



# Impact Update

## BE CENTRE



Prepared by Be Centre in October 2024  
For the period 1 April to 30 September 2024



WHAT THEY STRUGGLE TO SAY  
WE HELP THROUGH PLAY

# PROJECTS WE'RE WORKING ON

## PLAY THERAPY IN SCHOOLS

The Teacher's Optimal Relationship Approach (TORA), is an innovative framework designed to build strong, supportive relationships between teachers and students. TORA recognises that emotional connection is foundational to both learning and healing, particularly for children who have experienced trauma. It empowers teachers to integrate the principles of Play Therapy into their daily practices, fostering a therapeutic environment within the classroom.

At its core, TORA is comprised of three key components: **group play therapy**, **individual play therapy**, and **teacher training & observation**. Group and individual play therapy in the school allow children to express emotions and work through trauma and other life-challenges in a safe, non-directive environment. By providing children with these outlets, TORA helps them build resilience, self-confidence and emotional regulation skills.

Teachers receive specialised training in therapeutic principles, enabling them to embed Play Therapy techniques into their interactions with students. This gives teachers the tools to address emotional challenges in real time, creating a nurturing, emotionally safe learning space. When a child feels safe and nurtured within the teacher-child relationship they are ready and primed for learning, which research shows improves learning outcomes for children.

The approach not only benefits individual students but enhances the overall school environment, promoting positive relationships and emotional wellbeing across the entire school community.

Be Centre is proud to be the first to implement TORA in NSW at St. Martin's School in Davidson. Our Play Therapist, Joanna, who is trained in Play Therapy, Filial Therapy and TORA, is now resident at St Martin's school, supporting children and teachers 2 days per week.

With the generous support of Perpetual, we are helping teachers become active participants in their students' healing journey, creating a school-wide culture of empathy and support. Early results indicate that TORA positively impacts students' emotional health, teacher-student relationships, and the overall atmosphere of the school. By addressing the emotional needs of children at school, TORA is helping us foster healing at the very heart of education.



# MARKET SNAPSHOT

## Financial Landscape and Funding Challenges

Like many organisations, we are navigating a challenging environment where demand for services has significantly increased, while funding opportunities are becoming more competitive and constrained.

Recent data from Social Ventures Australia (SVA) shows that many charities are experiencing a decline in revenue, with some reporting reductions of up to 20%. This has left 88% of these organisations operating at a loss, severely affecting their ability to deliver critical services.

In addition, Philanthropy Australia has reported a surge in grant applications across the sector. This increased competition for a shrinking pool of funds is particularly challenging for organisations like ours, which are focused on early intervention mental health services for children. The shift in funding priorities towards crisis and emergency services, often at the expense of preventative care, further exacerbates the strain on our ability to meet the rising demand for Play Therapy.

At Be Centre, we are seeing firsthand the growing need for longer-term therapy for children who have experienced complex trauma. This not only impacts our ability to serve new referrals but also increases our reliance on scholarships, requiring multiple funding cycles per child. To maintain our capacity to heal children and reach those on our waitlist, we urgently need to secure additional funding.

## Therapy Duration, Waitlist and Funding Needs

We continue to see a rise in referrals from GPs, schools, and health professionals. However, children are now requiring longer periods of therapy due to more complex trauma, often needing multiple scholarships. This extended care is impacting our ability to serve children on our waitlist, and as a result, fewer children are receiving scholarships.

To keep up with the growing need and ensure that more children receive the help they need, we must seek additional funding. Your ongoing support remains vital to ensuring that we can continue to offer healing to every child who needs us.





# OUR **IMPACT** OVER THE PAST 6 MONTHS



**Meet Joanna.**

Joanna is trained in play and filial therapy. She recently completed her Teachers Optimal Relationship Approach training and is now implementing TORA at St. Martin's school in Davidson. This is the **first school in NSW** to adopt the approach.

Together, through early intervention, we are stopping cycles of harm and helping children heal from difficulties and major trauma so that they can thrive.

**1051**

Play, Art and Drama therapy sessions

**133**

Children receiving therapy

**373**

Parent support, connection, review sessions

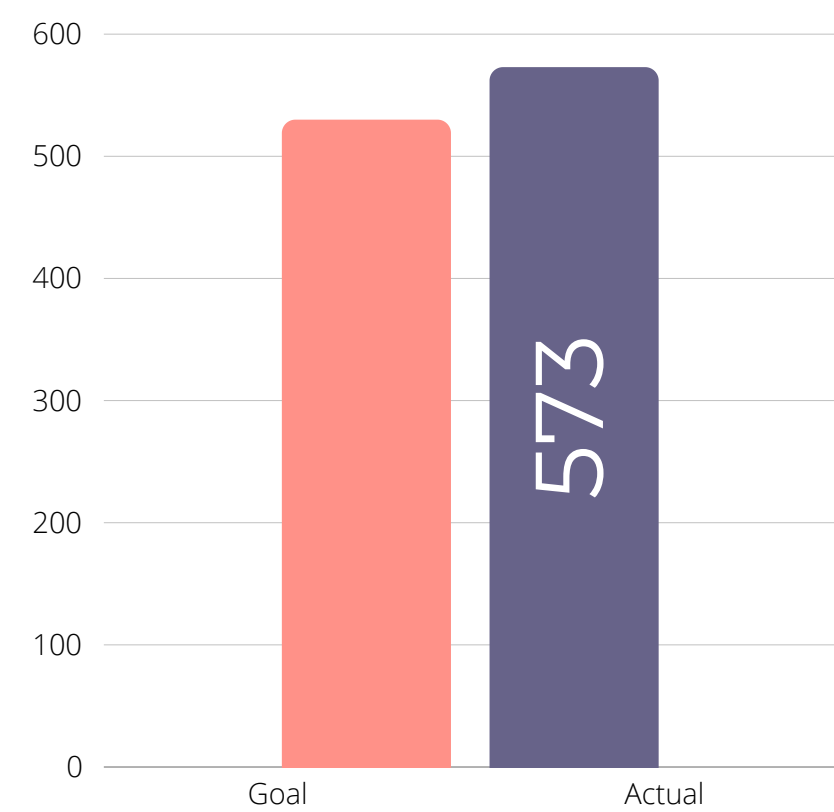
**52**

Group therapy sessions

Six month period from 1 April - 30 September 2024

# Supporting Children Get The Help They Need - **At No Cost To Their Families**

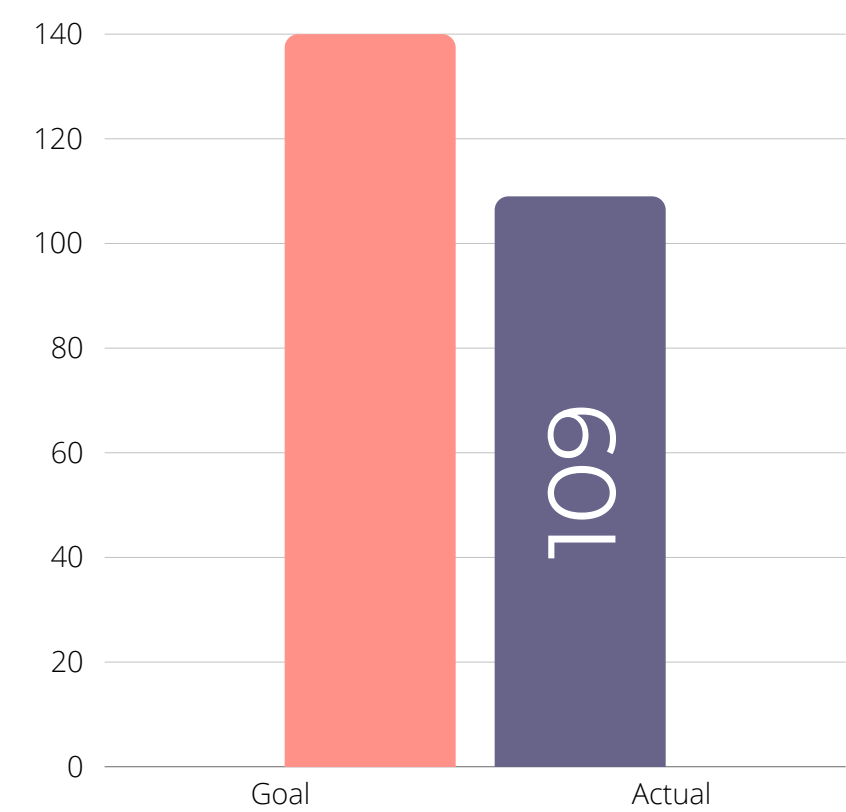
Donors provide funding to support children and families who otherwise would not be able to afford early intervention play therapy services. Below is a snapshot of all scholarship recipient data from 1 April 2024 - 30 September 2024



**573 play therapy sessions** delivered over the last 6 mths without cost to the family.



**32 children** over the last 6 mths attending play therapy at no cost to them.\*

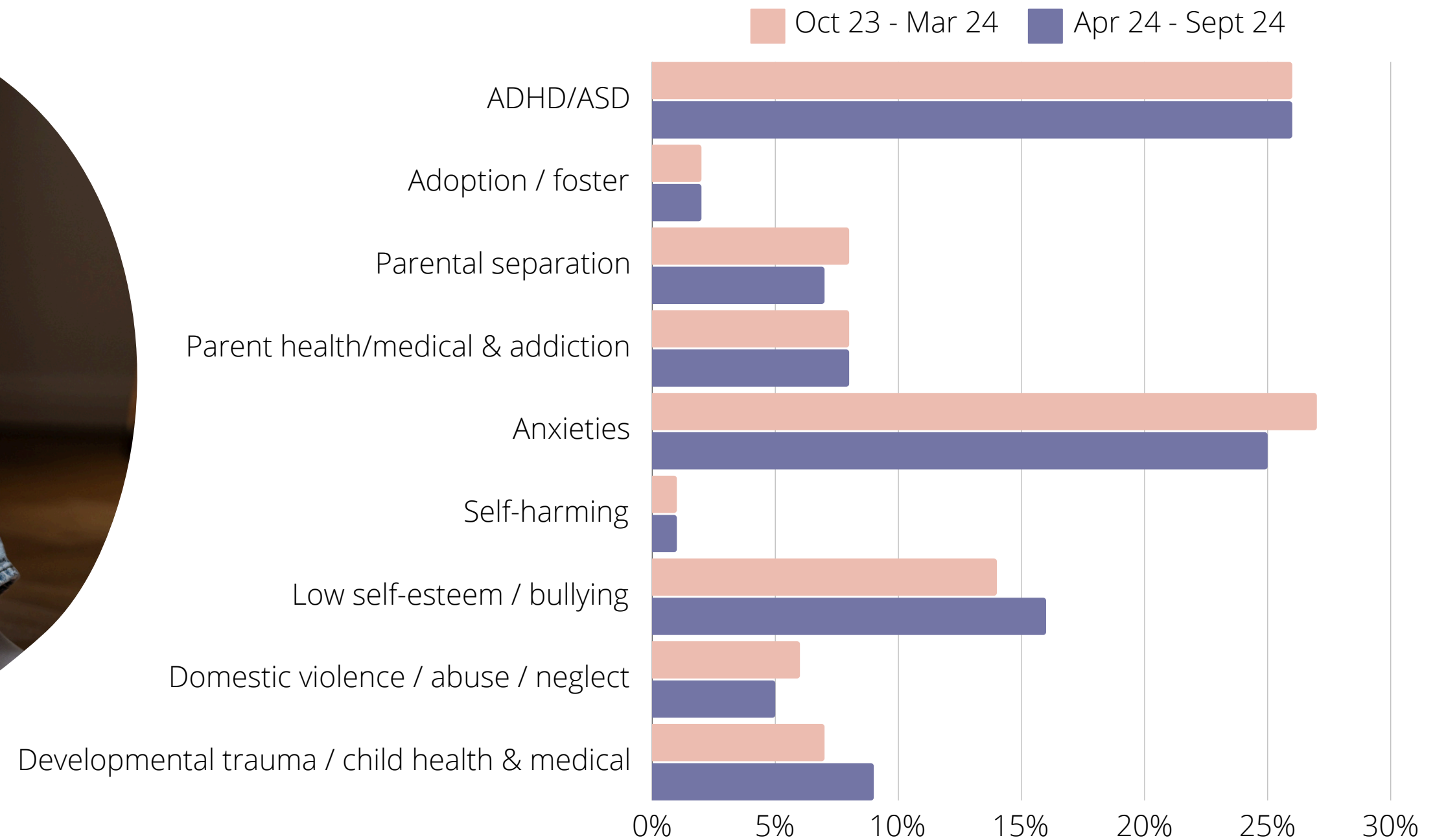


**109 parent support sessions** over the last 6 mths were delivered to all\* families attending play therapy at no cost to them. Every parent or carer who has a child in therapy is offered 6 free counselling sessions.\*\*

\*Due to the complex trauma experienced by Be Centre clients, we are seeing much longer therapeutic engagements, on average, than our baseline of 12 sessions. This means many of our children receive 2-3 scholarships to complete treatment.

\*\* The majority of scholarship funding is tied to ‘children’s counselling’, this leaves a funding gap for parent counselling. At Be Centre we believe the whole family system should be supported to get the best outcomes.

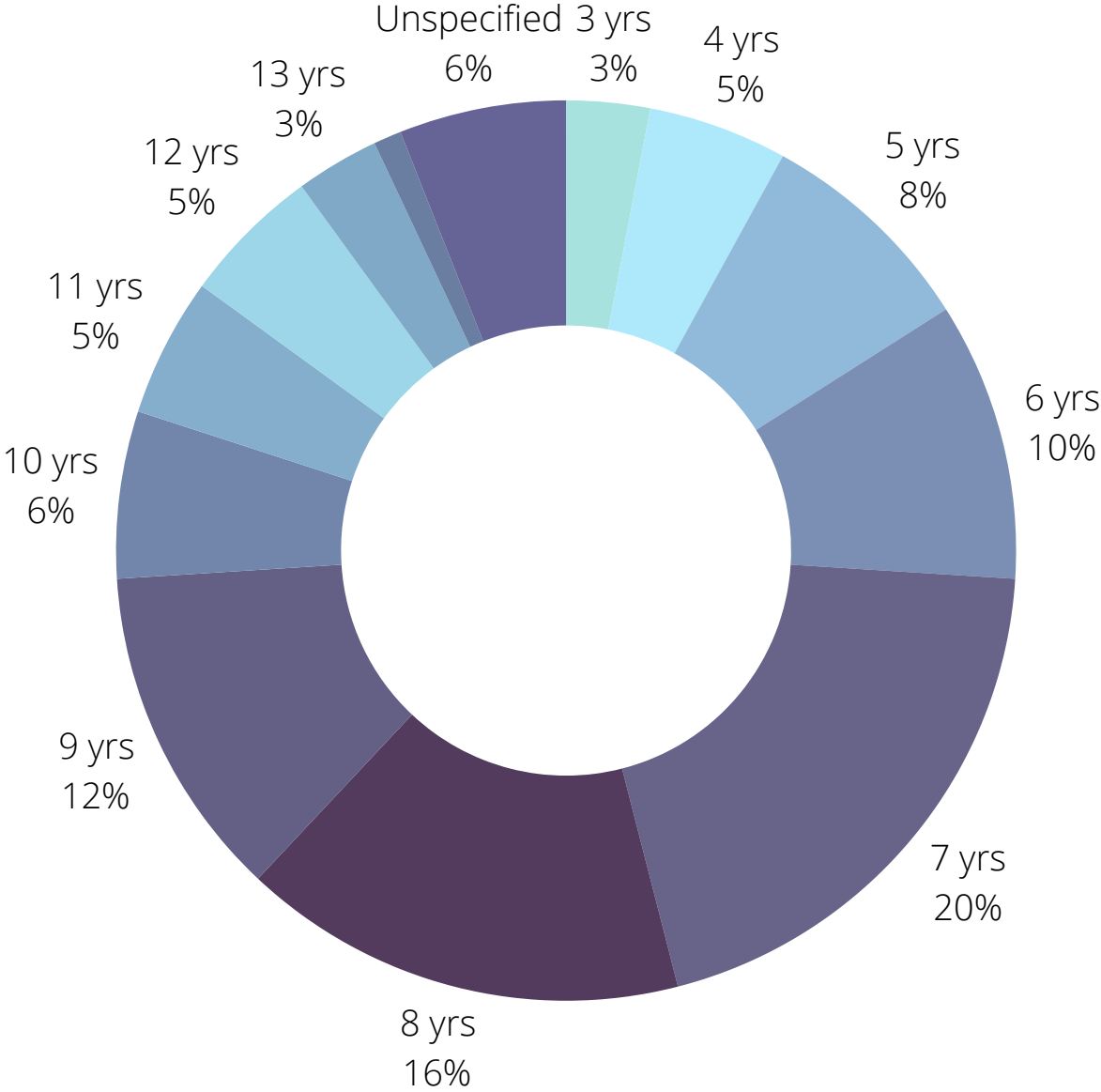
# WHY DO CHILDREN COME TO BE CENTRE?



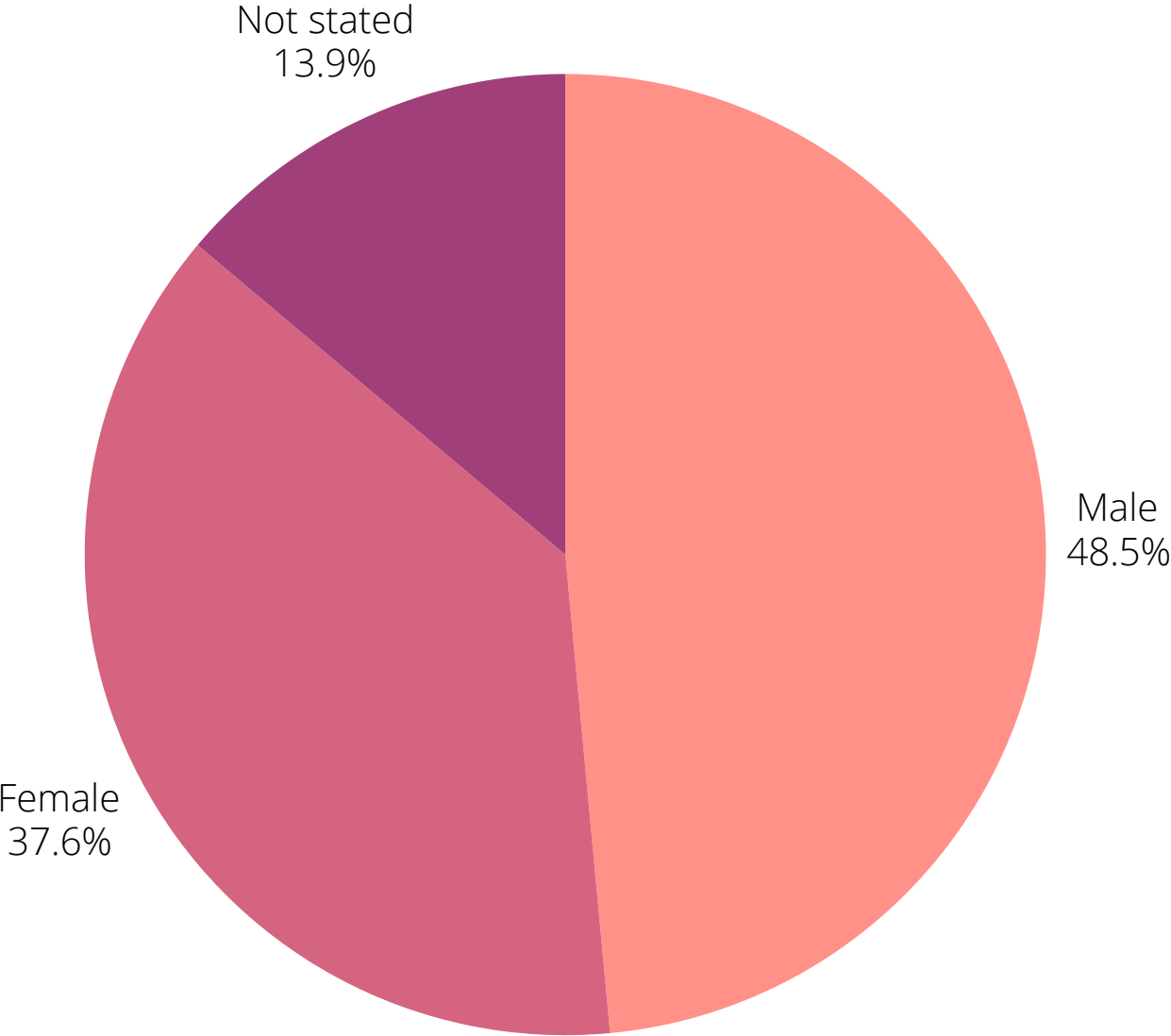
Anxieties include fears, phobias, generalised anxiety, separation anxiety, social anxiety, sleeping difficulties, toileting issues, selective mutism, and death in the family/friendships.

# WHO ARE WE WORKING WITH?

How old are they?



How do they identify?



Note: 'Unspecified' and 'Not stated' relates to children in group programs. We do not capture ages and genders.



# PLAY THERAPY AND THE LONGER TERM MENTAL WELLBEING OF OUR CHILDREN

**93%** of parents/carers

Agreed that play or creative therapy has helped their child and contributed to an overall better and more positive state of wellbeing.

**93%** of parents/carers

Agreed that play/creative therapy has helped their child to better express their emotions.

**84%** of parents/carers

Agreed that their child was better able to foster more positive family relationships and develop secure attachments.

**“** The support as a whole family has been beyond great we are very grateful to have had this journey with Be Centre. **”**







## Impact Stories

### Lily\*. Aged 8.

#### Lily's\* Journey of Healing through Play Therapy

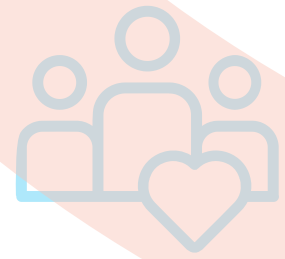
When Lily first started working with Be Centre's play therapist, she was deeply affected by trauma. She had witnessed and experienced severe family violence throughout her early years. Her mum, Lucy\*, fled with her and her younger sister to escape the violence, leading to multiple moves and a constant feeling of instability. At just 8 years old, Lily struggled with nightmares, hypervigilance and social withdrawal. Her confidence was shattered and her ability to regulate emotions was severely impacted.

The Play Therapy journey began with creating a safe, welcoming space where Lily could freely express her fears and confusion. She quickly engaged in therapy, using role-play to explore complex feelings of fear, confusion and distrust. Her play centered around relationships filled with danger and uncertainty, reflecting the trauma of her past. In these sessions, she bravely worked through feelings of sadness, anger and self-blame, trying to make sense of her experiences.

As therapy progressed, a beautiful transformation began to unfold. The once-timid girl started expressing assertiveness, empowering herself in her play. Characters in her stories shifted from being helpless to protectors, much like how Lily started to view herself. She became more confident in expressing emotions and finding ways to regulate her behavior. By the end of therapy, her ability to manage emotions had improved, and her Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire score dropped from 15 to 8, signifying enormous progress.

Though her therapy ended due to circumstances outside of our control, the change in Lily was profound. With a healthier sense of self and newfound emotional tools, Lily's journey toward healing continues and her family remains forever grateful for the support they received. She now rarely has nightmares!

\*Names have been changed to protect the family's privacy



## Impact Stories

### A parent's journey

Dear Sponsor,

I would like to express the importance of the Parent Support provided by Be Centre.

During my journey as a Mother I was faced with many challenges, from childhood traumas and coping mechanisms, to an abusive marriage and controlling ex-husband, to children that didn't have easy births and temperaments.

It took me many sessions with Michelle to make me understand that if I wasn't in the right headspace, I couldn't show up for my kids being the best version of myself.

I'm forever grateful for all that I achieved together with Michelle. I've done many years of therapy, but none of my previous experiences had the depth and targeted goal so in line with the results achieved as with Michelle.

Because of Be Centre and Michelle, I now am able to parent and support my kids in the way I believe is best suited for me and them.

We finally have a great relationship and can fully enjoy our moments as a family. I pick up on their bids of connection and use these moments as teaching opportunities.

When I started the parenting support sessions, I used to say I regret having children and now I think they can feel how much I love them.

I hope many other families have the same opportunity as I did. Thank you sponsors, Be Centre staff and most importantly Michelle.



# FUTURE FUNDING GOALS / OPPORTUNITIES

We’re committed to supporting those in need with critical early intervention services. If you’d like to learn more about how you can help these important initiatives, please feel free to reach out

FY24	FY25	FY26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continued support of therapy for children in our one-to-one <b>Hear Me Play</b> program. (\$2,500)</li><li>• Sponsorship of new programs for children including <b>Teleplay Therapy</b>. (\$35,000)</li><li>• Clinical team training on new trauma-informed approaches. (\$12,500)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Funding a pilot program for pre-schools to implement a train the trainer model to embed Play therapy practices in rural and remote areas. (\$50,000)</li><li>• Fund expansion of our internal capacity, offering parent and couples counselling, aiming to improve their home environment while children await therapy. (\$35,000)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Build a purpose built centre in an area of high need. (\$2.5m)</li><li>• Opportunity to fund a Be Centre scholarship at Deakin University, fostering a future pipeline of skilled therapists and staff (\$38,000)</li></ul>



# THANK YOU

Dear Donor,

Thank you kindly for your generosity in providing us support both financially and emotionally via the Be Centre play therapy program. We originally brought our son to the Be Centre, as my husband had brain cancer.

Play therapy would help my son get the support he needed. Moving forward our son truly needs and benefits from this play therapy program as he struggles with social interactions with others and needs it to function in school and with his peers.

It's a great support for social emotional regulation. Throughout our time here both his parents have experienced health & financial hardship and the continued support from Be Centre and yourself through your kindness makes it possible for our son to function better at school and in general emotionally.

Thank you again.



# About Be Centre Foundation



Be Centre is a children's mental health charity offering an innovative Play Therapy Program for children age 3-12 years who have been impacted by trauma or other serious life challenges.

Be Centre is dedicated to early intervention and stopping cycles of harm - helping children heal so they can move forward and create the best possible future for themselves, their families and the community.

[www.becentre.org.au](http://www.becentre.org.au)

ABN: 58 128 050 037

CFN: 21168

Be Centre is a Registered Charity. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

