

Annual Review

2022



Lifestyle
Solutions

Contents

- A word from our Chair and CEO2
- About us.....6
- Keeping people safe.....8
- Our people12
- Growing independence.....14
- Bindi Enterprises18
- Supporting jobseekers..... 20
- Children, young people and families.....22
- Change for good 26
- Doing things better 28
- Our Board32

Acknowledgement

Lifestyle Solutions acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia. We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the traditions, knowledge and dreamings of first Australians.

Meet Dan

Dan represented Tasmania in ten pin bowling at the 2022 Special Olympics Australian National Games (the Games). He works at Neville-Smith Forest Products (NSFP) timber mill, supported on the job by Possability.

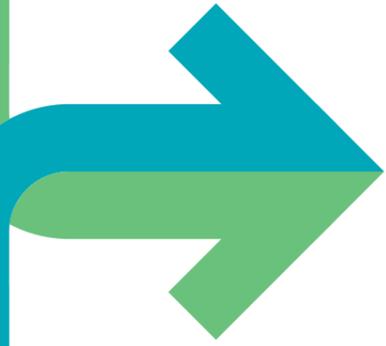
“Being out on the big stage, with the big crowd and your friends and teammates behind you—they give you a lot of support and momentum so you can feel confident. I try to push really hard to achieve something big.

Meet Jason

Jason took home gold in the 100-metre breaststroke. He said it “felt like it went really well” when he swam for Tasmania at the Games. Jason’s also a supported employee at NSFP.

“It’s what I love doing, just being in the pool being around other people. Growing up I wanted to be like Ian Thorpe.





As one group, Possability and Lifestyle Solutions have an exciting future.

We came together because of the things we share and because we see how we can do so much more with our combined people, resources and knowledge.

Joining together

In October 2022, Lifestyle Solutions and Possability joined together as one group.

We could see that combined we have an even greater ability to contribute to the people and communities we serve.

What we share

Across our group, we share:

- Leadership in providing services and support for people with disability as well as children, young people, their families and carers
- Strong histories of service - Lifestyle Solutions was established 20 years ago and Possability has more than 30 years' experience
- Complementary locations all around Australia
- Values that underpin cultures of collaboration, trust, teamwork and respect
- A commitment to human rights and inclusion
- A passion for enabling people to pursue their potential and achieve what is important to them.

Making a difference

Together, we can invest more in our people and services. We will be better positioned to invest in practice, research and staff training. Our complementary skill sets and experience will drive innovation and creative solutions.

From the earliest days of integration we have seen the many ways in which we can learn from each other.

What we are creating is better than the sum of both organisations' individual parts.

Staying focused

As Lifestyle Solutions and Possability come together, we remain focused on supporting our staff and continuing to deliver high quality services for the people we support, their families, carers and communities.

The people we support are still seeing the same familiar faces and maintaining their existing routines.

Positively received

The joining together of Lifestyle Solutions and Possability has been welcomed by external stakeholders who have expressed their ongoing desire to work with us in providing life-changing services.

The environment in which we work has changed rapidly in recent years and continues to change. When we came together, Lifestyle Solutions and Possability were both recognised as successful providers of services. Both had been early trial sites for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Both were contributing to our sector through organisations such as Alliance20 and National Disability Services (NDS).

As a larger provider in Australia, with greater resources and presence, we will continue to build our leadership in the sector, advocate for change and support other industry participants.



Drew Beswick (left)
CEO

Tony Pearson (right)
Chair

Our integration plans

Joining two organisations is not a simple process. However, our plans and preparation will make it as smooth and efficient as possible.

We began planning in September 2022 and integration was underway by October 2022. We expect it will take until mid-2023 to complete.

Integration is the process by which we identify how two separate organisations come to operate as one. It is how we determine how the people, processes and systems will work when combined.

The integration work is being undertaken by a dedicated team overseen by a steering committee within the group.

The dedicated integration team combines people with expertise in integrations and draws on the knowledge and experience of subject matter experts from across our group. This team will consult with a wide range of people, including staff and people we support.

They will build an understanding of how we work together, and plan and implement any change required to work better together in the future.

Getting involved

The integration depends on listening to and learning from the ideas and feedback of the people we support, families, carers and staff.

People are getting involved in the integration process in various ways, including co-design workshops, reference groups and providing feedback.

Meanwhile, BAU

While we do this, we're operating business as usual with existing staff and organisational structures.

Keeping the integration process separate to business as usual makes sure it does not affect the important daily work our people do.

Meet Amanda

A proud Aboriginal woman, Amanda was born and raised on Wiradjuri land and has dedicated her life to advocating for her people.

Amanda's passion to create a positive impact on the Aboriginal community attracted her to the role of First Nations Cultural Advisor at Lifestyle Solutions.

As part of the Child and Family Service Experience team, Amanda is responsible for developing and supporting cultural planning for Aboriginal children and young people living in residential and out-of-home care.

"I saw the position as an opportunity where I could make a meaningful difference on the outlook for Aboriginal youth and help give them a stronger voice," says Amanda.

Amanda champions our cultural support training program, travelling up and down the country to deliver workshops to our teams on how we can better support Aboriginal children living in out-of-home care.

Conducting the workshops gives Amanda a wonderful opportunity to grow awareness in the cultural space and share her experiences, knowledge and stories in the hope of inspiring others to support a better future for Aboriginal children in care.

"Loss of cultural identity is a major concern for Aboriginal children growing up in care. Our most important job for Aboriginal children is finding those missing links and connecting them back to their culture," says Amanda.

In the future, Amanda is working toward increasing community engagement by establishing more partnerships with Aboriginal communities and programs that support Aboriginal children and young people. She also hopes to be able to offer parenting programs that support Aboriginal parents to reconnect with their children in care.

“I'm always looking at new ways that we can gain a deeper understanding of the children that are coming into care, to allow us to have the right programs in place to meet their needs.”



About us

We support people with disability in their home, at work and in the community. We support children and young people in out-of-home care.

The people we support, their families and communities are at the heart of what we do.

Nothing makes us happier than seeing people thrive and build the lives they want for themselves.

We listen to people and seek to create a more equal society through our services in the areas of employment, independent living, support coordination, positive behaviour support, short stays and through creating safe, stable and nurturing environments for the children and young people we support in out-of-home care.

Where it all began

We've always believed in equality.

We see 'doing things better' as part of creating a more equal world.

Possability's story began in 1953, with a group of parents who saw the need to create opportunities for their children with disability. These businesses would become Oak Tasmania.

Then in 1989, nuns who understood the importance of 'a good life' opened a community housing and support services organisation named Euphrasia for people with disability.

A series of partnerships and mergers saw Euphrasia and Oak Tasmania bind together under the Possability Group.

Lifestyle Solutions followed a similar path.

In 1978 Bindi Enterprises began in Alice Springs to provide employment opportunities, support and advocacy for people with a disability.

Then in 2002, around a kitchen table in Newcastle, a group of people with personal experience caring for people with disability decided to do something to make people's lives better. They set up disability accommodation services under the name Lifestyle Solutions and soon expanded into residential out-of-home care for children.

Bindi and Lifestyle Solutions merged in 2012.

Possability and Lifestyle Solutions joined together in late 2022.

Today we stand as one. We are a blend of people from all walks of life united behind a shared vision—to support Australians with disability to live the lives they choose and to empower and support children and young people achieve positive outcomes.

Over the years our focus on equality has only deepened.

Where we're heading

We're working tirelessly to contribute to a more equitable and inclusive world.

While there's still much to be done, it's an exciting time to be part of the growing momentum.

We're proud to represent the interests of people with disability and children and young people through our sector advocacy. And we're committed to building sector knowledge and improving practice through our collaborations, partnerships, research and knowledge-sharing.

How we measure up



Keeping people safe

As we come together as one group, our focus will continue to be on delivering consistent, high quality services. The safety and safeguarding of the people we support is central to our service delivery.

Staying healthy with COVID-19

We want everyone we support, our staff and our communities to stay safe against COVID-19.

Since vaccinations became available in 2021, Lifestyle Solutions and Possability have encouraged all the people we support and team members to be vaccinated against COVID-19. We provided information and worked with people we support following informed consent standards so they could make an informed decision about vaccination. Families, guardians and persons responsible were engaged where appropriate and information provided in an accessible format where preferred.

Our staff were kept up to date on government requirements for vaccinations. Our social media and employee communication emphasised a positive view of becoming vaccinated.

Managing staff absences due to isolation and illness presented rostering challenges but we were able to address those and ensure that we continued to deliver quality services. At Lifestyle Solutions, a cross-organisation working group continues to meet regularly to share the latest information and government requirements, to ensure effective responses to the evolving situation.

A new safety buddy initiative is also protecting the health and safety of our employees by mitigating risks for a lone worker or a worker who works in a high-risk environment in isolated or remote areas.

Possability's Victorian teams were hit hard by outbreaks during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our management teams worked closely with the state health authorities and Local Public Health Units and followed the most up to date advice in managing the outbreaks.

We were so thankful to all our employees who consistently donned and worked in full personal protective equipment (PPE) when required and went above and beyond throughout the year—many working additional shifts to fill staff shortages.

Our staff are the bee's knees

Outbreaks and restrictions have continued since 2020, but our teams are dedicated and well-versed.

We want to thank all our staff for their support through the ups and downs.

You have shown innovation, resilience and strength. Thank you for supporting your team and for making the most of tough times. Thank you for being there for the people we support.

Meet Susan

"My job is all about helping people live their lives," Susan says.

It varies from person to person. It might be assisting with personal care, cooking, cleaning, shopping or attending medical appointments. Or it might be going out for a cup of coffee and grabbing something to eat, and providing emotional support if they're having a bad day."

Susan works with around 15 people as a Possability support professional, including with those with complex healthcare needs. She says the key to a successful support relationship is to value each person's lived experience and to partner with them to meet their needs: because they know themselves best. But when working with people who have complex care needs, it's about being extra careful.

"It requires a bit of extra vigilance, because you've got to be aware of things that can go wrong, like skin integrity and pressure sores, which are a big deal.

"Even the tiniest thing can leave a mark and turn into a pressure sore, and it can happen really quickly. It can have a huge impact. You can even lose limbs—or worse."

Susan says she's picked up a surprisingly broad range of skills while at work—and that it's also helped her confidence, too. "It pushes you out of your comfort zone to do things you wouldn't normally do. Before this job I'd park far away just to avoid parking in tight spaces. But I've had to park closer if the person I'm with has mobility issues.

Susan says working as a support professional has been deeply rewarding—and seeing the people she supports grow is one of her favourite parts of the job.

"You're helping someone every single day," she says. "It matters, even if you're not achieving those bigger goals. You're helping someone when they need it—without taking over their independence."



Meet Tom

Tom's always been interested in how stuff works.

"There's nothing better than getting an old busted television and taking a look at it. Even if it's completely blown up, it's nice to rip it back and go 'hmm, what was the engineer thinking when they built this?'"

Tom says his curiosity was sparked from a young age, largely thanks to his dad's interest in mechanics. "Dad's into four-wheel drives, and would pull the car apart every second weekend."

He says the support he gets from Possability helps keep his "life in order" with a diary and reminders. He's also been working on his everyday living skills—he's now catching public transport by himself, mowing the lawn, cooking dinner once a week and doing his own laundry.

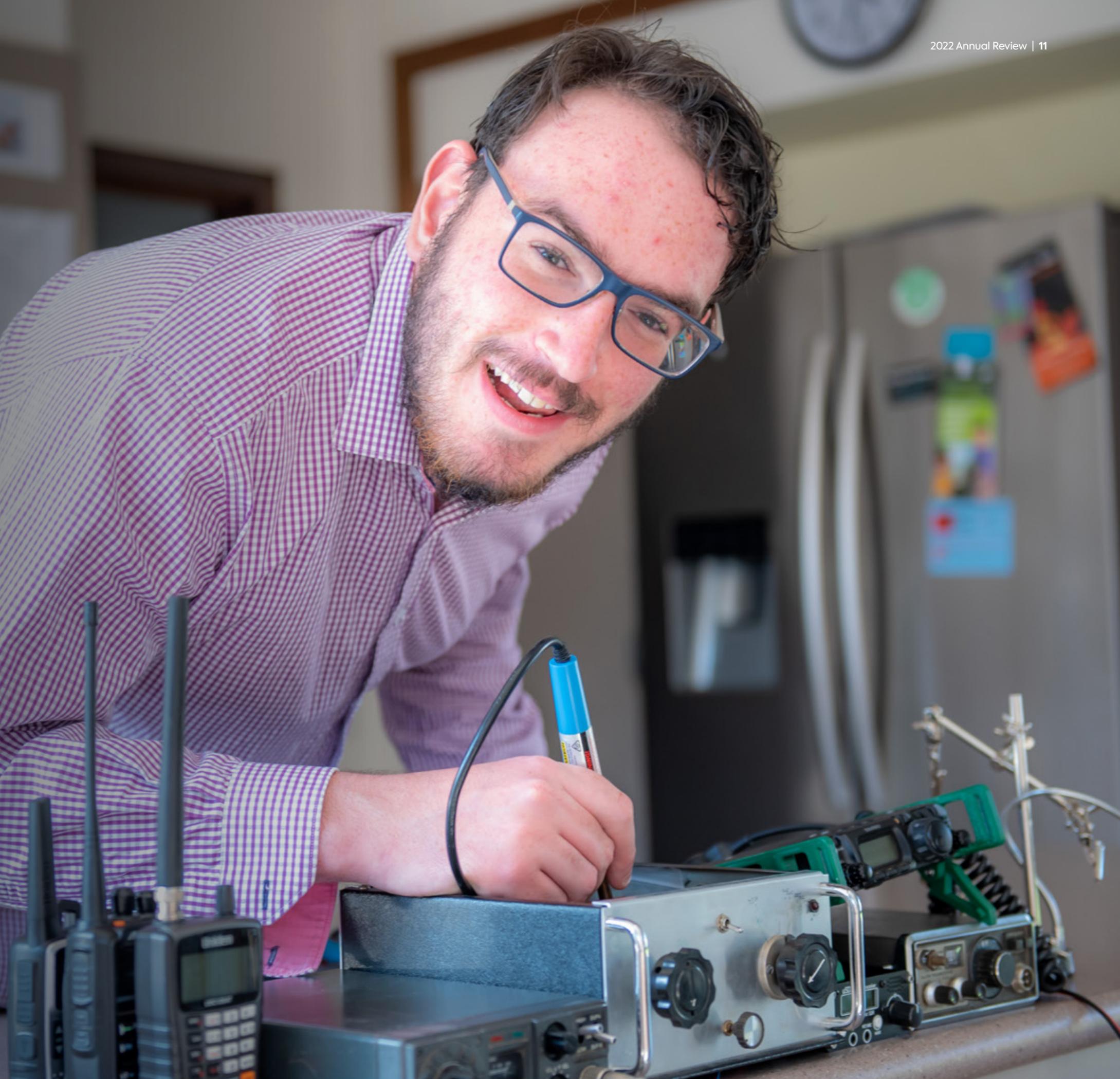
A Melbourne student in his final year of high school, Tom already has an impressive collection of specialist knowledge—and the accolades to go along with it.

For the past seven years, he's been a radio operator with the Eastern Mountain District Amateur Radio Club, and achieved his Amateur Radio Licence back in 2017. The same year, he also won the club's President's Award, and recently placed third in Australia alongside the club for the Wireless Institute of Australia's 2022 Remembrance Day Contest.

Tom enjoys the challenge of learning new things. He's also done a fair bit of portable amateur radio, setting up battery-powered gear and transmitting signals on hilltops. He's even dabbled in building his own transmitters.

Tom's advice to others?

“**Don't be afraid. It's never too late to learn about stuff.**”



Our people

Our people come from different backgrounds and work together to make our organisation rich and vibrant. We strive to provide great training, a safe workplace and want our people to be proud of the work we do.

Compass

In early 2022 Lifestyle Solutions launched a new mobile app for engaging with employees. Called Compass, it's built on a platform from a Sydney-based human resources (HR) technology company, Mumba. Content ranges from the latest organisation news and good news stories, to special deals on a range of products and services.

Lifestyle Solutions has integrated other systems into Compass as well. It gives staff access on their mobile to the comprehensive set of resources and tools for frontline staff that was established on the Lifestyle Solutions intranet in late 2020. The How Do I? toolkit contains quick guides with summaries and easy-to-read information, detailed instructions for processes and activities, system instructions and videos to show how to use a system or perform a task.

Attracting the right people

Attracting and retaining workers is a priority for everyone in our sector. In May 2022 Lifestyle Solutions won the inaugural Best Candidate Experience Initiative Award at the national SEEK STAR Awards.

This award acknowledges the innovative work in our organisation and our commitment to our values. The award recognised that hiring the best people through our talent process leads to great outcomes for the people we support. The award was for an online system that focuses on recruiting people whose values align with ours as well as creating a great experience for candidates.

Training

Lifestyle Solutions developed a new learning hub. All online courses and compliance with training requirements are now tracked in the new hub. The new learning hub is also accessible via the Compass mobile app.

Possability continues to work in partnership with Jobs Victoria to provide paid disability support professional traineeships. The program commenced in Melbourne in 2021 and offers the right candidates a 12-month paid traineeship for their Certificate IV in Disability.

During the year Lifestyle Solutions also introduced 21 traineeships.

Virtual reality

Virtual reality (VR) is becoming the next big thing in workplace training and has proven especially useful in healthcare sectors.

Possability has partnered with a tech company to introduce VR as regular training tool. So far, we've held pilot VR training sessions for a small group of staff and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Medication administration, inclusion and sexual harassment are just a few of the many modules available.

The next step is to distribute VR headsets and training modules to our training teams. We'll also explore how VR can help people with disability build skills, like preparing for travel and interviews, or just for enjoyment.

As a combined group, Lifestyle Solutions and Possability will build on the investments in training each has been making in 2022 (please see 'Doing things better' for more professional development investments, pg. 29).



Left to right: Beryl, Christine's mum, and Christine

Meet Christine

Christine has a passion for arts and crafts. A collection of her favourite works take pride of place on the walls around her house and bedroom.

She wanted to do more than was offered in her regular art programs, so she worked with her Supported Independent Living (SIL) team at Lifestyle Solutions to create her own micro-business. She set up a market stall where she sells her work every Sunday. She continues to hone her painting skills with weekly visits from an art teacher.

Christine has won two People's Choice awards and sold one of her award-winning paintings.

Along with her interests in art, Christine has a love of animals and joined an equestrian therapy course where she walks and helps to groom the horses.

Growing independence

Moving out of home is a big deal. For many, it's a huge step in becoming more independent. We're proud to be part of people's journeys to find their new home-sweet-home.

State-of-the-art living for greater independence

Lifestyle Solutions' partnership with a provider of Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA), Vera Living, has borne fruit over the year. Together we're offering 10 SDA apartments in a high-quality apartment complex in the Canberra suburb of Macquarie. The apartments provide people with disability purpose-built accommodation tailored to support their physical and mobility needs. Each is pre-fitted with assistive technology, including automated lighting and an adjustable kitchen bench.

Better home and living

Possability was chosen by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) to be one of eight Home and Living Demonstration Projects across the country. The Possability project is about improving SIL services for participants with complex needs, focusing on building independence through greater collaboration among the individual's support network. Through this initiative we're collaborating with support coordinators and positive behaviour practitioners to pilot a new service model that improves the quality and responsiveness of our services for people with complex needs.

Housing pathways

Possability's work with the Traffic Accident Commission to support Victorians after accidents has continued to develop and grow. Over the year we received 19 referrals to provide specialised housing management for people living in unsuitable situations. While 13 are ongoing, we've successfully supported six to move into good homes, three to get NDIS funding and two to secure SDA funding.

Meet Will

Will works at Possability's Oakdale Shredding, a shredding and recycling operation. After starting out as a supported employee, Will's now taken on extra responsibilities as a support professional.

"It's not just about driving trucks, when you're out and about and you've got someone with you, you've got to make sure you're teaching them and looking after them as well."

“**It feels good knowing everybody believes in what I've done over the years, you know, what I've achieved.**”

Welcome!

In March 2022 Possability officially welcomed 31 Victorians to support and 79 skilled and committed disability support professionals to the team.

The services transfer was for the seven remaining SIL houses operated by the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. We're not new to the transfer process, back in 2019 we had 312 Victorians with disability and 653 staff join us from the same government services, so for many they're reacquainting with familiar faces!

A significant amount of work was undertaken in the lead up to ensure a safe and smooth transition, including family forums, staff forums and staff training. Top of the priority list was consistency of services for the people we support, their families and staff.





Meet Peta

“It was a lot of fun moving out,” Peta signs. “I was really looking forward to it.”

After watching her four siblings move out of the family home, Peta was excited to have a place of her own. She says she enjoyed picking out her new furniture and setting up her room the way she’s always wanted. She particularly likes her bed, where she cuddles up with cushions and her iPad, chatting to family members and playing her cross-stitch game.

Peta decided to move out earlier this year, after her mum sadly passed away in February. While she misses her mum, Peta says she sees her every time she looks at the sun—as if her mum is always smiling down on her. Peta knows her mum would be very proud of her—as is the rest of her family.

She likes being able to go for walks to the nearby shopping centre. She loves cooking her favourite foods, like noodles and sausages, and hanging out with Patty and Felicia, the house’s dog and cat. Visits from family and showing her nieces and nephews around her new place has also been a highlight.

It helps that Peta moved in with a friend. “The very first day I came here I was excited, because I knew someone else here,” Peta signs.

She spends a lot of time with her friend and now housemate. They even go to the same day program, where they do activities like cooking, gardening, dancing and bowling—which is one of Peta’s favourite things to do, especially when she scores a strike.

Peta shares that moving out was a good decision—and she’s really looking forward to celebrating her first Christmas in her new home.

“**While it was a big decision and she misses her dad, Peta signs she wasn’t scared to move out: she was excited.**”



Left to right: Adrian, Charles and Billy

Bindi Enterprises

Bindi Enterprises provides supported employment and training opportunities for people with disability. It comprises the Bindi Mwerre Anthurre Artist Studio, a woodwork and metalwork workshop, a digital arts program and a contracts department that fulfils commercial agreements for tasks such as packaging, delivering, sorting and labelling.

Art for the Disability Royal Commission

The walls of the Disability Royal Commission's Public Hearing in Alice Springs in July were adorned with paintings by artists from Bindi Mwerre Anthurre Artists. This opportunity came at the request of the Royal

Commission after members of the Commission's First Nations Working Group saw Bindi artworks on a previous visit to Alice Springs.

Work by every Bindi artist was also shown in a slideshow during hearing breaks. A work by Bindi artist Adrian Jangala Robertson hung directly behind the Commissioner. Adrian is a respected Walpiri painter who has painted with Bindi for 20 years.

Prizes

Adrian extended his series of successful art prizes and recognition throughout 2022. He won the prestigious Alice Prize, which is an acquisitive contemporary art prize, welcoming entries from around Australia, in any medium or theme. Works by fellow Bindi Mwerre Anthurre artists Charles Jangala Inkamala and Billy Kenda were among the finalists. Stuart Keech from Bindi Enterprises' Contracts team was also a finalist.

Adrian Robertson and Billy Tjampitjinpa Kenda's artworks also hung in Sydney's popular Sulman and Wynne prizes awarded by the Art Gallery of NSW. Adrian was a finalist for the Sulman Prize, which is awarded for 'the best subject painting, genre painting or mural project by an Australian artist.' Billy was a finalist for the Wynne Prize, for 'the best landscape painting of Australian scenery.'

Adrian was also a finalist for the Hadley's Art Prize in Tasmania. This acquisitive landscape award is one of Australia's highest-value art prizes.

Charles Jangala Inkamala was selected as a finalist for the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards. They are the longest running and most prestigious Indigenous art awards in Australia, where Bindi artists have had repeated successes.

Bindi Enterprises also received a series of awards. Its Digital Art Program won the 2021 Northern Territory Chamber of Commerce Best Business Collaboration Award. Riccardo Capone, who works in the Bindi Contracts Department, was a finalist in the 2021 Alice Springs Mayoral Awards in recognition of his contribution to the Alice Springs community.

Philanthropic support

Bindi's Digital Art Program is positioned for further growth with three years of philanthropic funding announced by Kirkland Lake Gold.

The Pam Usher private foundation provided philanthropic support for the Bindi Mwerre Anthurre Artists, funding artist skills development workshops in 2021 and contributing to the annual Bindi Magic exhibition opening event in 2022.

Supporting jobseekers

Employment will continue to be a priority for our combined group. We're proud to support more jobseekers with disability to upskill, to be empowered and find jobs they really want—so they can build the lives they want for themselves.

Sky's the limit

The sky really is the limit for Possability's employment services, which have grown over the past 12 months. Growth in this area has been shaped by the Australian Government's Employment Disability Strategy, to create more inclusive workplaces and opportunities within them.

Opportunities a-plenty

We partner with jobseekers and employers to open up work opportunities in the community. We've partnered with a large variety of businesses, an event company, agricultural dealership, seasonal fruit growers and cafes, to name a few.

It's not only a matter of looking outward, Possability has directly employed jobseekers from our employment services. In this Annual Review you can hear from two of them: Annalise (on pg. 25), who's working as an administration assistant, and Will (on pg. 14), who's working as a support professional.

Next we'll be focusing on supporting up-and-coming school leavers and making sure they get the assistance they need to build their pathway to employment in Tasmania. We've already started this work by engaging with a number of schools and the broader education sector. As we progress, we'll look to take our approach to employment to other states.

“

I was extremely impressed with how hardworking and efficient your team were and their eagerness to complete tasks in such a prompt fashion. Their positive attitudes and daily dedication to getting the tasks completed made working together an absolute pleasure.

Rosie Dowie,
Event Operations Manager for the Taste of Summer

Meet April

“No one should be denied the opportunity to work,” says Career Coach April.

For the past two years, April has been working to support people to gain confidence, skills and experience to get them into work.

“It's seeing what skills the person needs help with to be able to get the role they'd like.”

This looks different for everyone. For some, it might involve teaching skills like how to use machinery, how to navigate public transport and how to manage finances. For others, it might involve communication skills, working through anxiety or taking short courses.

Career coaching was a new direction for April—who was the first person to join Possability's Community-Based Supported Employment team in Tasmania's north-west. The one-on-one program starts with a discovery session, which explores a person's access needs, likes, dislikes and goals.

“We also look at accessibility, and make sure the workplace has the right accommodations. Some people have complex access needs, but they can be addressed quite easily.”

The team also works with local businesses to discover where they need support, as well as volunteer and work opportunities. April says the program has had nothing but positive feedback.

“The businesses we have people working in are even promoting this program themselves, because it's been such a big change for their business.”

April says the impact of getting work is huge—whether it's increased confidence or independence, learning new skills, dreaming for the future or just getting a bit of extra money.

“Starting out, people can often be extremely nervous and anxious. We're there to provide reassurance and support, so they know they're not alone.”

For April, seeing the impact of her work brings her a lot of joy. “Seeing the smile on someone's face when they've learned a new skill or gotten a job they love is definitely my favourite part of the job.”



Children, young people and families

We're ensuring children and young people are safe, experience the very best care and have opportunities to make decisions about things that affect them. We're committed to supporting the choice and empowerment of every child or young person we support in out-of-home care, regardless of whether they are in residential or foster care.

Supporting children and young people

Lifestyle Solutions and Possability support children, young people and their families in every state and the Northern Territory.

Lifestyle Solutions now has five properties for children and young people in South Australia, growing from one that opened in the first half of 2021.

In Tasmania, Possability's Latrobe Short Stays has been operational for close to a decade. Led by an experienced team of ten staff, the children aged three and older get see the sights, from going to the park to exploring local museums and attractions. They recently upgraded their TVs, décor and bedding to create an inviting home away from home.

Partnerships with Aboriginal organisations

Local partnerships are critical for sustained connections for children and young people with their communities. For example, in the East Kimberley area in Western Australia, Lifestyle Solutions formed partnerships over the past year with NAIDOC, the Kimberley Language Resource Centre, the Garnduwa Amboorny Wirnan Aboriginal Corporation, Kununurra Waringarri Aboriginal Corporation, Olabud Doogethu Aboriginal Corporation, Jungarni Jutiya Aboriginal Corporation and Southern Cross Cultural Camp Lullumb. These partnerships range from language and culture to sport and camps.

The best 'family'

"When walking into this residential you are walking into a home and that is reflected by a number of ways. Whether it is the smiling faces of all the staff; the homelike feel of the décor; or just the general care that you feel just by being in the home's presence..."

"All of the staff in the home 'love' their job and that is evident with the low turnover in the home. The young people are able to be cared for by workers who are happy to be there, run like a close family and be appreciated even if their stories started 'not so great.'"

"All staff are happy to go above and beyond to ensure the kids have everything they need (including some pretty cool shoes), have implemented great routines, think out of the box for activities and lend an ongoing ear for any troubles."

"Overall, it is a home, and we want nothing more than for our kids to feel like they are at home especially when they are unable to be."

*Email from a government regional officer,
Lifestyle Solutions*

Accreditations

A major effort for Lifestyle Solutions during the year was to ensure the organisation has ongoing accreditation by the Office of the Children's Guardian in NSW. The effort was rewarded and the accreditation retained.

Also in NSW, Lifestyle Solutions worked with the Association of Children's Welfare Agencies to advocate with the state Department of Communities and Justice to enhance the way agencies work with the department for the benefit of children and young people in out-of-home care. This included advocating strongly for inclusive and responsive program delivery under the newly recommissioned Permanency Support Program.

Possability maintained its Safeguarding Children accreditation throughout the year. All onboarding staff must complete an online training module by the Australian Childhood Foundation that focuses on zero tolerance for abuse and neglect and a commitment to best practice outcomes for children, young people and their families. Then every three years employees do a refresher. The accreditation also involves regular audits to ensure our policies and procedures comply with the Safeguarding Children standards.

Meet Jack

Jack has always shown a keen interest in acting and writing scripts, which are usually a rewrite of his favourite television shows. When the Carillon Theatrical Society was up and running again, he was ready to get involved.

After learning the songs, Jack auditioned for the local theatre production of Oliver and was ecstatic to be offered a part in the play's chorus. He went to weekly rehearsals, his support team adapting their shifts to support his commitment to the play. Jack's been supported by Lifestyle Solutions since he was 11 years old.

Since joining the production, Jack's confidence and independence have grown immensely. He's a skilled performer, and after demonstrating as much he was offered extra scenes to act in. And his involvement in the play opened another door, Jack was approached by the play's venue to consider working there as a bartender.



turing
ential.



Meet Annalise

Meeting new people—that’s Annalise’s favourite part of working as an administration trainee at Possability’s Hobart office. Though she hasn’t been working with the team for long, she’s loving it.

“I haven’t done anything like this before,” says Annalise. “It’s my first time working in reception and I’m learning a lot. It’s a very good feeling.”

Annalise has learnt all sorts of reception skills to help keep the office running smoothly, like scanning documents, working with Excel spreadsheets, sending invoices to be paid and how the online ordering system works. She assists with daily COVID-19 cleans to keep the office safe and whips up delicious barista-style coffees for her colleagues—something she enjoys doing.

She says her teammates are incredibly supportive. “I’ve made a lot of friends. It’s not always easy to make friends, but I’ve made some really good friends at Possability.

“It feels like one big family to me. One big family that changes people’s lives and has helped me grow so much.”

While Annalise loves her job and she’s content for now, career progression is certainly on her mind.

“
I feel very proud
of myself. It’s the
best feeling ever.”

Change for good

Contributing to good, meaningful change for people with disability is a part of who we are. We strive to be great neighbours and contribute to our sector and the communities we operate in.

Keeping conversations going

Lifestyle Solutions and Possability are committed to representing the interests of the people we support and advocating for changes that matter to them.

We've built constructive relationships with government. In the lead-up to the last federal election we kept conversations about housing and service issues with policymakers going, including with the newly appointed Hon. Bill Shorten, Minister for the NDIS.

A strong NDIS

The introduction of the NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) was a gamechanger. It has had a huge impact on the disability sector and, rightly, given participants choice and control over which services they use.

In late 2021, National Disability Services (NDS), the peak body for non-government disability service providers, launched the Teamwork Works campaign. The campaign was about showing the real, human value of the NDIS by raising awareness of the people who rely on it and the workers who support them, and used data to show the financial benefits. Possability supported the campaign and the work of NDS more broadly through our representation on the Victorian and Tasmanian NDS committees. Lifestyle Solutions promoted the campaign among our teams and participated in national planning.

Making SIL Better

As members of Alliance20, a coalition of Australia's largest disability service providers, Possability and Lifestyle Solutions collaborate to influence policy to represent the interests of the people we support.

Working through Alliance20 and alongside NDS, Possability contributed to the NDIA's Making SIL Better project.

Our work advocating for improvements through Making SIL Better was mostly behind the scenes, but it resulted in big changes for participants who receive SIL funding. The NDIS has committed to making it easier for participants to speak directly with providers about how their supports are delivered, to ensure continuity of SIL funding levels, make communications clearer and to explain decisions better, among other things. We also advocated throughout the year for greater funding to provide the highest quality safeguarding approaches and to manage the increased cost of COVID-19.

Room to grow

Lifestyle Solutions has been expanding in the ACT. As well as its SDA apartments with Vera Living (pg. 14), a new service has been established in Canberra to offer services to those with high level and complex needs. It is well located near the Jamison shopping centre, within walking distance of GP and allied health practices.

The new Lifestyle Solutions office in Beenleigh provides a larger space for our growing Queensland Support Centre team from Child and Family Services, Disability Services including Support Coordination, Clinical and business support as well as training and a therapy room being used for behavioural support and speech pathology.



Doing things better

There's a lot we're passionate about. Being part of a vibrant sector, sharing our knowledge to benefit people with disability and looking at ways we can make our services better, to name a few.

We're all ears

Over the past 12 months Possability has made headway with our Client Engagement Framework objectives, with the finalisation of another series of meetings and surveys.

The engagement meetings were carried out across Tasmania and overall participation was high. Everyone we support was invited to participate and turnout was high. Most chose to meet face-to-face individually or as a group of four to five, generally as housemates. These meetings are about giving people a safe forum to share their thoughts and discuss any issues they might have, as well as support decision-making and the confidence to speak up.

We used the Quality of Life tool for 14 people to ensure their participation. This tool is for people with significant communication disability when we don't have the resources or expertise to understand their responses to our questions. It looks at a person's natural supports, community participation and friendships, among other markers of quality of life.

The engagement meeting results showed an increase in choice and control, improvements to quality of life and more confidence and the development of skills.

We finished collecting for our 2021 annual client survey in June 2022. Across our services, 340 surveys were completed. In Tasmania, 98 per cent of respondents felt supported by staff when they felt worried or upset, in Victoria this number was 93 per cent. While it's promising that most know how to make a formal complaint, 94 per cent in Tasmania and 75 per cent in Victoria, we're committed to ensuring that everyone we support feels capable and confident in doing so.



Knowledge creation and sharing

Possability created the Applied Research Centre for Disability and Wellbeing (ARCDW) in collaboration with the University of Tasmania to contribute to knowledge, education, sector leadership and to influence policy for people experiencing disadvantage, especially young people and adults with intellectual disability.

As well as sponsoring PhD students, the ARCDW has two research projects underway.

The first project is to understand the research priorities of the sector for people with intellectual disability, which will be drawn on to inform future research directions.

The second is a proposed study to test a standardised tool to measure episodic severity during behavioural crises. The tool is a simple scale that can be used to collect reliable data and measure the severity of episodes of behaviours of concern. Once completed, the published study results will be shared with the sector and if the tool is proven to work it'll be freely available for anyone to use.

Evidence-based positive behaviour support

We aim to encourage others in the field to measure episodic severity with this tool, rather than just occurrence, so we can make sure positive behaviour support strategies are effective. At the moment the emphasis is on if behaviours of concern happened, but that doesn't tell us how severe the behaviours were. We need to know if the strategies we're putting in place are supporting people in reducing the severity of behaviours of concern and making the people we support and staff safer.

We aim to deliver Positive Behaviour Support and Crisis Management two-day training to all employees, at the moment it's on a needs-basis. Throughout the past year we've been running sessions every six weeks in Tasmania and hosted eight sessions in Victoria, some of these have been online because of COVID-19 restrictions. Along with our Active Support training (explained further on), this training is the foundation of our Practice Framework. While Active Support is about supporting a proactive and capable environment when things are calm, the Positive Behaviour Support and Crisis Management training is about keeping everyone safe through times of crisis.

Supported decision-making

Possability is an industry partner in two Flinders University-led research partnerships.

One project, 'Bringing supported decision-making to behaviour support', is progressing to the development of web-based resources for people we're supporting and other stakeholders. We're contributing to this development by consulting on the resources and supporting a client to access the lived experience reference group that's advising the working party.

The second project is 'Enabling PBS Practitioners'. This project team has created a list of guiding principles based on good practice elements that have been emphasised so far, including person-centred practice, capable environments, least restrictive practice and many others. This information has been synthesised into three overarching practice principles: Human Rights, Collaborative Practice and Systems Change. The project team plans to embed these guiding principles across all the resources they create, for example as a set of prompting questions, guides for decision-making, or as reminders and considerations.

Active Support

We're committed to improving the lives of the people we support, one of the ways we do that is through investing in the further development of our Active Support training. Active Support teaches that every moment is an opportunity to engage and empower.

Possability has redeveloped our Active Support training in partnership with Latrobe University's Living with Disability Research Centre. There are two, two-day training sessions, one for support professionals and one for managers in how to support and coach Active Support.

Building Opportunities, Building Communities

Possability's annual Building Opportunities, Building Communities conference was another standout event in October 2021. Held over two days in two states, Victoria and Tasmania, the theme was 'Evidence to Action to Evidence'.

Our fourth annual conference brought together industry-leading speakers to challenge conference attendees to think about gaps in services and how service providers can ensure efficiency without reducing the quality of supports. And to make sure people with disability progress and are active contributors in their own lives.

Meet Kadia

Kadia has been working in the disability sector as a support professional for the past nine years. Known on her team with Possability as a champion of Active Support, Kadia believes this approach has made an enormous difference.

“I showed one person how to use their washing machine and dryer, so they can clean their own clothes, and taught them how to use their rice cooker and air fryer to support them to cook their own meals.”

Typically, Kadia teaches people how to use technology and clean, as well as strategies for communicating and patience. But it all depends on the person and their needs.

Working in this role, she says, has taught her a lot—and it’s been really rewarding. “I think what made me want to go into this industry is that I saw I could help other people. I like helping people and I love learning new skills—because the people I support aren’t the only ones learning. I’m learning too, and we’re all in this together.”

“
I teach people how
to do things, which
helps them live more
independently.”



Our Board



Tony Pearson
Chair of the Board



Dr. Ron Chalmers
Director



Dean Laurence
Director



David Morris
Director



Taryn Rulton
Director



Jan Snell
Director



Mark Valena
Director



Dr. Craig White
Director

Our many thanks

The merging together of Lifestyle Solutions and Possability has meant changes to our Board. We'd like to pass on our many thanks to our retiring directors, who kindly passed on so much wisdom and advice while serving: Fiona Evans, Fiona Payne, Kathleen Brient, Matthew Greskie, Pam White and Sue Ham.

We'd also like to make special mention of David Morris, who has moved from the role of Possability Chair to Director. We appreciate your ongoing support.



Meet Paul

We love helping people achieve what's important to them—whether it's pursuing their favourite pastime, learning a new skill or simply getting out and about and making the most of a great autumn day.

For Paul, who's new to fishing, there's no better way to start the day than getting up early and heading off to a local fishing spot with Lifestyle Solutions Support Professional Michael.

We caught up with Paul and Michael on what turned out to be a very special day in any fisherman's life—landing that elusive first fish!

To everyone who shared their story, told us their team's news or helped with this review, we thank you.

And to everyone we support, their families and communities, our story is your story—and we're excited to keep writing it together.

1800 634 748

enquiry@lifestylesolutions.org.au

lifestylesolutions.org.au

facebook.com/lifestylesolutions

linkedin.com/company/lifestyle-solutions-aust-ltd