



2021

iMPACT REPORT

YOU helped families face the impossible

Roman
*diagnosed at
two-and-a-half years old*



When Tash's youngest son Roman was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia when he was two-and-a-half years old, the Redkite parents' room at Westmead Children's Hospital was like a second home for her and her close-knit family. Roman's aunt and Tash's sister, Tamara, spent a lot of time at the hospital to give her sister a break – and to get some of Roman's special hugs.

Pictured - Roman and his mother Tash.

"IF I DIDN'T HAVE LIS
-A REDKITE SOCIAL WORKER-
I WOULD BE STAYING HOME
NOW, NOT DOING ANYTHING.
I WOULDN'T KNOW WHERE TO
START MY LIFE AGAIN, OR
EVEN HAVE THAT MOTIVATION
TO BE EXCITED TO TRY."

Teah is 17 and in remission from acute lymphoblastic leukaemia. She is starting her life all over again. From her friendships to the future she had imagined for herself, her cancer diagnosis has disrupted everything. Redkite Social Workers provide support to children and teens just like Teah, at their pace and to meet their specific needs from diagnosis, through treatment and when they transition home.



MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO



Every day in Australia, three families face the heartbreaking news that their precious child has cancer. That's 90 children a month. And this figure is set to rise as the incidence of childhood cancer continues to increase each year.

As you know, childhood cancer takes a massive toll on every member of the family. Future plans give way to the struggle to manage illness, medical appointments, disruption of school and work routines, strained relationships, and piling household bills. Stress becomes the new normal and keeping it together can seem impossible.

With your support in 2021, we made extraordinary leaps forward in supporting families going through childhood cancer.

While the COVID-19 pandemic forced many organisations to suspend programs, all of Redkite's in-hospital and community-based services continued. In fact, requests for services reached unprecedented levels in 2021 with 1,900 families being supported directly through our community-based service and over 2,800 individuals supported by our hospital social workers.

This year, we accomplished an important milestone with the release of our research report *The hidden health crisis – Children's cancer needs more than medicine*, highlighting the substantial gaps in care currently being experienced by families.

To address these gaps in services, we launched our child counselling service, offering tailored mental health support to diagnosed children



and their siblings; moved our Financial Assistance Program online to the *myRedkite* portal, making it easier for families to access crucial financial support, and launched new support groups for grandparents, fathers, and culturally and linguistically diverse families. These new programs and services are the first steps in closing the gaps in support so every family facing childhood cancer can access vital services and resources.

However, none of this would have been possible without our supporters' compassion and dedication to Redkite. Your generosity is what makes it possible for us to run the only national paediatric oncology mental health and wellbeing specialist service.

You support us through generous contributions, you tell others about our work, and you make us more effective than we could ever be on our own. With you by our side, in 2022, I know we will make even greater strides in support of children with cancer and their families.

Monique Keighery
CEO



we are...

REDKITE

Redkite is an innovative non-profit organisation that helps children and teens with cancer and their families by providing holistic psychosocial support. Through the provision of social work services, child and adult counselling, financial assistance, music therapy and group support, Redkite helps families navigate diagnosis, treatment and transition home, and bereavement.

Over the past 39 years, Redkite has grown from a small organisation supporting a few dozen families to a national support system helping thousands of families each year.

As Australia's only national paediatric oncology psychosocial support specialists, Redkite plays an important role in the lives of children with cancer and their families – both in hospital and in the community.

Redkite is a
LIFELINE
for families facing
childhood cancer.

The Redkite team is passionate about ensuring every child and teenager diagnosed with cancer, and their families, in Australia, receives the best quality non-medical cancer support – regardless of their background and location.

OUR MISSION

Every day in Australia, three families are changed forever because of a childhood cancer diagnosis. From the moment a family learns that their child has cancer, they are thrust into a completely unknown and frightening world of tough emotions, relationship strains, financial pressure, and uncertainty.

Redkite is there for every member of the family – mums, dads, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, and grandparents. We are with them from day one and through all of their darkest times with practical, financial, and mental health support – because holding it together in the face of childhood cancer can feel impossible.

REAL IMPACT EVERY DAY

Every year, Redkite supports children and families across Australia, helping them cope with the challenges they face as part of their childhood cancer experience.

We measure and evaluate the impact of our work across four key client outcomes:

Emotional and Mental Health
children with cancer and their families are better able to manage their emotional wellbeing and mental health

Empowerment
families are confident and equipped to navigate the impacts of childhood cancer

Financial Resilience
families are better able to manage the financial impact of their child's cancer

Social Wellbeing and Connection
families have meaningful connections throughout their child's cancer experience

CHALLENGES FAMILIES ARE EXPERIENCING NOW

While Australia has some of the best cancer survival rates in the world, the medical system is not designed to address the complex psychosocial challenges that are unique to childhood cancer and which impact the wellbeing of each family member long after the cancer treatment ends.

- ★ An estimated **10,000** mums, dads, carers, diagnosed children and their siblings are missing out on the specialised emotional and mental health support they need to cope across the cancer experience. [1]
- ★ Each year, more children are being diagnosed with cancer in Australia and diagnoses are expected to rise a further **7%** over the 20 years to 2035.[2]
- ★ For **50%** of families, a parent has to give up their job to be with their sick child.
- ★ While the five-year cancer survival rate for children 0-18 years is **86%**, two-thirds will have significant treatment side effects such as organ dysfunction, neurocognitive deficits, impaired fertility, or secondary malignancy.
- ★ Families face more disadvantage if they have to relocate for treatment, live in a regional or remote location, or are of Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander background.

[1] Redkite. (2021). The hidden health crisis – Children's cancer needs more than medicine.

[2] Youlden, et al. (2020). The incidence of childhood cancer in Australia, 1983-2015, and projections to 2035.

When it comes to making an impact ...

YOU MAKE IT POSSIBLE.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of Redkite supporters across Australia, together we are helping give back to families some of what a cancer diagnosis can rob from them – a child's potential, healthy meaningful connections with family and friends, mental resilience, and financial stability.

Your support this last year helped provide more counselling and psychosocial support, financial assistance, information, and resources to families facing childhood cancer. Because of your generosity, we raised over \$13 million during 2021 which has been put to work sustaining the quality in-hospital and community-based programs we offer families every day.

**\$13 MILLION
RAISED!**

**YOUR 2021
GIFTS HAVE
HELPED PROVIDE...**

10,000

Information, counselling
and support sessions
delivered to families

89%

Increase in
group support

1,900

Families receiving
support through
our community-
based
programs

141%

Increase in
Book Club
resources

4,200

Music therapy
sessions

2,800

Individuals supported
by hospital-based
Redkite
social workers

\$1.4 MILLION

In direct financial assistance
to families

580

Red Bag diagnosis
support packs

1,300

New myRedkite
active users



YOU...

GIVE COMFORT

AND REASSURANCE

“I had to explore my fears and explore the negative.”

Noelle, mother of Scout diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia aged three.

“We were floored by Scout’s diagnosis,” Noelle remembers, “and I didn’t know how gruelling the treatment would be, or how long it would take, but the whole family is impacted incredibly... financially, emotionally. I was in this heightened state of anxiety and pressure. Her brothers missed her and me; we were a family separated by cancer.”

Noelle, her husband and three young children are one of thousands of families living with the enormous stress caused by a childhood cancer diagnosis. Scout, the baby of their family, was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia in 2019 when she was three years old. What has followed is months of separation for her and her mother from the rest of the family, compounding the pressure on everyone’s mental and emotional wellbeing.

Redkite-funded social workers based in children’s hospitals throughout Australia connect with children and their families on arrival in hospital and support them through treatment. Our community-based social workers provide free emotional and mental health support by phone, in person or online, which is easily accessible by all family members whenever they need it and wherever they are located. Our social workers become a touchpoint for families throughout their child’s entire cancer experience. And being experts in children’s cancer, no topic is taboo; families have a confidential space to express their fears and explore their feelings.

Redkite’s unique approach to emotional and mental health support was invaluable to Noelle. “Sometimes you can’t always talk freely to friends and family, because they want you to be okay, and they want Scout to be okay,” she explains. “But you have to explore your fears a little bit. Friends and family want to be there to support you, but they want you to think positive. You have to be able to explore the negative, as well,” she says.

From our recently published *Hidden health crisis* report, we know that 60% of families say that their emotional and mental health needs were not met at diagnosis and treatment, rising to over 70% for their unmet needs after treatment and beyond. As such, we have seen the need for our family support services rapidly grow – we saw a 34% increase in individuals accessing our information, support, and counselling services last year and with your support, we provided over 10,000 information, counselling, and support sessions to families like Noelle’s.

Noelle remembers: “One day Scout asked me, ‘Mum, am I going to get to hold a kitten some day?’ I didn’t know if she was ever going to hold a kitten because everything was uncertain. I organised to speak to Redkite’s social workers, and I loved the way they talked to me. So that for me, talking to the social workers, that was where I vented.”



YOU ...
HELP EMPOWER
CHILDREN

In 2021, over 4,200 music therapy sessions were delivered, a 5% increase on 2020.

There is a substantial and growing body of research on the positive impact of music therapy in clinical settings – like a children’s cancer ward.

The impact this allied health therapy has on children is profound and it’s always in demand. Research has shown music to increase a child’s immune response and their body’s production of endorphins to support faster recovery from medical procedures. Music can also elevate a child’s mood and energy levels while also helping to regulate their heart rate, breathing and blood pressure. Music therapy strengthens a child’s ability to cope with the stress of cancer treatment and is highly effective in assisting with pain management, complementing pharmacological treatments.

Thanks to your incredible support in 2021, Redkite Music Therapists were able to stay in hospitals as frontline workers and continued to be an integral part of treatment teams in seven children’s hospitals nationally. Together, they delivered over 4,200 music therapy sessions.

Serena, from the Queensland Children’s Hospital, is a Redkite Music Therapist. She’s passionate about her work and the difference it makes to the children on her ward.

“Music therapists work at the hospital as part of the multidisciplinary team that supports the children and their families. Our role is unique; we use the medium of music to connect with patients and support their coping while they navigate their hospital journey,” Serena explains.

“I had been seeing one little girl for quite a long time now. There were bumps in the road where she had to spend time in the intensive care unit and go through the tough slog of recovery,” she recalls. “I played the guitar and sang her favourite music when she didn’t feel up to doing anything and needed comfort. Music fostered special moments of connection between her and her mum and dad, sharing a cuddle as they sang to her. As she became brighter, she would join me in singing out her favourite songs, playing instruments and enjoying a little groove to the music. Music therapy supported her to have a space to process what was going on, and to have fun, be silly and play. It was an important part of her hospital experience for her and her family.”

“It’s a basic human need for children and families to have access to that emotional layer of support, to have access to what music and experiencing music can bring in terms of wellbeing and health, particularly for children.”

- Serena, Redkite Music Therapist



**YOU...
HELP MAKE
ENDS MEET**

Cancer is expensive – 82% of families dig into their savings to cope financially following their child’s cancer diagnosis.

With your generous support this year, we continued to help families relieve the financial pressure and stress which can build exponentially during a child’s treatment through Redkite’s Financial Assistance Program. Over \$1.4 million in financial assistance was provided to over 1,400 families Australia-wide.

Nicholas – the youngest of four boys – was diagnosed with rhabdomyosarcoma in November 2020 when he was three years old. With his father frequently interstate for work, his mother Lisa left her job the day he was diagnosed to be with him throughout treatment. Since then, their days regularly start at 3am, to make the 80km trip from their home in the country to Adelaide for treatment, leaving his brothers behind in the care of their grandparents.

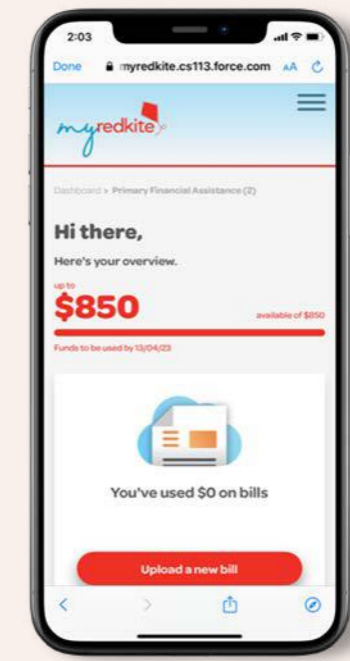
“I’ve left my job and haven’t gone back, and my husband is away every two weeks. So, add a little bit of tiredness and travel and money stress and it’s insane the amount of pressure it puts on your family and yourself,” says Lisa. “Redkite was the first charity we got a hold of because as soon as we got the diagnosis, we were assigned a hospital social worker who said, ‘There’s some financial assistance for you.’” she remembers.

Redkite’s financial assistance is flexible and designed to meet the individual needs of each family. Fuel and grocery vouchers meant Lisa’s parents could step in to do the grocery shop. Utility and other essential household bills can be uploaded directly to our online portal, *myRedkite*, for payment – another way families can access financial assistance.

“I went online and sent some electricity bills which were paid straight away,” she explains. “I take a lot of the responsibility for Nicholas. I rely on everyone else to do all the other bits and pieces. Having that support from Redkite and knowing that you have someone to rely on is a huge help.”

MAKING IT EASIER

Thanks to your support in 2021, we successfully launched our new online portal *myRedkite* as part of an enhanced Financial Assistance Program. Over 1,300 families have now registered to access financial assistance simply and quickly. Innovations like *myRedkite* are making it easier for families to access the support they need so they can focus more on what matters – helping their child.



Families can access *myRedkite* on their mobile anywhere and anytime.



YOU...
BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER

“We had people on the call from all over Australia and Redkite facilitated it. Once we started talking, they couldn't shut us up!”

When someone has gone through a traumatic experience, connecting with others who have experienced something similar can help with their mental wellbeing. Cancer is emotionally traumatic for every family member, which is why Redkite Connect Groups, facilitated by a Redkite community-based social worker, are so helpful and impactful for participants.

More than half of the families who are going through their child's cancer said they needed to connect with others going through the same experience. From diagnosis and treatment (55%), to end of treatment onwards (58%), or into palliative care and bereavement (53% and 51% respectively), families report that they need to find ways to relieve their sense of isolation. Redkite facilitates this connection through our Connect and Coffee Catch Up groups, and through our Cascade Program, run in partnership with the Kids Cancer Centre. Due to the contributions from our supporters in 2021, we were able to run 72 support groups – more than one a week – an 89% increase from 2020.

Each Redkite Connect Group centres around a specific theme – like mums, dads or grandparents, or a stage in the cancer journey. Connect Groups give parents and caregivers an opportunity to connect with people who are on a similar journey to them, where they don't have to explain themselves because everyone on the call “just knows”.

Trish joined a Connect Group for bereaved parents after her son, Tom, passed away from brain cancer in 2019.

“The first time I'd talked to other bereaved parents was through a Redkite Connect Group,” Trish remembers. “We had people on the call from all over Australia and Redkite facilitated it. Once we started talking, they couldn't shut us up!”

“When I speak to other mums and dads there is an understanding of what we're going through and you can just talk,” says Trish. “Even if we're sharing terrible stories, it's our space to do it and I always feel lighter at the end. Whether we've had a cry or a laugh, those shared experiences really connect you.”

For Trish, and many parents who participate in Redkite's Connect Groups, their impact is profound because of the common ground, safety, and friendship the groups create. “The Connect Groups I've done with Redkite happened to be with other parents whose children also had brain cancer and I think that made our connection more intense,” Trish explains. “If I'm talking to someone who's lost a child to cancer, it's like a hundred times more intense and helpful. So, I really love the video calls that I've done with Redkite. They are much so much more impactful than even some of the chats that I have with close friends and family and other supporters in my life, because they just know... they've been through the same thing and it's so important.”

Today Trish still misses her son, and she still loves talking about him. Her family and friends are always ready to listen, but Trish knows that if she ever wants to talk to people who, as she puts it, “just know”, she can join the next Redkite Connect Group.





IN GRATITUDE

At Redkite we value all our amazing partners including individual supporters, foundations, and corporations. Your generosity helps us to provide emotional and mental health support, financial assistance, and practical resources to people whose lives are profoundly affected by childhood cancer.

Redkite's Impact Report allows us to recognise our donors who supported us during 2021.

We also acknowledge and thank those who have elected not to have their names published.

GIFT IN WILLS

Estate of the late Leslie Edward Allen
 Estate of the late JB Holliday
 Estate of the late Peter John Joynson
 Estate of the late Erika Mettbach
 Estate of the late Lyell Elaine Power

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PREMIER PARTNERS



MAJOR CORPORATE SUPPORTERS



SUPPORTER HIGHLIGHTS

COLES & COLES EXPRESS

In 2021, Redkite celebrated eight years of partnership with our Premier Partners Coles and Coles Express, who have raised over \$45 million for families facing childhood cancer since 2013. The passionate team continues to make a significant and meaningful difference by donating 5c from the sale of every specially marked loaf of Coles Own Brand bread, gingerbread, 20c from the sale of Easter hot cross buns, and through Redkite fundraising weeks at Coles Express.

In 2021, the Redkite and Coles Dare to Dream Scholarship received 142 applications from young people impacted by cancer, with 42 young people awarded the scholarship.

Coles Express team members continued to go above and beyond connecting and inspiring customers to round up their purchases during the Redkite Week. In 2021, the team members across Australia raised an incredible \$2.3 million for families facing their child's cancer.



CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

This year saw Redkite's corporate supporters and communities across Australia come together to help families in what was another challenging year.

We launched our inaugural **Sun Up Challenge** in September which saw 791 people get up at sunrise and walk every morning for the month of September, raising over \$255,000 to support Redkite families. A big thank you to **BOC**, for their generous support as Headline Sponsor, and to **9 Network** as our Media Partner helping spread the word across broadcast, digital and print channels.

It was a record breaking year of fundraising through **Dry July**, where 866 supporters raised over \$400,000. Across Australia, 47 corporate teams got behind the challenge, giving up

alcohol with their colleagues for the month. The funds raised during Dry July, plus a generous grant from the Dry July Foundation, allows Redkite to provide essential emotional, practical, and mental health support to young people with cancer and their families from the moment of diagnosis.

Our **Beyond 24 Crisis Appeal** saw **MPA** and **Canaccord Genuity** step up to raise nearly \$300,000 in one week with funds generously matched by **BOC**.

Our wonderful supporters raised critical funding to ensure families receive the essential support they need to weather the tough months ahead. We are grateful for the continued support of these generous organisations.

A LIFETIME LEGACY

Kathy understands the importance of making sure diagnosed children and their families continue to have access to the support they need whenever they need it and wherever they are.

“It’s a horrendous thing for a child, and often their parents are going through financial hell too,” Kathy said.

Kathy first heard about the vital services that Redkite provides to families facing childhood cancer when she attended a Redkite Corporate Quiz night in support of Redkite. At that event she was deeply moved by stories from families and became a lifelong supporter. Over the years, Kathy’s commitment to Redkite’s mission to ensure children with cancer and their families have access to the best possible support deepened. She became a regular giver and a member of our Regional Council, but she wanted to find another way to ensure future families facing childhood cancer still received this support, which is why she decided to include Redkite in her Will.

Kathy says the process was quick, easy – and one of the most rewarding decisions she’s ever made.

“It’s an amazing feeling knowing you’ve left a legacy and you’ll make a difference in people’s lives even after you’re gone,” Kathy said.



Leaving a gift in your Will is a lasting testament to your values; ensuring that your dedication to improving the lives of others can live on for future generations. If you are interested in hearing more about how you can leave a gift in your Will to Redkite, please speak with our Bequest Specialist.

Cheryl Kirgan
Bequest Specialist
ckirgan@redkite.org.au

NO ONE SHOULD FACE THE IMPOSSIBLE ALONE

Together we have achieved an incredible amount but there is still much more to be done before we see a day where every diagnosed child and their family receive the care and support they need.

With your continued passion and commitment, we can provide more tailored services so children and their families can continue to live life to the fullest, despite their diagnosis. We want to make sure that more families feel empowered to navigate every step of the cancer experience.

Our ambition is that every family has equal access to the best psychosocial support available whenever and wherever they need it.

It has been a privilege to step into the role of Redkite Chair in 2021 and lead my fellow Directors and Redkite team. I want to acknowledge the outstanding contributions made by our outgoing Chairman, Jennifer Horrigan, who led Redkite with distinction through the last three years, including during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Childhood cancer robs children and their families of certainty, potential and future plans. Together we can continue to transform how families access our comprehensive non-medical support.

Mark Rigotti
Redkite Chair



CURRENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Board of Directors provide strong corporate governance and are custodians of Redkite's mission and values. They volunteer their time to ensure that Redkite fully meets our objectives and obligations in support of children with cancer and their families.



Mark Rigotti
Redkite Chair

Recently appointed CEO of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (from 25th July 2022). Immediate Past Global CEO of Herbert Smith Freehills, where he is currently a Partner & Senior Adviser. Over 20 years of senior executive experience.



Jennifer Horrigan

Resigned 31 May 2022
– end of term

Current Chairman of Dexus Asset Management with over 25 years' experience across investment banking, financial communications and strategic relations.



A/Prof Chris Milross

20 December 2021
– term start

Currently the Director of Radiation Oncology and Medical Services at Chris O'Brien Lifehouse. 30 years' experience in clinical oncology as a specialist radiation oncologist.



Bruce Morgan

Resigned 31 May 2022
– end of term

Current Chair of TAHE, Deputy Chair of the European Australian Business Council and Director of Origin Energy and the University of NSW Foundation. Adjunct Professor, University of NSW.



Stephen Conry AM
Board Member

Stephen is Chairman of private investment company Langdon Capital and the former CEO of JLL, Australia's largest commercial property services firm. He has served on various business and community Boards, and is Immediate Past President of the Property Council of Australia.



Joost de Kock
Board Member

Deputy Secretary Customer Strategy & Technology at Transport for NSW with 20 years' consulting experience in public and private sectors. Joost is passionate about helping families facing childhood cancer through personal experience.



Georgie Gardner
Board Member

One of the country's best known and most popular television news presenters, anchoring Nine's 6.00pm Sydney news bulletin and ambassador for Redkite since 2000.



Dr Brian Murphy
Board Member

Leads global consultancy firm Bain and Company's Energy & Natural Resources practice across the Asia-Pacific region. Over 20 years' experience in strategy and management consulting.



Alex Scandurra
Board Member

Founding Director of FinTech Australia, and sits on the ASIC Digital Advisory Committee and the Advisory Board to the NSW Dept of Finance, Services & Innovation. Former CEO of Stone & Chalk.



Deanne Stewart

16 March 2022
– term start

Currently the CEO of Aware Super. Deanne has more than 25 years' leadership experience in financial services in wealth, superannuation and insurance sectors.



“The impact of cancer is huge. It becomes a full-time job. Every day is a different juggle. I can’t always plan, and when I do, not everything goes according to plan.”

- Michelle, mother of Dakoda diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia aged three.



“YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH YOUR
GENEROSITY HAS HELPED US THIS YEAR.
I DON'T THINK WE COULD HAVE MADE IT
THROUGH THIS WITHOUT YOUR SUPPORT.”

- Anonymous feedback from parent



*Thank you for being part of our mission to ensure
there is always a lifeline for families facing childhood cancer.*

*We invite you to tell us about your passion for supporting
families facing childhood cancer.
Contact us to create change for diagnosed children and their families.*

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