



**SYDNEY  
WOMEN'S  
FUND**



**A voice  
for women  
a force  
for change**



A sub-fund of  
**SYDNEY  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION**



#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land that we now call Sydney. We define Greater Sydney as the Sydney Metropolitan Area. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. This includes the Gadigal people of the Eora nation on the southern harbour shores and extends from Campbelltown, Dharawal people, in the south to the Northern Suburbs, Garigal and Caregal people, to Gosford and the Central Coast, the Darkinjung people and to Penrith in the west, Darug people. East to west it extends from the coast to the Blue Mountains, the Dharug and Gundungurra people, and north to south from the Hawkesbury River, Darug and Darkinjung people, and to the Illawarra Escarpment, the Dharawal people.

#### CHAIR'S FOREWARD



## Supporting women, strengthening communities

**“Empowering and investing in women and families not only benefits individuals, but is essential for building strong communities.”**

I have seen first-hand the life-changing impact Sydney Women's Fund makes in communities when we collaborate with and support local grassroots charities that focus on improving women's access to education and employment, reducing domestic violence, and increasing the inclusion and wellbeing of everyone who identifies and lives as a woman.

Alongside supporting grassroots charities, we are a 'Voice for Change'. Our research highlights inequities and helps catalyse change. The Fund's most recent study, *Portrait IV* undertaken by Australian social researchers Dr. Rebecca Huntley and Kate Whelan, paints a powerful and concerning picture of the vulnerability of far too many Sydney women.

Underlying the struggle and divide between Sydney women is a lack of equity, with women being paid less and fulfilling the role of the main carer. This is often at the cost of work and financial security, despite their education and desire to work.

Our aim is to ensure every woman has access to education, work, independence and belonging. By identifying and funding the programs needed, we enable our most vulnerable women and families to share equitably in all that Sydney life offers.

We believe in a Sydney community where women and families can thrive and feel equally valued and safe. Where gender, age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and socio-economic status don't determine our fate.

If you're passionate about advancing the lives of women and families in your city, the Sydney Women's Fund is for you. By working together, we can create real change.

**Georgina Byron AM**

CHAIR, SYDNEY WOMEN'S  
FUND ADVISORY COUNCIL  
DEPUTY CHAIR, SYDNEY  
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

## OUR VISION

# Creating equity for women and families

**Sydney Women's Fund is dedicated to improving the lives of Sydney women and families. The Fund identifies, co-designs and funds innovative grassroots interventions to increase women's and girls' ability to determine their own futures.**

Established in 2008 as a sub-fund of Sydney Community Foundation, the Fund's aim is to increase gender equity and opportunity. Over the past 15 years, it has worked with local communities to create positive change and funded critical programs to help improve the lives of local women and families.

The Fund's work is driven by a dedicated committee of community leaders and experts, and supported by generous donors and advocates, who work together to identify the most pressing issues facing women and support the changemakers who can address them.

We believe those who are closest to community issues are most qualified to solve them. This is why we listen to our communities, and empower women and families in need.

Our aim is for every woman to have access to education, work, independence and belonging, to be free from violence and discrimination. We advocate for every woman to be able to participate fully in community life and achieve equity in all areas.

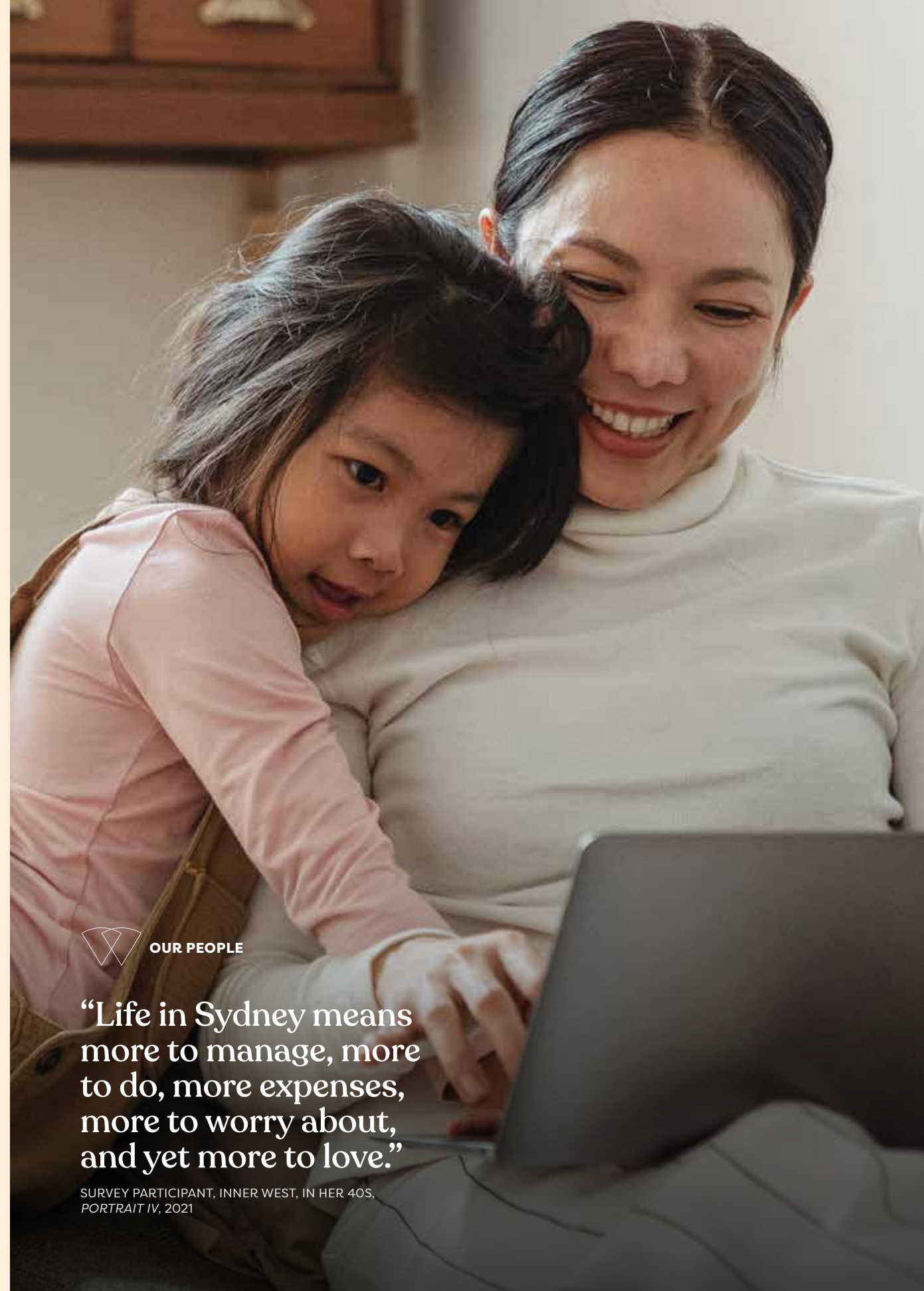
We work with our partners to provide women with education scholarships, supported learning in safe spaces, job skills, training, work pathways and employment scholarships. We provide shelter for victims of domestic violence, personalised casework, referrals to specialists for physical and mental health care, and fund holistic trauma recovery programs.

We help newly arrived women to navigate the Australian settlement system, work and recruitment process. We design and share educational resources to assist with money management. We help keep women out of prison and families together, and more.

By providing funding and support to organisations that work towards gender equity, Sydney Women's Fund helps to create a stronger, more equal and fairer community for everyone.



IMAGE Dress for Success



## OUR PEOPLE

**“Life in Sydney means more to manage, more to do, more expenses, more to worry about, and yet more to love.”**

SURVEY PARTICIPANT, INNER WEST, IN HER 40S,  
PORTRAIT IV, 2021

# Why change is needed

\*Sydney Women's Fund Portrait IV Research, Rebecca Huntley and Kate Whelan.



## 48% OF WOMEN

earn less than \$34K pa & **7% earn** over \$100K pa



## 31% HAVE A DEGREE

**28%** can't find a suitable job



## 44% WERE BORN OVERSEAS

**38%** speak a language other than English at home



IMAGE The Warrior Woman Foundation



## 30% WORK FULL-TIME

**30% Sydney women** would like to be engaged in more paid work.



IMAGE Plate It Forward



## 21% HAVE REDUCED THEIR WORK HOURS

to care for someone else & **36%** say caring impacts their careers



## MORE THAN HALF

are concerned about their personal health and wellbeing & **41% feel overwhelmed** by their responsibilities



IMAGE Women's & Girls' Emergency Centre



## MORE THAN A THIRD

of Greater Sydney women are in housing stress & **67% of women** are worried about the cost of living



## 39% OF WOMEN

have experienced intolerance such as sexism, ageism or racism & **62%** of women in Sydney believe that it is still harder for women to get ahead than men



IMAGE The Social Outfit



**“If you are interested in changing the fate of girls and women who are less fortunate than yourself, please support the Sydney Women’s Fund.**

Your donation, big or small, will change the life of a girl or woman in our city who will go on to change the lives of their family, their community and in many cases become leaders that build a better city for all Sydneysiders.

Lots of drops make oceans, and so it is with giving. If every person gives what they can, collectively we can raise enough to create opportunity and equity for all women.”

**Wendy McCarthy AO**

CO-FOUNDER AND PATRON SYDNEY WOMEN’S FUND



## OUR FOCUS AREAS

# Inclusion and wellbeing

**A sense of belonging is essential to our wellbeing. Sydney Women's Fund believes that all women should feel welcomed, safe, and free to express themselves and thrive in Sydney.**

Community cohesion is the life-blood of our society, however, in recent decades, we have become increasingly disconnected. The Sydney Women's Fund *Portrait IV* research shows that 53 percent of women are concerned about their personal health and wellbeing.

Sydney Women's Fund aims to provide connection opportunities for all women in Greater Sydney at risk of social isolation.

We invest in programs to promote inclusion, wellbeing and belonging for vulnerable women and families; single mothers, older women, indigenous women and girls, migrant,

refugee and asylum seeker women and families, and members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

We achieve our goals through funding welcoming neighbourhood centres, cultural initiatives and bespoke programs that bring women and families together.

The programs we fund range from the creation of shared gardens for older women living in community housing, to culturally appropriate healing circles for women displaced by war and conflict. We offer employment opportunities in social enterprises where women can share and express their unique cultural talents, and provide women with mentoring to help them become leaders and changemakers in their communities.



IMAGE Refugee Advice & Casework Service



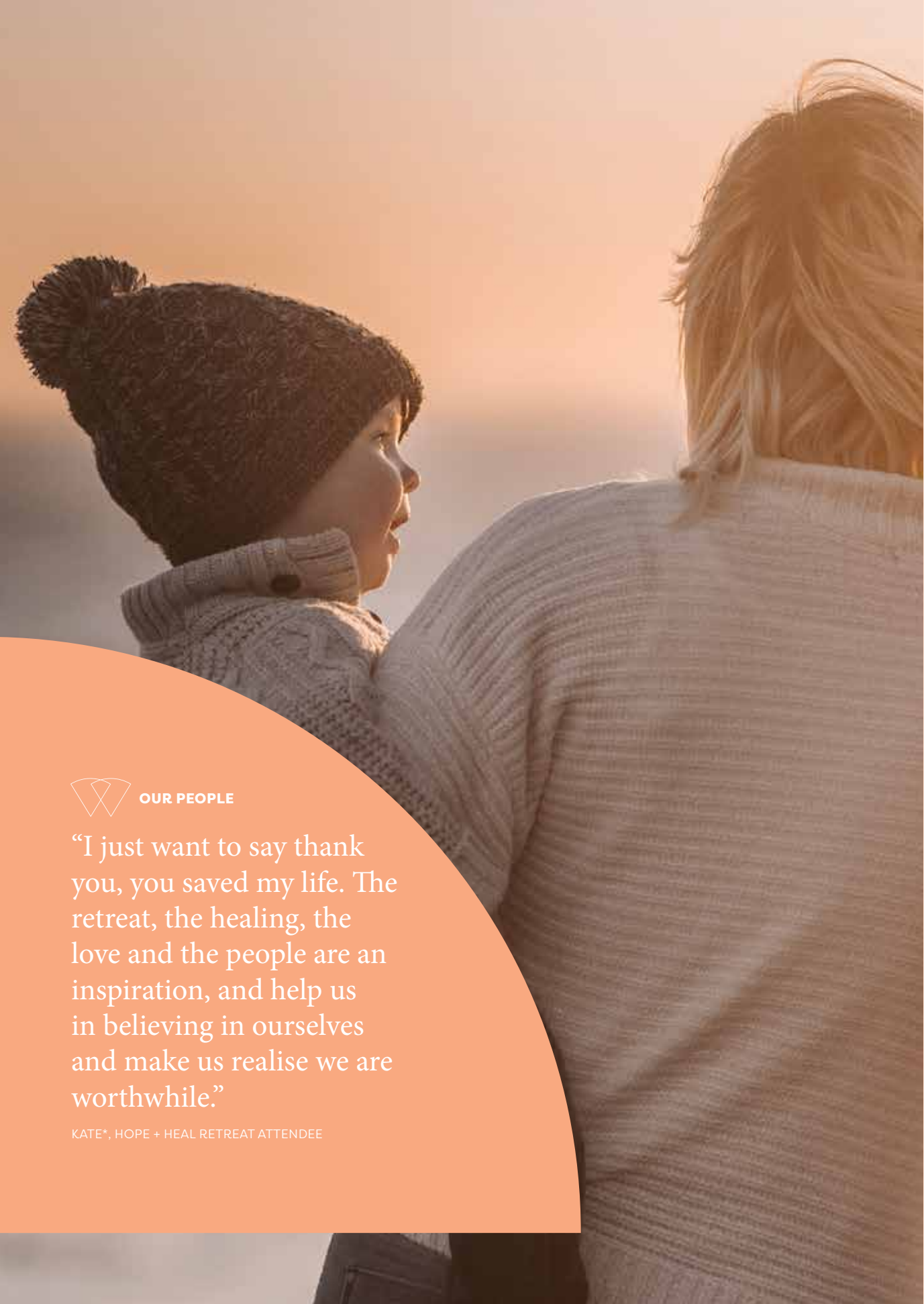
## OUR PEOPLE



**“I was housebound and hadn't worked for many years because of my disability.**

Then I came to Pepper's Place and loved it, and I'm still here. I'm a lot more outgoing now, I'm not as nervous around people as I used to be, and I've noticed that in a lot of other women here, especially those from non-English speaking backgrounds. It brings you closer to your family as well because you're not as stressed out from being home all the time. It saved my mind from going crazy. I've made friends I didn't have before. Coming to the centre, meeting everybody... it just made it easier for me to fit in. I come here and I feel safe. I feel a sense of belonging to the community and I'm also giving back. I love coming here and I love what I do.”

SYDNEY WOMEN'S FUND, EMPLOYMENT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM PARTICIPANT



 OUR PEOPLE

“I just want to say thank you, you saved my life. The retreat, the healing, the love and the people are an inspiration, and help us in believing in ourselves and make us realise we are worthwhile.”

KATE\*, HOPE + HEAL RETREAT ATTENDEE

OUR FOCUS AREAS

## Safety and crisis

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**Sydney Women's Fund supports programs that provide the essentials women and their children need to rebuild their lives after trauma. Domestic violence can take many forms. It can include physical and emotional harm, sexual and financial abuse, exclusion and isolation.**

Of the women interviewed as part of our *Portrait IV* survey, 38 percent said that family violence is one of the most pressing issues that need to be addressed, and 39% of women had experienced some form of intolerance in the past 12 months; sexism, ageism, and racism being the most common.

An absence of housing, basic amenities, a safe environment, and food insecurity expose women and children to a cycle of disadvantage.

The projects we fund give women in crisis a safe place to stay, essential appliances and furnishings, food, financial support and access to people and services that can help them recover from domestic abuse, plan and take control of their future.

We focus on early intervention and prevention programs to reduce violence, working with young people to help them learn about respectful relationships.

Our charity partners assist women on their journey from leaving a violent home situation and formulating a safe way to leave, to finding new accommodation, as well as free legal advice and relocation services. We support healing and rehabilitative retreats for domestic violence survivors.

Our programs provide holistic support to vulnerable women and children, helping them to rebuild their lives in safety.



## OUR FOCUS AREAS

# Education and employment

Education and employment pathway programs empower women and girls to make informed decisions about their lives. To develop the skills and knowledge needed to become independent, active and engaged members of their community. Education also means better employment opportunities, improved health outcomes and reduced gender inequity.

The women who participated in our *Portrait IV* survey expressed the need to balance a decent income with the kind of flexibility they need to care for children, parents and family, and themselves. Almost one third of respondents struggled to find a suitable job or opportunity and many said caring for others prevented them from working more, despite their desire to do so.

At Sydney Women's Fund, our education and employment programs focus on

providing supported learning in safe spaces, academic scholarships for gifted young women, job skills, training, mentoring and employment scholarships, and work pathways for women exiting prison.

For many years we have been funding access to education and employment pathways for disadvantaged and culturally diverse women living in some of the most disadvantaged pockets of South Western Sydney. Programs that provide childcare are prioritised, so these women can enter the workforce more easily - sometimes as the first in their family to do so.

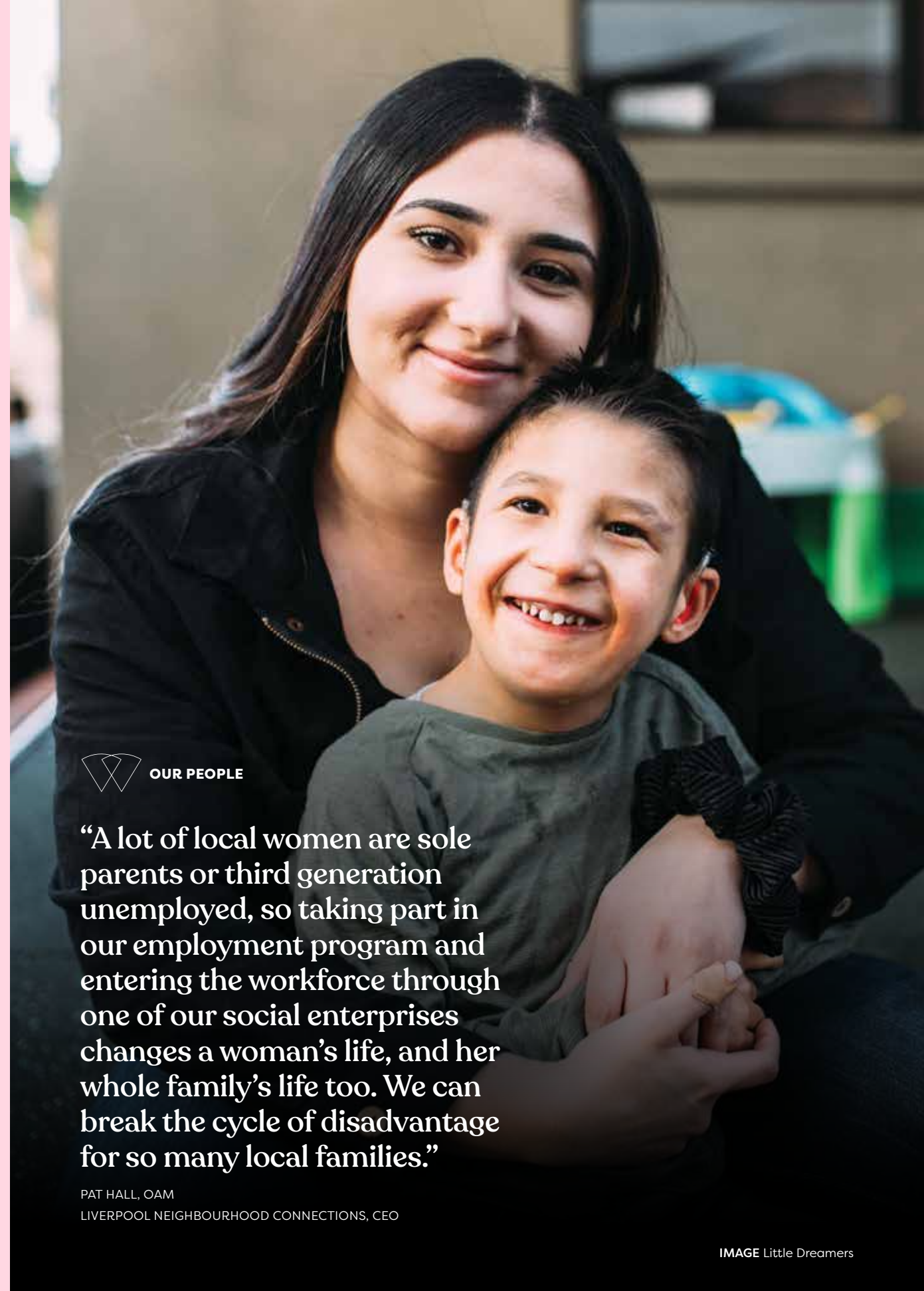
We support the development of local social enterprises - low-risk, safe environments - that offer work experience and increase women's future employability, while most importantly building skills and confidence.

We focus on funding programs and interventions that remove common barriers to work participation.

Education and employment projects supported by Sydney Women's Fund donors can break the cycle of intergenerational poverty and empower women and girls to take control of their lives. Taking part in these programs changes the lives of women, their families and future generations.



IMAGE Harding Miller Education Foundation



## OUR PEOPLE

**“A lot of local women are sole parents or third generation unemployed, so taking part in our employment program and entering the workforce through one of our social enterprises changes a woman's life, and her whole family's life too. We can break the cycle of disadvantage for so many local families.”**

PAT HALL, OAM  
LIVERPOOL NEIGHBOURHOOD CONNECTIONS, CEO

IMAGE Little Dreamers





**SYDNEY  
WOMEN'S  
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By Sydney  
Community  
Foundation

**For 15 years, Sydney  
Women's Fund has provided  
vital and life-changing  
support to vulnerable women  
and families in our communities,  
but we need your help.**

We offer simple and effective tax-deductible giving by individuals, families, companies and sporting and cultural groups. Our dedicated charity partners join us in seeking your support. Please help if you can, your donation has the potential to change the lives of women and families for generations to come.



[sydneywomensfund.org.au](https://sydneywomensfund.org.au)