



CONNECTING • SUPPORTING • FLOURISHING

# Annual Report 2022

**PLAY9ROUP**  
TASMANIA

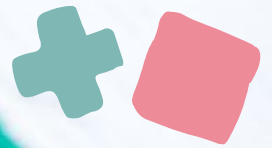
# Our vision

Families with young children and babies are supported to flourish physically, emotionally and socially through their connections to Tasmania's playgroup community.

# Our purpose

1. We recognise parents and caregivers as their children's first teachers, and emphasise the importance of play and attachment in early childhood development.
2. We work collaboratively with organisations, volunteers and families to build resilient, inclusive and supportive playgroup communities that connect families and young children.





“Playgroup was a wonderful resource for connecting with other parents and children when my children were very young. Now that they are older I am happy to help make that service available to other families.”



"I love watching my child make new friends that they get excited to see every week."



# Connecting

**915** families including  
**1,372** children  
involved with playgroups

**36** community playgroups  
delivered  
**1,440** sessions

**35** organisational playgroups  
delivered  
**1,400** sessions

In 2022, **Tasmanian families**  
spent more than **42,000**  
**hours** at playgroups

"Playgroup is an understanding place for our kids and us as parents."

smalltalk

**30** families took part in  
**40** sessions gaining confidence and enhancing home-learning skills



"My son is now a social butterfly and loves the company of others. I attribute that to attending playgroup each week from a young age until my return to work at 12 months."



# Supporting

**78** volunteers provided  
**49,950** hours of support  
to Tasmanian families and playgroups



“Playgroup provides an opportunity for parents to interact and create social connections, which can be incredibly challenging at this stage of life if you don’t have established family/friendship networks around you.”

## Playgroup Tasmania staff

provided face-to-face, phone, email and messaging support in response to more than

**1,300**  
queries

from volunteers and families

## Top 5 ways

playgroups were supported

1. Venue support and leases
2. Tools for running a playgroup
3. Promotional materials
4. Ideas for play
5. Grant applications

# Flourishing

**87%** of playgroup leaders feel ‘**very**’ or ‘**extremely**’ valued for their efforts

**92%** of parents ‘**agreed**’ or ‘**strongly agreed**’ that playgroup improved their child’s social skills

**82%** of parents ‘**agreed**’ or ‘**strongly agreed**’ that playgroup increased their ideas for play activities at home

**92%** of parents ‘**agreed**’ or ‘**strongly agreed**’ that playgroup supported their child’s development

**87%** of playgroup parents were ‘**very**’ or ‘**extremely**’ satisfied with their playgroup experience

“When the ladies asked me to join in for my input and knowledge with children, I felt very humbled that they had noticed my interests and valued me to help.”

“Activities carried out by Playgroup Tas have raised awareness and increased the father inclusive capacity of local services.”



“Creating new friendships with other parents gives me a reason to get out of the house with a small child.”

# Supporting

We support Tasmanian families by providing trusted information, championing the voices of children and promoting the needs of families to decision-makers.

## Highlights

- ▼ Playgroup Tasmania introduced specialised CircusPlay sessions in the north west and south. These Play and Learning Supported (PALS) playgroup program sessions aim to create connections between people with disability and the communities they live in by bringing together mixed ability groups.
- ▼ In our role as a Leader with the B4 Early Years Coalition, Playgroup joins influential individuals and organisations from diverse backgrounds to raise awareness of the importance of the early years, especially the First 1000 Days.
- ▼ The PlayTogether program continues to train playgroup leaders in all regions to support the empowering of abilities, foster acceptance and raise awareness in ways that promote inclusivity and connection.
- ▼ And our PlayConnect program remains an important resource for families with children aged 0 to 6 years who have unique needs associated with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or who display autism-like characteristics.

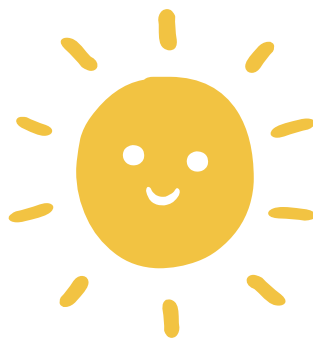
# Connecting

Playgroup Tasmania connects parents with each other and relevant services, developing supportive networks for families and children that directly benefit wellbeing.

## Highlights

- ✦ The thoughts and concerns of playgroup families informed Tasmania’s inaugural Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy *It takes a Tasmanian Village*. Playgroups will play a significant role in realising the Strategy’s Action Plan.
- ✦ Nearly 80 volunteers run Tasmania’s 36 community playgroups, sharing their time and experience to create safe, supportive spaces for families around the state.
- ✦ Playgroup development officers across the state connect playgroup leaders and families with evidence-based, fun activities, trusted resources and promotional and administrative support.
- ✦ PlayBaby groups continue to provide safe and welcoming spaces both in person and online in the lead up to birth and during the first year of parenting.
- ✦ Our collaborative approach connects playgroups and families to specialised services and support in their communities, improving wellbeing.

“I love having the acceptance and support of other parents with no judgement: I know that I’m not alone when things are tough.”



"Having somewhere to go and people to meet, even just once a week, is something we both look forward to."

"It's helpful seeing that kids do things at all different stages and each baby is different, so you don't compare."

# Flourishing

Tasmanian families flourish when they're supported by responsive programs and high quality, inclusive playgroups.

## Highlights

- ★ Playgroup Tasmania is committed to being a Child Safe Organisation and ensuring all playgroups are safe spaces for parents and children alike. A child-centred, child-friendly framework has been developed to map our continuing work in this area.
- ★ Our active membership in the Communities for Children network brings the voices of playgroup families to the ongoing design of these programs and services, ensuring continual improvement and relevance.
- ★ In 2021, Children's Week celebrations continued to grow with support from the state government. A free activity guide featuring more than 50 free, family-friendly activities was produced in collaboration with Housing Choices Tasmania, the Commissioner for Children and Young People and the Tasmanian Government.
- ★ The vital role of playgroups in our communities is acknowledged in the state government's Child Youth and Wellbeing Framework. This policy area aligns with Playgroup Tasmania's strategic plan, activities and outcomes and will benefit Tasmanian families across our state.
- ★ Playgroup Tasmania is active in the national playgroup network, collaborating and growing with our fellow state and territory organisations to embed the vital contribution playgroups make to Australian life in the minds of decision-makers.

"My mum often says that 'Playgroup was a lifeline' and I know that playgroup has been the same for so many other families ..."



"I love leading our playgroup because I get to meet new families, build friendships with them, and help others do the same."



Playgroup Tasmania is the peak body representing volunteer-led and organisational playgroups across Tasmania.

For nearly 50 years, playgroups have provided children and their families with connection, support and play experiences. Playgroups contribute to a community's resilience by empowering families, leveraging the existing strengths within communities, and building social capital through volunteer engagement and capacity building.

Playgroup Tasmania would not exist without its dedicated volunteers, including our Board Members. This year the Playgroup Tasmania Board established a clear Child Safe Framework and developed a new Strategic Plan 2022-25 in addition to undertaking its strategic management and governance responsibilities.

Playgroup Tasmania acknowledges that we live, work and play on Aboriginal land, land of the palawa/pakana people of lutruwita (Tasmania). We pay our respects to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, to elders past and present and to all those who continue caring for country, sharing stories and upholding rights.

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TASMANIA



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