

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

Helping girls and young women
live life fearlessly



FROM THE CHAIR



After three years of researching, developing, piloting and evaluating, Fearless Women officially launched and rolled out our flagship education and mentoring programs in February 2023.

As an organisation initiated and based on evidence, we have taken the time to get the programs right and build a solid foundation for future success – an approach that would not have been possible without the support of our founding family.

This year we also expanded our board from the initial start-up members, to include a younger group of women with a diverse range of experience and expertise. Thank you to Ramya Balachandren, Rachel Fishlock, Delfina Shakespear and Shannon Wilson-McClinton for joining our board and to existing directors, Juliet Moody, Judy Waters, Rebecca Gorman, Dr Kerry Sargent and Martin Fisk for your wisdom, advice and assistance over 2022-23.

The delivery of our programs relies on a dedicated and committed team, and we are fortunate to have such a team, led by the fearless and tireless Chief Executive Officer, Glenda Stevens. On behalf of the board, thank you to Glenda, Patricia McDonell, Hannah Deans and Greta Mauwa for your commitment, particularly in devoting weekends and evenings to deliver our activities that are necessarily out of traditional work hours.

And thank you to our amazing mentors, who are central to helping girls and young women live life with confidence, courage, resilience and hope. As with our team, mentors invest considerable time out of their busy lives to be a friend who will listen without judgement to mentees. Mentoring is a vitally important pillar in the Fearless Women program offering, and we could not achieve our mission without these extraordinary women.

Now that we have piloted, evaluated, launched and are now delivering our Education and Mentoring programs, attention is turning to fundraising to ensure a sustainable future for Fearless Women. We know our programs work – we have the evidence to prove it. We now need to build a solid financial base to support operations, programs and governance over the long term.

Unfortunately Fearless Women did not receive ACT Government funding this year, despite Budget and grant submissions and engagement with Ministers.

We will continue to strongly advocate for funding with the ACT Government – particularly now we are receiving referrals from ACT government agencies – to achieve equity with our “brother” organisation, Menslink.

We will also continue to pursue private funding and partnerships, guided by the marketing and fundraising strategy developed this year, and the fundraising committee established in 2022-23.

Fearless Women was a bright idea in 2020 that became a reality thanks to our founding supporters, or family as we like to call them.

We would not be providing education and mentoring programs to thousands of girls and young women today without their support.

Once again, thank you to the:

- Prosser Foundation
- Snow Foundation
- Hands Across Canberra
- Proximity
- Much More than Money
- Capital Chemist

You have been with us from the start, and we thank you for your faith in realising the Fearless Women vision and sharing the journey with us.

Most of all, we thank you for your support for the girls and young women of the Canberra region.

Together we are making a difference, and helping girls and young women thrive, not just survive.

Gai Brodtmann
Chair

FROM THE CEO



2022–23 saw Fearless Women grow. No longer a seedling, but now in the sunshine and fresh air...and making a positive difference.

As an organisation, Fearless Women invested in start-up equipment and resources. In July 2022, with new shiny branding, logos, website and social media, plus a grace-and-favour shared office location in the city, the Mentor Program commenced. Twelve young women were each paired with a capable, Fearless Women-trained volunteer mentor. By the end of the year, 45 young women/mentor pairs were part of the program. At the same time, Fearless Future, our school Education Program for girls in Years 5 to 10, started.

The programs' six-month evaluation showed them to be consistent with their Theories of Change and are contributing to building confidence, healthy relationships, personal resilience, and ... fearless women. Unfortunately, due to resource restrictions, the proposed Counselling Program has not yet commenced.

Demand for Fearless First sessions and for participation in the Mentor Program is strong. To facilitate increased demand, and to maintain a high standard of service delivery and organisational support, further staff were employed.

Support Officer, Patricia McDonnell and I were joined

by Hannah Deans as Education Officer and in June 2023, Greta Mauwa filled the Program Coordinator role. The contribution to the development of programs, by interns from the University of Canberra's Bachelor of Science in Psychology was appreciated. A Youth Advisory Committee, to give input on contemporary issues, was also established this year.

"BY THE END OF THE YEAR, 45 YOUNG WOMEN/MENTOR PAIRS WERE PART OF THE PROGRAM."

The skill of Fearless Women's dedicated and knowledgeable Board together with its committed, creative, and talented staff has enabled Fearless Women to achieve its organisational and program aims for the year. Underpinning them, Fearless Women has depended on the good will of the people of the ACT. I am thankful for the support from the ACT community, from businesses, from our donors and volunteers, and from our amazing, vivacious, and committed mentors. Seeing theory and research come to life; seeing our programs take shape; seeing women, young and more mature, grow, learn, connect, and become confident has been beyond rewarding.

Glenda Stevens
CEO

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

INCOME	2023	2022
Grants	4,875	7,798
Major Gifts	173,705	965,000
Donations	31,525	34,908
Consulting Fees	2,000	-
Interest Received	3,289	138
Total Income	215,394	1,007,844

EXPENDITURE		
Salaries/staff expenses	205,464	109,759
Organisation expenses	51,672	25,915
Mentor Program*	15,834	818
Education Program*	27,014	7,633
Total Operating Expense	299,984	144,125

*Excluding program salaries /staff expenses

Year's Surplus (Deficit)	(84,590)	863,718
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Balance sheet as at 30 June

ASSETS	2023	2022
Cash at Bank	795,089	881,508
GST receivable		4,769
Fixed Assets	6,515	5,323
Total Operating Expense	801,604	891,599

LIABILITIES

Current Liabilities	11,914	12,319
Total Liabilities	11,914	12,319
Net Assets	789,690	879,280

EQUITY

Current Year Earnings	(84,590)	863,718
Retained Earnings	874,280	15,562
Total Equity	789,690	879,280

TREASURER'S COMMENTS



Fearless Women finished the year in a slightly weaker position than at the start of 2022–23, however it held retained earnings of \$874,280.

In 2021–22, Fearless Women received a donation of \$750,000. It was the donor's intention that Fearless Women use the funds over the ensuing 3–years.

The year's operating costs exceeded income by \$84,590. Salary, wages, and the cost of employment was the organisation's largest expense. Fearless Women invested in a comprehensive customer resource management database (CRM) to underpin operations and incurred organisational and program start-up costs.

In 2022–23 Fearless Women received \$205,230 in gifts and donations from Foundations, businesses, and individuals plus a Volunteer Grant of \$4,875 from the Australian Government. Fearless Women is most grateful for their generosity.

Rebecca Gorman
Treasurer

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Young women have a unique perspective on their lives. To assist Fearless Women maintain an ongoing, grounded connection with girls and young women, an Advisory Committee was established. The Committee's members are young women aged from ten to thirty, who are from diverse backgrounds and experiences. They provide input into program development and policies, help identify trends and challenges, and discuss ideas on issues facing girls and young women.

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

A Fundraising Committee was established in June 2023. This Committee will develop and implement a Fundraising and Philanthropic Strategy and provide advice, support and recommendations in relation to fundraising opportunities for Fearless Women.

PROGRAMS



EVALUATION

An external evaluation, in December 2022, showed that both the Mentor Program and Fearless Future are progressing towards delivering the target objectives and outcomes, with higher-than-anticipated benchmarks being achieved.

The evaluation found that the programs are each based on evidence and that objectives and key factors are proving to be accurate.

**FEARLESS
WOMEN** ♥

MENTOR PROGRAM

In July 2022, the first pilot mentoring group, Fearless First, commenced their two-year journey. Forty-five young women aged between 10 and 21 had joined the program by June 2023, each paired with a volunteer female mentor.

In 2023, the Mentor Program was enhanced with group activities specifically for older mentees and their mentors. These sessions included 'Sexual Well-being' facilitated by Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT, and CV writing hosted by Yellow Edge.

**"100% OF PARENTS
SAW POSITIVE CHANGES
IN THEIR MENTEE
DAUGHTERS."**

On-going professional development for mentors also commenced. The first session was 'Practical ways to support a mentee with anxiety', by Psychodynamic Psychotherapist, Tracey Mansted.

Program participants meet fortnightly either as a pair or for Fearless Women-organised group activities. Time as a pair allows for conversations and to unpack specific life challenges being faced by the young woman. Group activities complement individual catch-ups. Through interacting in small, safe groups, mentees develop social skills, learn about their world, engage in new experiences, and mature their strengths and build confidence.

This year's group activities included:

- Jewellery, drumming, and art workshops
- Learning hip hop and street funk
- Packing Birthing Kits with Zonta International and Rotary
- Caring for ponies at Pegasus Riding for the Disabled
- Games and Japanese cultural nights
- Urban orienteering
- Star gazing at Mt Stromlo, and
- Picnicking at Nara Peace Park

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

FEARLESS FUTURE

Fearless Future is a 50-minute foundation course that promotes positive help-seeking and provides advice on how to help someone else who is struggling. In 2022-23, Fearless Future was delivered 66 times to girls in years 5 - 10 in government and non-government schools in the ACT and NSW.

"92% OF ATTENDEES SAID THEY WOULD RECOMMEND FEARLESS FUTURE TO OTHERS."

In its first year, 4,930 young women heard Fearless Future's key messages: you are not alone, it is OK not to be OK all the time, where to go for help and how to help someone who is struggling.

LET'S TALK ABOUT

Four modules from an expanded, multi module program titled Let's talk about ... were trialled with girls in years 5 - 10 in several schools. A modified version was also delivered to 20 women on the JobTrainer Women in Civil Construction Program.

**FEARLESS
Future** 

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foundation course

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In its first year,

**4,930
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heard Fearless Future's key
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LOOKING FORWARD

In 2024, the Fearless Women Mentor Program will be running at capacity with eight cohorts of young women and mentors, and the pilot cohorts will graduate.

To ensure programs continue to be effective and well run, a comprehensive evaluation and mentor support program will be embedded into the Mentor and Education programs.

The remaining modules of Let's talk about... will be developed by the end of 2023 and launched in schools in first term of 2024.

CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY

OUR SUPPORTERS

Our first Volunteer Thank You afternoon was held at the National Museum of Australia. Before viewing the Empowered, Women Through the Ages exhibition, guests were acknowledged by Alicia Payne MP and Senator David Smith. Chair, Gai Brodtmann thanked everyone for their willing and outstanding contribution to Fearless Women. Fearless Women could not function without the generosity and kindness of volunteers.

Several Canberra businesses hosted fundraising events for Fearless Women, including Farrar Gesini Dunn's golf day, Tour de Office bike ride organised by MGI Joyce Dickson, Proximity's Big Day Out, and Fearless Women participated in Hands Across Canberra's annual Canberra Day giving appeal. Fearless Women is also grateful for the significant contributions to our business activities by Rowdy Inc., Dance Central, Threesides Marketing, and the team at Yellow Edge.

Fearless Women is sincerely thankful to the following organisations for their financial support in 2022-23:



The Prosser Foundation

FARRARGESINIDUNN

ShawandPartners
Financial Services



THE HUMPHRIES FAMILY
FOUNDATION



ActewAGL



20
MWB
22

CLYNROD FOUNDATION



OUR VOLUNTEERS

Our first Volunteer Thank You afternoon was held at the National Museum of Australia. Before viewing the Empowered, Women Through the Ages exhibition, guests were acknowledged by Dr Marisa Patterson, MLA and Mr David Smith, MP. Fearless Women Chair, Gai Brodtmann thanked every volunteer for their willing and outstanding contribution to Fearless Women. Fearless Women could not function without the generosity and kindness of volunteers.

OUR COLLABORATIONS

Fearless Women is an active and contributing member of:

- ACT Council of Social Service
- Mental Health Community Coalition
- Canberra Business Chamber
- Volunteering ACT, and
- Youth Alliance of ACT

Fearless Women believes that collaborating with others give greater successful outcomes. Fearless Women has contributed through:

- Input to ACT Government Directorates' Commissioning process at roundtables, meetings, workshops and planning days with the Child, Youth and Family Services Programs, ACT Health Directorate, Mental Health Commissioning, and the Community Services Directorate.
- Fearless Women values our healthy reciprocal relationship with several organisations, including Menslink, and appreciates their generosity to Fearless Women since inception.
- Holding a roundtable conversation on achieving gender equality which resulted in Fearless Women submitting a recommendations paper to the ACT Government's 3rd Action Plan under the ACT Women's Plan 2016-26.



RAiSiNG COMMUNITY AWARENESS

Fearless Women garnered significant media exposure following the February 2023 official launch of both the Mentor Program and Fearless Future, with several newspaper articles and multiple radio interviews.

At the ACT Volunteer Expo, Fearless Women staff and volunteer mentors talked with prospective volunteers about our programs. Fearless Women also spoke at community organisation meetings such as Rotary Sundowners, Canberra Quilters, and

Volleyball ACT, while being the selected charity on Capital Chemist's 2023 calendar gave Fearless Women year-round exposure. Presentations to industry groups such as the ACT Department of Education Allied Health Services helped to promote Fearless Women's programs in the community.

Fearless Women launched profiles on social media platforms Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. By the end of June there were more than 300 Facebook followers, 160 following on Instagram, and an active LinkedIn page with frequently viewed posts.



Fearless Women

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[FEARLESSWOMEN.ORG.AU](https://fearlesswomen.org.au)

