the hub because it is a safe place to meet with mothers and learn different cultures ... I love looking after children and helping those mothers that need extra support to complete their courses. I am grateful I got my first casual job with the community hub. Thank you."

Florence Mukesha, casual childminder at Staines Memorial College Community Hub (Florence is studying for a Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care)

Term 3 snapshot – Western Sydney

The impact of offering complimentary childminding across the hubs is evident in a snapshot of Term 3 participation in skills training and English classes at the Western Sydney hubs.

Enrolments in TAFE courses rose, with 273 participants completing the First Aid course delivered at Colyton, Rydalmere and Toongabbie East hubs. A total of 188 participants attended Education Support, Floristry, Barista, Retail, Digital Literacy, and Community Services courses across the hubs. There was also increased attendance at beginners and intermediate English classes.

Chester Hill Public School Hub's TAFE Floristry course attracted new families from a range of ages, locations and cultural backgrounds.

Fairfield West Public School Hub partnered with the Information and Cultural Exchange Centre Hub to deliver an innovative program that used sewing as a tool for women to learn English, while also building their skills for potential self-employment in tailoring and alterations.

Mamona finds her path

Mamona, who attends the Broadmeadows Valley Primary School Hub, arrived in Australia from Pakistan in 2014.

Mamona has a Masters in Urdu Literature, however for the first year in Australia she could only speak one sentence in English, so she stayed at home and lost confidence.

Mamona went on to complete a Certificate III in Children's Services. In 2017, she moved to Melbourne with her husband and three children. She started attending the playgroup at her local hub and signed up for English classes and several other programs.

When federal childminding grant funding became available, Kirsten, the hub leader, was able to offer Mamona casual work as a childminder for the English and sewing classes. She now has her first job in Australia, working six hours a week childminding while her children are at school.

Top: Women studying a TAFE Floristry course at Chester Hill Public School Hub display the results of their newly acquired skills. Bottom: First Aid course participants from Rydalmere Public School and Toongabbie East Public School hubs in Parramatta.

What we achieve for children

OUTCOME: Migrant children enjoy and succeed in school and achieve optimal health, development and wellbeing.

Hubs continued to increase school readiness through playgroups and programs such as Step into Kinder.

Playgroups were the No. 1 reason people came to the hubs.

Hubs filled a major service gap: 2/3 of hub parents with a child under the age of five have not taken their child to any other early years services outside the hub.

1,746 referrals were made to external services such as preschool/ kindergarten and maternal child health services.

Early years award for Dandy Pals

Dandenong Primary School Hub's Step into Kinder Program for three-year-olds won a 2018 Victorian Early Years Award for Supporting Parents to Build their Capacity and Confidence.

The program was developed as an extension of the hub's Dandy Pals Playgroup, to help families access high quality early learning services and improve children's transition into kindergarten and school.

Many local children had been starting four-year-old kindergarten without being ready to fully participate in a structured program. The Step into Kinder Program has helped children develop their social, emotional, numeracy and language skills, and identified children needing early intervention.

As a result, families and children are more confident and better prepared for kindergarten and school.

The hub's partners in this initiative were the RE Ross Trust, The Smith Family, The Water Well Project and the City of Greater Dandenong.

"I have worked with and observed five children during the pre-prep program that has run in my classroom this term.

It is evident that these children have attended a kindy program in the following ways:

- they are confident in the formal school setting
- they are able to participate and focus in a group mat session
- they follow instructions
- they show some understanding and communication skills in English
- they are familiar with prep skills such as cutting, drawing, writing names, fine motor work
- they show respect to teachers and peers

These positive behaviours will contribute to a smooth transition into the school setting."

Michelle Eliadis, EALD prep teacher, Woodridge State School, describing the impact of the hub on children's school readiness

Right: A playful spectacle at the Ipswich hubs launch event in April.

What we achieve for families

OUTCOME: Migrant families function well, have the capacity, confidence and skills to nurture child learning, and are connected, active participants in the community and workforce.

183 jobs were secured as a result of being connected with a hub.

Hubs facilitated 9,021 volunteering opportunities.

Spending time with other people was one of the main reasons families visited a hub.

In the first six months of offering federally funded childminding, hubs improved parents' English and job skills, thereby increasing their confidence in looking for a job by 22%.

Improving parenting skills

Campbellfield Heights Community Hub partnered with Arabic Welfare to deliver a Parenting Skills Project across two school terms in 2018.

The content of each workshop was developed specifically for local mothers, who had indicated they were finding it difficult parenting and bringing up their children in the Australian culture.

The hub leader observed that many parents were overwhelmed by the tasks associated with bringing up happy, healthy and engaged children. Increasingly, parents were struggling to engage with their children in a positive way.

Arabic Welfare was approached to partner with the hub and two parent focus groups were held to discuss their most pressing needs. Topics covered in the program included self-care, emotions, recreation and physical health, developmental milestones, parenting models and strength-based parenting.

The six-week program ran once a week for two hours and childcare was provided. Being able to employ qualified childcare workers meant that the children received a consistent learning experience while their mothers were gaining parenting skills.

"Being part of the project gave women a sense that they were not alone in their struggles. They created friendships and support networks.

The program was able to break down barriers and enhanced collaboration between Arabic Welfare and parents who had not accessed specialised services in the past."

Rebekah Volpe, Hub Leader, Campbellfield Heights Community Hub

The Health Impact Project

Our support agency in Queensland, Access Community Services, secured funding from Queensland Health to bring integrated health services into the five community hubs in Logan.

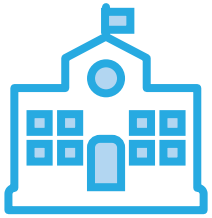
The Health Impact Project was developed in direct response to unmet health needs identified among young families. It aimed to achieve optimum health outcomes for families by focusing on four main areas of health and wellbeing:

- speech and occupational therapy (assessments)
- maternal health (child health nurses, pediatric first aid)
- physical health, fitness, nutrition and hygiene (swimming and circus classes, healthy lunchbox activities), and
- health promotion activities (mental health, women's health).

The assessments and early interventions were designed to be complementary, non-intrusive and culturally sensitive.

Opposite and right: Hubs actively create opportunities for parents to join in playful learning experiences with their young children.

What we achieve for schools



OUTCOME: Schools respond to the needs and aspirations of migrant children and families.

58 government schools 12 Catholic schools, and 2 independent schools are better equipped to respond to community and cultural needs.

Migrant and refugee children are arriving at kindergarten and school ready to socialise and learn.

Parents are more actively engaged in school activities as volunteers, leaders and participants.

"Thanks to the support of the hub at St Pauls Primary, the school now has 25 children enrolled for prep in 2019. Before the hub started, they would be lucky to have four children enrolled at this time of year.

Eighteen of these children have been attending the prep transition program run by the hub leader. The school celebrates the difference the hub makes."

Access Community Services Ltd, our support agency in Queensland

"I cannot imagine this school without a community centre (hub).

It is the first school I have worked in that has one, and I can honestly say that if I were to leave Paralowie and take up the Principal role in another site, developing a school-based community centre would be at the top of a new initiatives list.

The benefits ... are hard to measure with quantative data but you only have to spend a few minutes with parents involved in one of the programs, or experience the joy of the children when they are engaged in activities with parents present, to know data doesn't measure everything.

Increasing parent participation in our school supports the strengthening of student dispositions to learning because they experience parents showing an interest in their life at school. It encourages education-based conversations at home, and this in turn can lead to a more diverse range of opinions and conversations in classroom discussion – an essential component of developing a well-rounded view of the world and the challenges of the future."

Peter McKay, Principal, Paralowie R-12 School, Salisbury, South Australia

Transforming a school into a village

"At Coffee and Chat [in our hub] recently, we were asked to say something we are grateful for. Some mentioned the warmer weather, their spouse etc. It made me think. Despite everything I have been through in recent years ... I am grateful.

I am grateful that I live in a country where I have a voice that can be heard. But most importantly I am grateful for the village (ever expanding) that I have now, and may it continue to grow.

Through this village I know that if I am sick, I have people drop off soup, come wash my dishes when my arm was in a sling, make sandwiches for lunch when my kids ended up finishing the loaf at brekky before school.

This year I became a qualified facilitator of 'Tuning into Kids', and I am currently studying Certificate III in Education Support through the hub."

Eliza, Hub mum, Meadows Primary School Hub

Above: Students from Holy Eucharist Primary School in Brimbank prepare vegetable garden beds as part of their hub's activities. School students often introduce their parents and younger siblings to the hubs.

What we achieve for communities

OUTCOME: Community services respond early and effectively to migrant child and family needs.

Hubs served as safe and welcoming gateways, connecting services with hard-to-reach migrant families.

12,748 referrals were made to additional services and support (e.g. family support, maternal child health services, preschool and community health services).

Hubs partnered with 523 external organisations and services.

Eating well in Brimbank

A major project delivered through the five Brimbank hubs introduced hundreds of families to the benefits of healthy eating and taught them how to grow and prepare nutritional food.

The 3-year Food Security Project (FSP) was funded by the Besen Family Foundation and ran from 2015–18. It aimed to:

- engage and connect parents (particularly migrant women) to the school and each other
- increase awareness around nutrition and the importance of healthy eating in relation to children's development and behaviour, and
- embed a culture of healthy eating at school and at home.

The key activities were cooking, gardening and health/nutrition sessions. Cooking workshops were very popular with families, with 171 workshops delivered over three years. They fostered social connections, friendships and cross-cultural understanding, and were also an effective way of reaching new families and connecting them into the hubs.

The overall project also delivered 81 gardening sessions and 38 health/nutrition sessions.

The Brimbank hubs intend to offer more cooking, gardening and healthy eating sessions in future.

Top: Roxburgh Rise Primary School Hub women in the hub's kitchen with the results of their Iftar feast preparations during Ramadan. Bottom: Women from a Wollongong hub with food designed for sharing.

Right: Hub Leader Veronica O'Brien (back row, second from right), with hub families at the Westfield Local Heroes award ceremony.

Alek receives Australia Day medallion

Alek Arok, our Hub Leader at Staines Memorial College Community Hub, was awarded a City of Ipswich 2018 Australia Day Medallion in recognition of her work as hub leader and a community volunteer.

Recipients are selected by the Mayor and councillors in recognition of the valuable contribution they have made, over time, to the prosperity of the local community.

Through the hub, Alek delivers a Kinder Support Program, support with resume writing and interview skills, social Coffee and Chat sessions, sewing classes, playgroup, craft activities and English classes.

Marina named Woman of the Year

Our Banksia Road Public School Hub Leader Marina Boutros was named the City of Canterbury Bankstown's 2018 Woman of the Year.

The inaugural award was announced at the City Council's International Women's Day celebration in March. Award candidates were nominated by members of the local community and needed to 'contribute to improving the lives of people in Canterbury-Bankstown and demonstrate achievements or outcomes above and beyond their occupational roles'.

Veronica is a Local Hero

Victorian hub leader Veronica O'Brien was one of three women to win an inaugural Westfield Local Heroes award.

The Airport West community was asked to nominate individuals who they believe promote social wellbeing and harmony in their communities.

Veronica runs the Roxburgh Rise Primary School Hub, which offers programs including an inclusive playgroup and the weekly Sawt Al Nissa (Women's Voice) group.

Veronica says the real heroes are the women and children she works with, who have the courage to turn up and connect with others, to keep on learning, and to share such a generosity of spirit.

"It's just such a wonderful way I can continue to offer support, welcome and a safe space to those who have come to Australia, having survived terrible experiences and are now rebuilding a new life for their families."

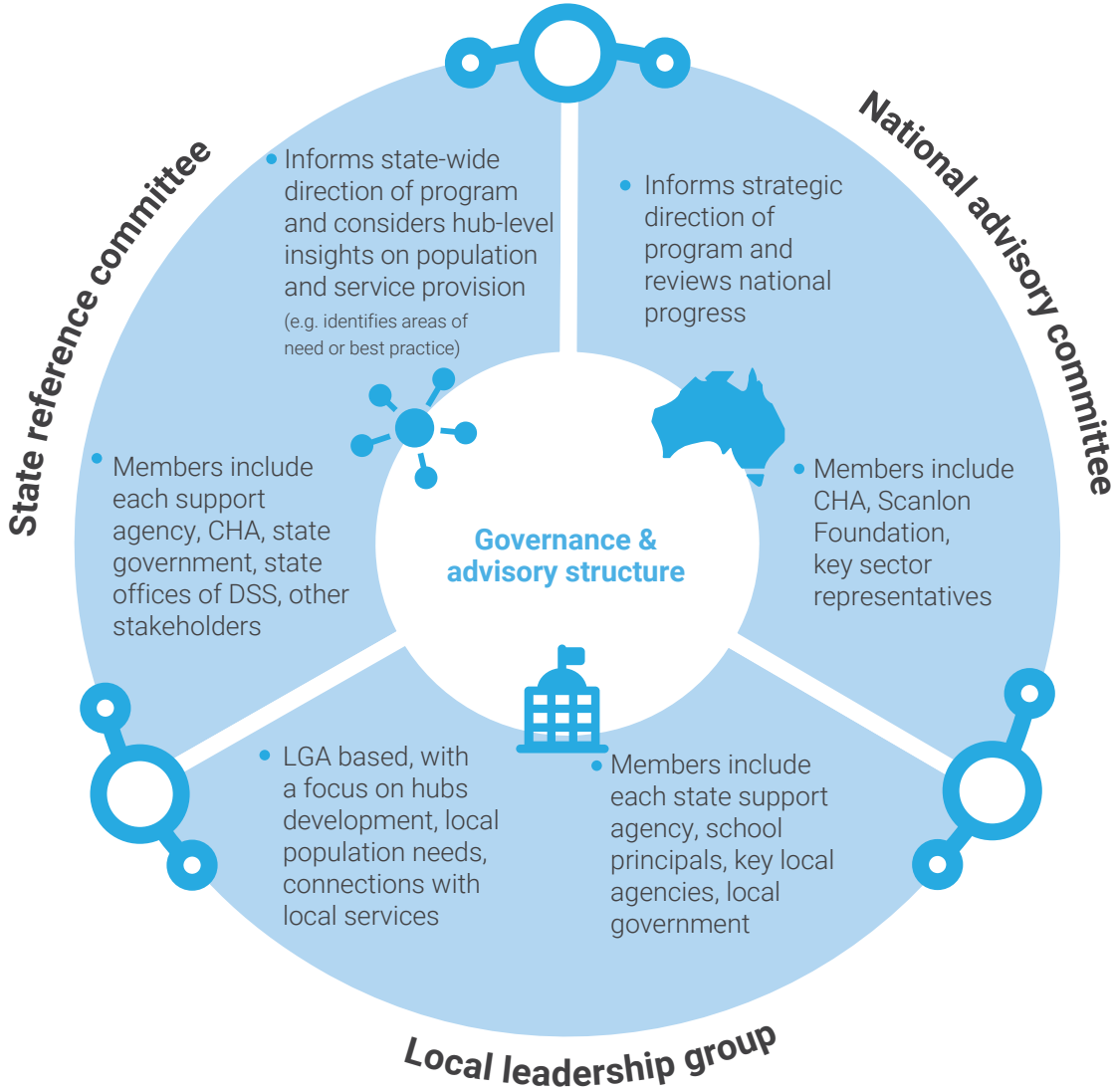
The award comes with a $10,000 grant, which the hub will use to buy toys and equipment for the playgroup program and to support other hub programs.

Above: Alek Arok, Staines Memorial College Hub Leader.
Right: Marina Boutros receives her award from Canterbury Bankstown Mayor, Cr Khal Asfour.

Program governance

The national hubs program is guided by three-tiers of advisory groups.

The three tiers comprise a local leadership group in each hub community, a state reference committee of project partners and stakeholders at the state level, and a national advisory committee of senior representatives from CHA, the Scanlon Foundation and key stakeholders.



Program funding

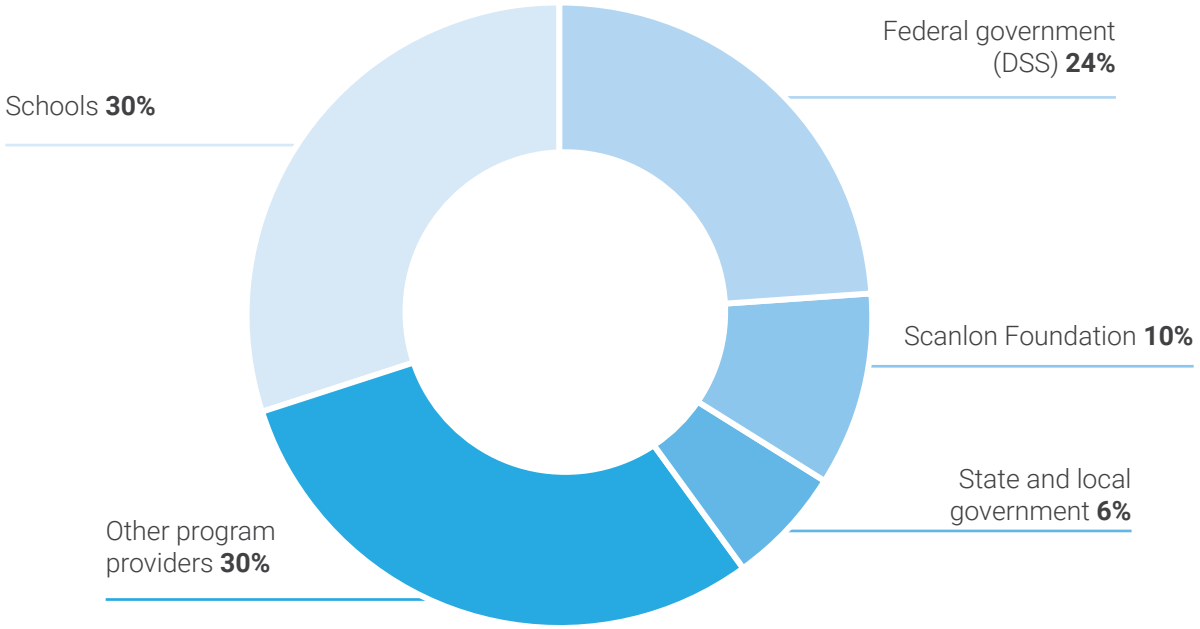
The national program is funded, supported and delivered by one of Australia's most effective partnerships between philanthropy, all tiers of government and the community and corporate sectors.

CHA estimates that the full program costs over $12 million in direct and indirect costs to run across one year. For every dollar provided by the federal government (through DSS), the program draws in another three dollars from other sources, either as direct funding or in kind.

Government, host schools and philanthropy provide direct funding for hub operations, staffing and program administration; host schools and community centres provide support with facilities and overheads; partnerships with service providers, corporate and non-profit supporters attract funding and in-kind support for hub programs; and host schools and partner support agencies contribute in-kind management support.

This ability to quadruple our core operational funding by attracting additional support is one of the program's critical success factors and delivers excellent value for the Australian Government's original investment.

The program's current funding model aims to secure the future of established hubs and build a solid base from which to sustain and grow the network.



Our supporters and delivery partners

We wish to acknowledge the ongoing support and contributions of:

Our funding and program partners

Australian Government Department of Social Services

Scanlon Foundation

Victorian Government Department of Premier and Cabinet

NSW Government, through Multicultural NSW

Queensland Government Department of Education

Hume City Council

Australian Government Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Office for Women

Besen Family Foundation

Uniting VIC TAS

KS Environmental Group

Government House Victoria, and the Governor and Mr Howard

MPavilion

UniSuper

Our support agencies

NEW SOUTH WALES

Illawarra Multicultural Services – Wollongong hubs

Settlement Services International Ltd – Western Sydney hubs

QUEENSLAND

Access Community Services – Logan and Ipswich hubs

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Lutheran Community Care – Port Adelaide Enfield and Salisbury hubs

VICTORIA

E-focus – Himilo Community Connect Project, Banyule hub

Hume City Council – Hume hubs

The Smith Family – Brimbank, Greater Dandenong, Greater Geelong and Greater Shepparton hubs

Our host schools and centres during 2018

NEW SOUTH WALES

Blacktown
All Saints of Africa Centre^
Bert Oldfield Public School
Colyton Public School

Canterbury Bankstown
Banksia Road Public School
Bankstown Public School
Bass Hill Public School
Chester Hill Public School
Georges Hall Public School^
Sacred Heart Catholic School
St Brendan's Catholic Primary School^
Villawood East Public School
Yagoona Public School

Cumberland
Granville Public School

Fairfield
Bossley Park Public School
Fairfield West Public School
Prairievale Public School
Smithfield Public School

Parramatta
Information and Cultural Exchange Centre
Maronite College of the Holy Family
Rydalmere Public School
Toongabbie East Public School
Westmead Public School

Wollongong
Warrawong Public School
Wollongong Public School
Wollongong West Public School

QUEENSLAND

Ipswich
Fernbrooke State School
Redbank Plains State School
Riverview State School
Staines Memorial College
Woodlinks State School

Logan
Marsden State School
St Francis College
St Paul's Catholic Primary School
Woodridge North State School
Woodridge State School

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Port Adelaide Enfield
Blair Athol North B-7 School
St Brigid's School

Salisbury
Karrendi Primary School
Para Vista Primary School
Paralowie R-12 School
St Augustine's Parish School
Salisbury Primary School

VICTORIA

Banyule
St Pius X Primary School (Himilo Community Connect Project)

Brimbank
Deer Park North Primary School
Holy Eucharist Primary School
St Albans Primary School
St Albans Heights Primary School
Stevensville Primary School

Greater Dandenong
Dandenong Primary School
Dandenong South Primary School
Dandenong West Primary School
Springvale Rise Primary School
St Anthony's Primary School

Greater Geelong
Bell Park North Primary School
Northern Bay College – Hendy Hub
Northern Bay College – Wexford Hub

Greater Shepparton
Gowrie Street Primary School
St Georges Road Primary School
Wilmot Road Primary School

Hume
Bethal Primary School
Broadmeadows Valley Primary School
Campbellfield Heights Primary School
Coolaroo South Primary School
Craigieburn South Primary School
Dallas Brooks Community Primary School
Good Samaritan Primary School
Holy Child Primary School
Meadow Heights Primary School
Meadows Primary School
Mount Ridley College
Roxburgh Park Primary School
Roxburgh Rise Primary School
St Dominic's Primary School
Sunbury Heights Primary School

^ Farewell to All Saints of Africa Community Hub and Georges Hall Community Hub, which left the network in mid-2018, and St Brendan's Community Hub, which left at the end of the year.

We are welcoming Liverpool City Council in Western Sydney as a support agency in 2019, along with three community hubs that will open in Liverpool LGA during the year.

Community Hubs Australia

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