



IMPACT REPORT 2021-22

Variety – the Children's Charity NSW/ACT

How you made a difference

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OUR VISION

For all Australian children to reach their full potential, regardless of ability or background.

OUR MISSION

To empower Australian children who are sick, experiencing disadvantage or living with a disability to live, laugh and learn.

MESSAGE FROM CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD



Let me first reach out to all our Variety 'family', making sure you are well, and resilient to the pressures surrounding your lives. Cost of living, floods, health impacts, politics and any number of triggers, it is important to know that Variety / Tent 56 (T56) is here for you, in any way we can, to help make your lives the best they can be. Every day is important, and Variety is good at being there for those early first steps. If you need a hand, reach out and we will be there.

By 'we', I acknowledge T56's magnificent staff, committed to our cause through thick and thin, our volunteers and supporters, the Bashers and eventers, corporate supporters, and in particular all of the community that 'rounds up' at Woolworths, cent by cent adding more than \$1million this year towards the efforts of Variety.

This year has been very positive and has enabled us to lean forward again. Our events are 'back on the road' and T56 is increasing our granting to meet demand. There is always more to do and I know that it is what drives everyone everyday who is associated with Variety. Our operations reflect this growth, and I draw particular attention to our staffing restructure, the investment and building strategy and the partnerships strategy to grow this organisation by 25% over the next three years.

In closing, on your behalf, I thank the Board of T56 for their support, enthusiasm and hard work over the last twelve months.

Variety is always at the 'heart of life'.

I wish you all a healthy and prosperous 2023.

Warm regards,

Dr Greg Levenston.

Chair / Chief Barker

MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Across New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, our individual and corporate donors, event participants, partners and volunteers were there for kids in 2022.

When Malyq needed a Race Runner to deliver physical exercise outside the home, Variety's donors and supporters were there.

When hospitalised immune-compromised children needed free non-emergency flights home to visit family, Variety's donors and supporters were there.

When Ewan required an Equine Hoist to continue Equine Therapy, Variety donors and supporters were there.

Variety – the Children's Charity is the conduit between people and companies wanting to change the lives of children who are sick, experiencing disadvantage or living with a disability, and their families. Our donors and supporters work together to solve exclusion and deliver equity to these children.

Steeped in a long history, Variety may seem an unusual name for a children's charity, however, the noun "Variety" is defined as being diverse, which describes our donors and supporters perfectly. Our donors and supporters are a diverse group of people and organisations changing the lives of a diverse group of children and families.

Variety's vision is for all Australian children to reach their full potential, regardless of ability or background, with a mission of empowering Australian children who are sick, experiencing disadvantage or living with a disability to live, laugh and learn.

Thank you seems inadequate, but on behalf of the kids and families you made that possible for in 2022, thank you.

Sincerely,

David Small

Executive Director at Variety – the Children's Charity NSW/ ACT



HOW WE HELP

Your Impact

With your help, we ensure children have the best opportunity to live life more fully, regardless of ability or background. The work we do gives children the opportunity to improve mobility, gain freedom and get involved in their community, where they can better communicate, achieve independence, and increase their self-esteem.

Thanks to your support, we help kids with these challenges:



Disadvantage



Sickness



Disability

By delivering support to NSW/ACT kids in the following ways:

- GRANTS
- PROGRAMS
- ACTIVITIES

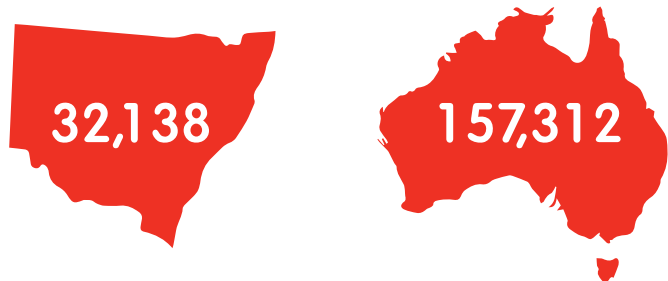


IN 2021/22 WE GRANTED:

\$2.84 million

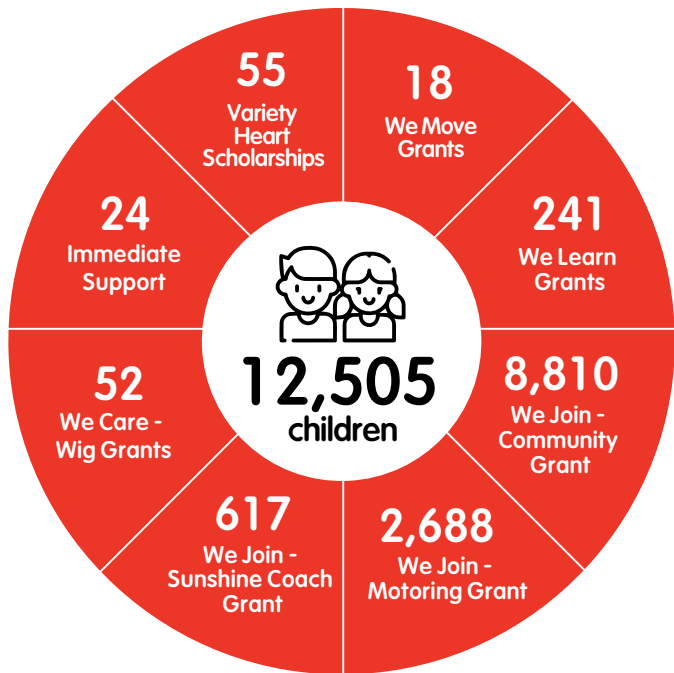
to help kids in need

THANKS TO YOUR SUPPORT, IN
2021/22 WE IMPACTED:



CHILDREN IN NSW/ACT CHILDREN AUSTRALIA-WIDE

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IMPACTED BY OUR
GRANTS IN NSW/ACT



JUST LIKE YOU
26,910
CHILDREN IMPACTED



ACTIVATE INCLUSION
1,338
CHILDREN IMPACTED



NEWCASTLE XMAS
TOY DRIVE & SYDNEY
XMAS PARTY
2,500
CHILDREN IMPACTED



Through our wig grants, Variety provides specialised, custom-made wigs made from real hair to kids who have lost their hair due to a medical condition such as alopecia, cancer and trichotillomania.

This year we granted **52 wigs to children who have lost their hair** living in NSW/ACT, increasing their confidence and self-esteem.

Losing your hair can have profound psychological effects, particularly through childhood and adolescence. One specialised wig can cost up to \$6,000 and lasts two to three years, making the cost prohibitive for many families.

Thanks to you, Kyla received her custom-made wig

Kyla loves jumping on the trampoline, riding her bike, and like so many 12-year-old girls, she loves to dance!

Kyla's mum Belinda says Kyla is always looking to help others, so it came as no surprise when she chose to donate her hair to Variety's Hair with Heart program in November 2019.

"It had taken her about three and a half years to grow her hair long enough, so we were all thrilled when she finally got there. We waited until after her dancing concert and in the end, she donated 42cm of hair, as well as the money she had fundraised for Variety," said Belinda.

Then in February 2020, Kyla's sister found a perfectly round, bald patch on the top of Kyla's head.

What began smaller than the size of a 10-cent coin, quickly grew and two weeks later Kyla was diagnosed with Alopecia Areata.

"It was really upsetting for me because I didn't really know how much was going to fall out," said Kyla.

Belinda said it was so incredibly difficult watching Kyla struggle with the diagnosis as she couldn't do anything to make it better.

"I shaved my head with her twice but that didn't stop hers falling out."

When Kyla first started asking about a wig, Belinda swung into action and began researching options but quickly realised the family faced yet another hurdle.

"I was quite shocked to find out a wig was going to cost close to \$5000! We just hadn't had a chance to save for those sorts of things."

Fortunately, Freedom Wigs suggested Belinda approach Variety for support and both Kyla and Belinda were thrilled when the wig arrived – just in time for her Year 6 Formal.



This year, we granted **23 We Join Community grants** to support kids to join in with their communities, no matter their circumstances. Schools and organisations are invited to apply for grants up to \$10,000 to purchase equipment that will promote access and inclusivity in the community for children aged 0-18 years.

It's incredible to see the look of absolute joy on the face of a child as they're wheeled to the beach and into the sea.



Thanks to you, everyone can go to the beach.

A day at the beach is one of life's simple pleasures. The sun on your back and the water lapping at your feet can brighten up anyone's outlook on life.

But people living with a disability can't always navigate the sand and the surf. Particularly if they're in a wheelchair.

Getting on to the beach can be tough, which means they don't get to experience that feeling of freedom on the beach that the rest of us take for granted. But life's looking up for people heading to the NSW south coastal area of Tuross Head for their next family holiday.

With the help of Variety, the Local Progress Association has purchased an all-terrain beach wheelchair. And at nearly \$5,000, she's a beauty.

The wheelchair enables children and adults with no other means to access the sand or sea onto the beach, and into the water. It has made a huge difference to so many people who live and holiday in this picturesque neck of the woods. A

handful of locals regularly use the wheelchair too.

Progress Association Honorary Secretary John Tilbrook reckons the wheelchair promotes access and inclusivity, and he's proud as punch.

"It's incredible to see the look of absolute joy on the face of a child as they're wheeled to the beach and into the sea. Often, it's one of just a handful of times in their entire life that they've been able to enjoy the feeling of weightlessness in the ocean. Their whole face lights up as they enter the water," John says.

The new wheelchair arrived just in time for summer, replacing a wheelchair that was more than two decades old. The old model is now out of production, meaning spare parts were hard to come by.

This new set of speciality wheels will serve the local community well for another two decades, or more.

Now, a day out at the beach at Tuross Head will be a real day out to remember. For everyone.



There is a clear link between poverty and digital exclusion – children living in poverty who do not have access to, or the skills to use, new technology are left behind.

In 2022, your support helped us provide **241 laptops to students living in financial hardship** to encourage their educational goals through our We Learn grant. This grant helps high school students living with financial hardship by providing a laptop to encourage their educational goals, where they otherwise may not be afforded the opportunity.

Big movements throughout the day is everything to Jax. Moving a lot and spending time with his siblings is what makes him feel happiest.



Our We Move grant funded **18 grants delivering life-changing specialist equipment to kids living with a disability**. Your support helped get this equipment to children who were unable to access them through statutory services such as the NDIS, increasing their physical development, independence and social inclusion and, ultimately, joy!

Thanks to you, Jax can safely play outdoors

Belinda uses the word 'big energy' to describe her son Jax. Throughout the day, the seven-year-old has the overwhelming urge to move, run, jump and play.

He might sound like most other kids his age. Except that Jax has severe autism.

Emotional regulation is challenging for Jax. He displays frequent and extreme movement-seeking behaviours. Sitting still is rare.

Quite simply, he has a much higher threshold for movement than others his age. His needs are significant.

The little boy's movements are high intensity, which can be unsafe at times when he uses tools not designed to meet his movement needs, Belinda explains.

"His sensory-seeking behaviours are a lot. He frequently seeks movement at a high intensity and struggles to regulate his behaviours," she explains.

Specialists suggested a climbing frame for him, Belinda knew that she could never afford to purchase it given the exorbitant price tag.

So, Variety stepped in, and it's been a complete game-changer for Jax. The little boy adores it, heading out into the yard to play on it several times a day. Here, Jax can safely expel all that energy inside him and jump, climb and run. It's been a game-changer.

Belinda was keen to find a school that would be inclusive of Jax and bring out the best in her son.

The family has relocated to a property with more land so that Jax has more safe space to run and play.

The teacher taught the other students to hold their hands out for Jax when he was indicating that he wanted to communicate. It made a huge difference to how he feels in the classroom, she says.

The teacher also answered questions from students and ensured Jax was included in activities throughout the school day.

Of course, Belinda sees a kid that never stops laughing. He's got bright red curly hair and big blue eyes. He loves the water and adores his dogs and horses. Outdoor play is crucial for Jax.

"Big movements throughout the day is everything to Jax. Moving a lot and spending time with his siblings is what makes him feel happiest."

VARIETY SUNSHINE COACHES

This year, your support allowed us to deliver **7 Variety Sunshine Coaches** to organisations who cater to kids with a physical disability, living in regional communities or experiencing social disadvantage, to enable them to access the community and to experience a range of special programs and activities.

Variety Sunshine Coaches can be fitted with wheelchair modifications, ensuring that all children can attend excursions and extra-curricular activities together.

"Thanks to this gift, the 100 students at Cranleigh School, who live with a range of disabilities, will be able to take part in their education on the same basis as their peers. A student's disability will not disadvantage their education as they will be able to engage with the wider community during excursions.

The Sunshine Coach will literally bring sunshine to the lives of our students, as it can be used for excursions, sporting events and other educational activities."

Kylie Croke, Principal of Cranleigh Specialist School



VARIETY HEART SCHOLARSHIPS

This year, Variety granted **55 Variety Heart Scholarships**, allowing children with a demonstrated talent who are living with a disability, chronic illness or financial hardship to pursue their dreams and realise their potential.

Scholarships are awarded in the areas of Sport and The Arts and are made possible by the support of our incredible partner The Grahame Mapp Family Foundation.



One day, Layla wants to represent Australia at the Commonwealth Games and Paralympic Games.



You helped Layla make her dreams a reality

Breaking running records comes naturally for Layla. She can run like the wind, and nothing will stop her from pursuing her dreams.

It's remarkable given that Layla is legally blind. She has tunnel vision. This means that she has no peripheral vision.

Put simply, Layla will never be able to drive. She struggles with vision fatigue when she concentrates for too long.

But there's no doubt that Layla will go far in life. Layla doesn't spend much time thinking about her disability. She's got too many races to run. There are running records yet to break.

All Layla needs is someone to believe in her, and a bit of support along the way.

She's determined to do well at anything she puts her mind to. She's not only excelling in athletics, she's also academically gifted.

"School is just like a racetrack to her, so she's in the gifted class and

tries her best every day."

On the running track, she's beating people two years older than her to the finish line. She dashes past able-bodied athletes at a rate of knots.

One day, she wants to represent Australia at the Commonwealth Games and Paralympic Games. It's a lofty goal, but she's well on her way.

Having the support from Variety has meant the world to her. Layla has been the recipient of a Variety Heart Scholarship, which helps cover the costs of racing at the elite level. The cost of travelling to events adds up, not to mention entry fees and uniforms.

As to the future, it's hard to know what lies ahead. Layla's eyesight could stabilise, or it could worsen. The doctors can't tell just yet.

In the meantime, Layla's determined to put her best foot forward.



**ACTIVATE
INCLUSION**
SPORTS DAYS

ACTIVATE INCLUSION

Variety Activate Inclusion Sports Days, run in partnership with Sport NSW and delivered by Disability Sport Australia, are a free, fun, and inclusive day of sport catered to kids with a physical disability, living in regional communities or experiencing social disadvantage.

Held during school terms, Activate Inclusion Sports Days gave over 1,300 kids the opportunity to try sports they might otherwise miss out on. Aimed at kids aged 5-18 with learning difficulties, intellectual, sensory & physical disabilities, the days are an opportunity to have a go in a fun and inclusive environment.

We are thrilled to partner with Sport NSW and Disability Sport Australia on this important program.

JUST LIKE YOU

This year, Variety's Just Like You program impacted nearly 27,000 children. A series of free and fun disability awareness workshops, JLY aims to build understanding, acceptance, and inclusion of those living with a disability, with all workshops delivered by professional facilitators who have a disability. Meeting and spending time with a person who has a disability helps to build empathy in children.

"I thought it was fun, while we were learning. It changed my view on people with a disability."

Elizabeth, Student at Clovelly Public School

"I had so many kids individually speak to me about the positive impact of a disability program being delivered by the facilitator, a smart, confident woman in a wheelchair."

Teacher, Tighes Hill Public School

"This workshop should be compulsory in all schools."

Teacher, Blakehurst Public School

I truly believe the knowledge that the students gain from Just Like You, helps to build acceptance and understanding in the community. I highly recommend ALL schools to take part!"

Teacher, Mosman Church Of England Preparatory School

"The most important thing we learnt is that people with disabilities are just like you and I. They got us involved and excited as this experience was eye opening, yet fun."

Meg and Katerina, Students at Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Program impact

Following the JLY workshop:

94%

Students are more likely to believe people living with disabilities are able to do many things

96%

Students are more likely to demonstrate empathy towards people living with a disability

95%

Students are more likely to believe all people are important and valuable to society

99%

Teachers agree that students learnt something important

REGIONAL SPOTLIGHT

We continue to focus on reaching all kids and supporting families and communities, regardless of how remote or regional they may be. Children who must travel great distances for medical appointments, educational opportunities and sporting competitions often face challenges and that's where we come in - making sure that all kids can attain their full potential, regardless of their background.

This year, 25 grants were given out to children in over 40 schools across regional NSW and ACT. Our motoring events have a long tradition of giving participants the chance to explore country towns that aren't always on the map. Our Bash cars are renowned for bringing fun and excitement to far-flung corners of the country and bringing smiles to the faces of local families who rarely have visitors. Moreover, we also bring thousands of dollars in grants to local schools for much needed technology, playground equipment and educational resources. Not to mention the tourism dollars injected into regional communities with lunch and overnight stops along the routes.

Thank you to all our incredible fundraisers who engage their wider community to help to fund our grants, programs, and scholarships for kids in need! We are grateful to our amazing partners and supporters for making the dreams of so many children a reality.



VARIETY POSTIE BIKE DASH

Our incredible Dashers raised a record-breaking amount for kids in need, with over \$30,000 of equipment and resources granted to 7 schools along the breathtaking route through the Snowy Mountains region.



VARIETY ADVENTURE RIDE

32 Riders, including 19 new entrants, travelled from Tamworth to as far as Ballina and back again, granting \$25,000 of equipment and resources to 3 schools along the way.



VARIETY 4WD ADVENTURE

31 4WD vehicles and 83 Adventurers kicked it up a notch this year with two identical events, granting \$8,775 of equipment and resources along the route.

Variety BASH

VARIETY NSW BASH

This year marked the 30th anniversary of the NSW Bash with 300 people across 97 Bash cars, including 18 new cars, raising an incredible amount for kids in need. Over \$50,000 of equipment and resources were granted to 9 schools and organisations along the route.



VARIETY BRYDENS LAWYERS BUNGARRIBEE TO BAKERS CREEK BASH

After two years of cancellation due to Covid, this year's B to B Bash raised a record amount, and granted \$93,175 of equipment and resources along the epic route to 17 schools and community groups.



Variety KIDS xmas PARTY



"It's an honour to host the Variety Xmas event and give animal-loving kids and their families the chance to celebrate and create fantastic memories in what's been a challenging year,"
Jake Burgess, Sydney Zoo's Managing Director.

For the past 27 years, Variety has spread festive joy to thousands of children who are experiencing illness, disadvantage or living with a disability through our annual Xmas parties.

In 2021, the Sydney Variety Xmas Party was hosted at the NEW Sydney Zoo in Bungaribee where we celebrated the magic of the festive season with over 1 500 children along with their families and carers.

Children enjoyed face painting, a craft zone, Ferris wheel rides, roaming character costumes, a unique 'Santa Claws' photo experience and, of course, a free gift from "Santa Claws". Thank you to the 70+ volunteers who helped bring the event to life, together with support from major sponsor, Woolworths, event partner, Sydney Zoo and event sponsor Chas Clarkson who adorned the zoo with their magical Christmas decorations.



In Newcastle, more than 1000 children, as well as their families and carers made their way through our 2nd Xmas Toy Drive-Thru. Over 400 cars took part in the special event which offered a chance for everyone to experience the magic of the festive season – without leaving their vehicle. The excited kids arrived with windows down to take in the spectacle of roving characters, Newcastle Knights players and

cheerleaders, Bash cars and postie bikes before receiving a wave from Santa and Mrs Claus and a free Xmas gift from Variety.

We are grateful for the support of our volunteers who helped bring the event to life and for the generosity of our event sponsor, The Wests Group, as well as McDonald Jones Stadium and local Woolworths stores who supplied goodie bags to giveaway.

THANK YOU TO
WOOLWORTHS
AND THEIR
CUSTOMERS



Celebrating a successful Small Change Appeal with Woolworths Cabramatta team, the top performing store across both April and October campaigns!



OUR WOOLWORTHS PARTNERSHIP

Our major partner Woolworths has been supporting Variety NSW/ACT since 2013. We are so grateful for the generosity of their customers, helping us raise over \$14 million for kids in need in Australia.

Our Small Change Appeals in April and October 2022 raised over \$1.1 million combined across NSW and ACT. Woolworths also offers us year-round support including providing monthly supplies and provisions to the Variety Ward at Westmead Children's Hospital, as well as supporting our annual Kids' Xmas Parties in Sydney and Newcastle.

Joining us on the NSW Bash, the Woolie-saurus team raised funds for kids in need and came out on top as our highest fundraiser. Throughout the week, Woolworths stores along the route donated supplies to the local schools the Bashers stopped at to feed the crowds with Woolworths team members getting some very early starts to help run the vital breakfast barbecues.

All these incredible initiatives profoundly impact the lives of kids through inclusion programs, kids experiences and individual and community grants, such as our Sunshine Coaches.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN 2022

MAJOR PARTNERS



PARTNERS

Cerner Corporation Pty Ltd
Sydney Zoo
Australian Hotels Association -
Newcastle + Hunter
Daracon Group
First National Real Estate
Orica
Brydens Lawyers
Pickles Pty Ltd
Tamex Transport
International Convention and
Exhibition Centre Sydney
Sage

MAJOR DONORS

De Lambert Largesse
Phil Cave
St Marys Rugby League Club
The Shirley Ward Foundation

SUPPORTERS

McDonald Jones Stadium
Newcastle Coal
Infrastructure Group
Wests Group
Endeavour Energy
Bayer
Allied Couriers

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!

We couldn't run all our events and programs without the support provided by our dedicated volunteers, so to everyone who has lent a hand during 2022, we say a big Variety THANK YOU! From individual to corporate volunteering, we are always looking for enthusiastic people to join in the fun.

Visit variety.org.au/nsw/get-involved/ to find out more.

BOARD MEMBERS

Thank you to our Board Members for their unwavering support and valuable expertise.

- Dr Greg Levenston – Chair/Chief Barker
- Greg Lewis – Deputy Chair
- Vanessa Beggs
- Jack Cannons AM
- John Dennis
- Paul Mullaly
- Lauren Nash
- Caoimhe Tooili
- Matthew Saunders
- Michael Starkey

STAFF

Special thanks to the Variety staff for their significant contribution.

David Small – Executive Director
Tara Beath – Head of Marketing & Fundraising
Liz Gearing – Head of Kids Support
Brooke Battam – Head of Operations
Carolina Cordoba – Head of Finance
Heather Monk – Senior Manager, Philanthropy and Partnerships
Kiara Prest – Partnerships and Projects Manager
Krystle Donovan – Kids Support Manager
Maddison Coker – Kids Support Coordinator
Alanna Nichols – Campaigns Manager

Lani Beaven – Marketing Manager
Kamina Polivnick – Marketing Manager
Kate Fester – Marketing Coordinator
Chandra Sekhar – Database Analyst
Michelle Sala – Supporter Relations Officer
Rob Vincent – Motoring Events Manager
Victor Sheil – Senior Motoring Events Manager
Stuart Telfer – Motoring Events Manager
Rebecca Rowe – Event and Experience Manager
Janet Kilazoglou – Event and Experience Manager
Michelle Van Doninck – PR Manager

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDRAISERS!

Every year we are blown away by the incredible contribution our fundraisers make to the impact we can have on children all over NSW/ACT. Thank you to all of our motoring event participants, Hair with Heart fundraisers and Spin 4 Kids participants for every dollar you raised in 2022 to support the children in our community who need it most.



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Thank You

Over the last 12 months, your support has made an amazing and lasting impact in the lives of Aussie kids.

Thank you for supporting Variety NSW/ACT in making our vision a reality and for helping us create a future where every child, regardless of circumstance or ability, can be supported, included and equal.