



Annual Report 2024



www.swanautism.org.au



About SWAN

Our Vision

A community where every autistic person is able to live the life they choose.

Our Mission

To enhance the lives of autistic people and their families in their own communities by:

- Providing holistic support to individuals and their families through peer support, information, linkages, and advocacy
- Working together with autistic people and their families to build their capacity to make choices and have control in their own lives
- Working together with organisations and networks with similar values to share strategies and resources to bring about positive change and improve regional services
- Building the understanding, awareness, and capacity of the community, to enable participation, inclusion, and contribution of all people with disabilities.

Our Philosophy and Values

SWAN operates from a philosophy that all people have the right to live in inclusive and supportive communities.

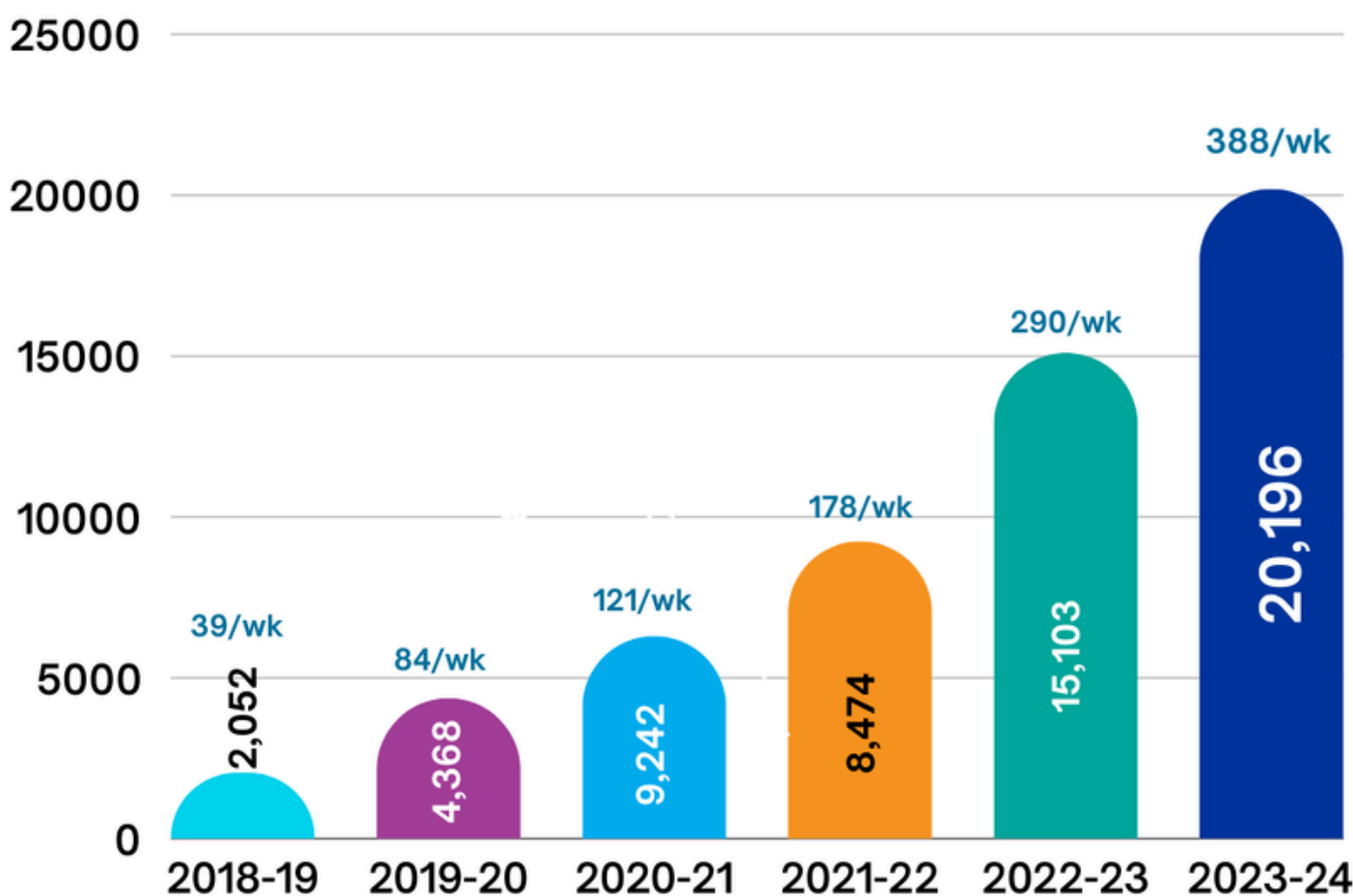
Our work with individuals and families strives to uphold and promote the values of inclusion in line with our vision and mission statement.





SWAN Supports

Number of Supports Provided by SWAN



8,874
family
members

9,166
people with
disability

2,156
professionals



SWAN Supports

4,012
individual
meetings

388
supports
per week

20,196
supports
provided

608
workshop
attendees

11,609
online peer
support



President's Report

2024 has been a year in two parts – everything running as planned for six months and chasing funding for the next six, during which all our staff have been at the front of supporting those individuals and families with autism in their daily lives and coping with NDIS and general government non-understanding.

The Jumpstart film making has been completed in Bunbury, a project that stretched all who were involved – both staff and participants. A lot was learnt by all and a realisation that it is a lot harder than it seems from the outside. There have been several Understanding Autism and NDIS workshops, and our Autism Go-To Guides have continued to be given out to those working their way through the system.

With the shock of no funding, there were many changes, including moving our Bunbury office to appointment only, and a reduction in overall staffing hours. Thank you to the SWAN Crew who continued providing support to our community during this challenging time. Many submissions and resubmissions later (after months of limbo), we again have funding. Not a great way for not-for-profit organisations keep their momentum heading in the right direction.

We are again afloat and doing what SWAN does best, spending our time helping those in need. We had two good days at the Collie and Brunswick Shows, with over 350 people using the sensory areas and many taking books to help on their journey.

Thank you to our Board and Staff for fighting through the worries of funding and continuing to be leaders in the support of people and their families.

Ant Pursell



Ant with Minister Don Punch at the SWAN Family Christmas Party 2023



**Hanging out with Bluey at our Family
Christmas Party 2023**



**SWAN Crew & Volunteers at our
Family Christmas Party 2023**



Treasurer's Report

The 2023/24 operations of the South West Autism Network have been primarily funded by grants from the Federal Government and community donations.

SWAN's Information, Linkages and Capacity building (ILC) grant projects, Regional Toolkit & JumpStart, were successfully completed on 30th June 2024. SWAN applied for further ILC funding, but was one of 173 disability peer support organisations whose applications were unsuccessful. Due to the outstanding advocacy by SWAN members, the wider community and our State and Federal Representatives, SWAN's ILC funding was extended until 30th June 2025.

Unfortunately SWAN was not able to run YES Program and AutStars during the 2023/24 financial year, due to staff needing to prioritise support provision and meeting the grant funding requirements, in addition to shortages of volunteers. Staff have sought other funding opportunities that match the values and objectives of SWAN. This has included Youth Mental Health First Aid training and contracting for Every Australian Counts.

The philosophy of SWAN has always been an investment in people. To support this investment, much of the funding SWAN receives is dedicated to the employment of staff. This is SWAN's largest cost, but our staff are SWAN's greatest resource. The work they undertake in supporting people with disabilities and families, who have often been unable to find support elsewhere, is the core reason SWAN exists. The Board acknowledges the work by our staff, and the need to resource them to enable SWAN to be sustainable. We have continued to receive support through donations from many parties, and as an organisation we are very grateful for those who donate money, resources or time.

SWAN had an operating profit of \$3,200 in 2023/24. SWAN has cash assets of \$159,076.31 and minimal liabilities outstanding as at 30th June. The Board will continue to ensure we can resource SWAN to support our community.

Grant Avery





Balance Sheet

	30 June 2024	30 June 2023
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents		
SWAN - Card Account	\$721	\$1,124
South West Autism Network	\$158,127	\$105,764
Bendigo Bank - Term Deposit	\$55,476	\$102,996
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$214,324	\$209,884
Trade and Other Receivables		
Accounts Receivable	\$15,904	\$10,571
Prepayments	(\$988)	(\$4,252)
Total Trade and Other Receivables	\$14,916	\$6,319
Total Current Assets	\$229,240	\$216,203
Non-Current Assets		
Property, Plant and Equipment		
Plant and Equipment	\$29,914	\$27,302
Less Accumulated Depreciation on P & E	(\$13,018)	(\$11,832)
Furniture and Fittings	\$6,083	\$6,083
Less Accumulated Depreciation on F & F	(\$3,229)	(\$2,992)
Total Plant & Equipment	\$19,749	\$18,561
Leasehold Improvements		
Leasehold Improvements	\$11,620	\$11,620
Less Accumulated Depreciation on LI	(\$5,308)	(\$4,534)
Total Leasehold Improvements	\$6,312	\$7,087
Total Property, Plan and Equipment	\$26,061	\$25,648
Intangibles		
Website Development	\$32,621	\$32,621
Less Accumulated Depreciation on WD	(\$23,273)	(\$18,284)
Total Intangibles	\$9,348	\$14,337
Total Non-Current Assets	\$35,408	\$39,984
Total Assets	\$264,648	\$256,187



Balance Sheet

	30 June 2024	30 June 2023
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Trade and Other Payables		
Accounts Payable	\$2,531	\$19,247
Wages Payable	(\$7,164)	(\$1,746)
Provision for Printing Liability	\$8,834	-
PAYG Withholdings Payable	\$10,142	-
Superannuation Payable	\$1,081	\$2,349
Suspense	-	(\$50)
Total Trade and Other Payables	\$15,424	\$19,800
Tax Liabilities		
GST	\$15,548	\$5,911
Total Tax Liabilities	\$15,548	\$5,911
Total Current Liabilities	\$30,972	\$25,711
Net Assets	\$233,676	\$230,476
<hr/>		
Equity		
Retained Earnings		
Retained Earnings	\$230,476	\$197,081
Current Year Earnings	\$3,200	\$33,395
Total Retained Earnings	\$233,676	\$230,476
Total Equity	\$233,676	\$230,476



Visiting the therapy goats at our
Family Christmas Party 2023



Minister Punch helping Santa give out
gifts at our Family Christmas Party 2023



Staff Report

At SWAN's first AGM in 2013, we had 57 families registered as members, with 176 people subscribed to our e-Newsletter, 228 members of our Facebook peer support group, and 236 people following the SWAN public Facebook page. Today we have 1,996 registered SWAN members, 1,514 members of our Facebook peer support group for individuals and families, and 3,055 people following the SWAN public Facebook page. Such growth is a continuing testament to the need for support within our community and the efforts of the SWAN team. Over the course of the 2023-24 financial year, we saw a further 33.7% increase in support provided by SWAN from 2022-23, to 20,196 (an average of 388 people engaged per week).

SWAN have had a challenging last 12 months, saying goodbye to two of our Admin staff (Sam and Jodie), but welcoming Rikki and Lara to the team. We completed our two Information, Linkages and Capacity building (ILC) projects in June 2024, but were initially unsuccessful in applications to extend this funding ([read more here](#)). Our deepest gratitude to SWAN members, the wider community, State Minister Don Punch and Federal MP Nola Marino for advocating to Minister for the NDIS Bill Shorten to extend SWAN's funding through to 30th June 2025. We continue to provide information, peer support and advocacy via phone, email, Zoom, social media and in-person at our Busselton office or by appointment at Milligan in Bunbury.

YES Program and AutStars have been on a break since 2022 due primarily to staffing and volunteer shortages and the need to focus our energies on the JumpStart film-making project. They are planned to recommence at some point during 2025. In 2023-24 we delivered 8 workshops on Understanding Autism, 5 workshops on Understanding NDIS, and Using your NDIS Plan and one Youth Mental Health First Aid training course. Rikki has done an outstanding job delivering our Understanding Autism training to Education Assistance students at South Regional TAFE and Child Care workers in Margaret River.





Staff Report

SWAN is contracted by Every Australian Counts to provide systemic advocacy and co-design engagement with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and Commonwealth Government. Over the course of 2023-24 SWAN also made 6 systemic advocacy submissions to State and Commonwealth Government Inquiries.

We have continued to offer Sensory Chill Out Zones at community events, attending the Easy Beatz Disco in Busselton, Collie Show, Brunswick Show, and Play in the Bay, and hosted the SWAN Families Christmas Party in Nov/Dec 2023. Due to funding constraints, no Family Christmas party will be held this year, however SWAN will be hosting a sensory chill out zone at the Vasse Lions Christmas Fair & Carols By Candlelight.

On behalf of SWAN members, we would like to sincerely thank our major sponsors, Greg and Kathy Walsh, and the community donors who enable SWAN to advocate for autistic people and people with disability living in the south west. Our gratitude to our incredible volunteers, without whom SWAN projects and events would simply not happen. Our sincere gratitude to Tina Williams, who has now been volunteering with SWAN two days per week for eleven years. Tina manages the administration of the organisation, and looks after the whole team.

Nick Avery

CEO

Mel Jacobson

2IC Coordinator

Ronnie Madge

Coordinator

Kylie Robinson

Coordinator

Rikki McCabe

Coordinator

Tina Williams

Admin Volunteer

Lara Cheeseman

Junior Admin Assistant





Tina, Ronnie and volunteers at our Family Christmas Party 2023



Mel and Kylie with State Opposition Leader, Libby Mettam at Play In The Bay



Feedback

“Thank you so much for your time Thursday, I really appreciate you giving your time to help share your incredible knowledge and experience. It was truly a pleasure to meet with you. For the first time in a long time I feel like we will be able to have the support we need to ensure our incredible human has everything she needs to reach her true potential. So far from what I can see SWAN is an incredible service and I hope in time I’ll have opportunity to give back. 🍕”

“Your new Go To Guides are FANTASTIC!”

“Thank you for all your help & support today. I feel very safe with your help & am finally getting somewhere because of it. I know I've got a bit of work & time ahead of me, but it feels like it will be easy because of your support & help.”

“I would like to take this opportunity to thank the SWAN staff for their tremendous support with assisting my son with a successful transition to a new high school. The direct liaison with the learning support co-ordinator together with attendance and valuable input at meetings with the school leadership team, has provided the necessary advocacy for my son to feel comfortable and supported within a new academic environment. A direct consequence of SWAN’s support is my son’s school attendance and engagement has gone from around 25% to 100%.”

“Thanks so much for the information. I will have a look through it all and am so relieved I can get in touch for any further info. Much appreciated!”

“The recently published SWAN Go To guides are proving to be a valuable resource for my son’s family and support workers as he increases his social engagements and is starting to seek independence through part time work and community participation. The SWAN Go To guides cover off on all the essential topics from personal safety to life after school in a way that is understood and useful for both carers, support workers and those with special needs.”

“Thank you so much for taking the time to speak with me today, I am so happy to have met you. You gave me so much insight and knowledge I felt empowered after our meeting.”



**Youth Mental Health First Aid Training
2023**



**New Youth Mental Health First Aiders
2023**



South West Autism Network Inc
ABN: 60 399 882 817

Busselton:

12 Pettit Cres, West Busselton WA 6280

Bunbury:

Milligan CLRC, 35 Milligan St, Carey Park WA 6230

Postal:

PO Box 1739, Busselton WA 6280

Phone:

0499 819 038 0474 577 400 0476 315 694

Email:

info@swanautism.org.au

Website:

www.swanautism.org.au



