



Little Sparklers

Annual Report 2020/21





Founder's statement

I write this today filled with immense pride for what our organisation has been able to achieve during such a tumultuous time globally.

It has been an incredibly tough time to be supporting our online community, especially in the current funding climate during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite very modest funding we have remained solvent, continued to deliver on our charitable purpose and actively grown our

resources, reaching over 150,000 members in 2021.

This is not to say that our situation is ideal, because it's far from it.

What I am hoping to illustrate with this report is that the services Little Sparklers provides are of tangible, demonstrated value. They deserve real-world funding so that we can change more lives in the coming years.

Carly Grubb

Founder, Little Sparklers





About Little Sparklers



Little Sparklers is an Australian registered charity. We empower families to nurture their young children - day in and night out. We offer free peer support through the online movement, The Beyond Sleep Training Project.

By understanding normal behaviour and development, families can establish realistic expectations for their children. The care provided to young babies and toddlers is fundamental to their brain development and wellbeing throughout their lives and for that care to be provided, families must be supported.

Right now, society is letting families down.

Unrealistic cultural expectations of our babies are creating an unnecessary burden for families, especially mothers and primary carers.

But we can change this

With access to evidence-based, expert-backed information, we can shift parenting approaches to align with the needs of our infants and young children - and support families to thrive alongside.

Acknowledgement of Country

Little Sparklers acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land in which our Board and volunteers work, live and visit. We pay our respects to the Elders of those many nations from past and present, recognising their continuing connection to land, waters and community.

Little Sparklers is committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society including the birthing and raising of children.



Our vision, mission and values

Our vision:

- ✦ Our vision is a world in which families are truly supported to nurture their children day and night, building connected and resilient families.

Our mission:

- ✦ Our mission is to support, educate and empower families to confidently raise their babies and young children through understanding the biological, psychological and social needs of the whole family.

Our values:

- ✦ We are evidence-based, empathic & empowering
- ✦ We are courageous
- ✦ We listen to our hearts & respect our children
- ✦ We value critical thinking and informed decision making
- ✦ We value connection



Charitable purpose and powers

Little Sparklers' charitable purpose is to pursue the following objectives:

- ✦ Promote the prevention of perinatal mental illness by:
 - improving parental resilience through social connection, knowledge of normal infant sleep, and practical information on mental wellbeing and sleep hygiene;
 - providing information and support to families and health care workers on biologically normal infant sleep and strategies for connected parenting;
 - supporting parents who are at risk of harm to perinatal mental health due to parenting advice that does not align with their values, by providing evidence-based resources that align with their values and individual family circumstances, including peer-to-peer support networks and access to online resources to assist in informed decision-making.
- ✦ Advance the health of infants and children, promoting healthy emotional and social development through connected parenting, improved maternal mental health and family resilience.
- ✦ Advance the education of families by providing increased options in evidence-based strategies for coping with early parenting challenges.
- ✦ Advance the education of health professionals who provide early parenting services to families, by providing evidence-based support and resources for connected parenting, using online and face-to-face channels.
- ✦ Challenge dominant paradigms relating to perinatal mental health and infant sleep, promoting progressive change in Australian government policy and practice towards the support of evidence-based connected parenting strategies.



COVID-19 Impact statement

COVID-19 has presented enormous challenges globally, and our organisation has felt the impact acutely

Our core community is parents of babies and young children. The isolation and disconnection experienced during lengthy lockdowns have had a significant impact on the mental health and wellbeing of our members.

From navigating sleep and feeding issues to the social aspects of finding their feet as new parents, the disruptions to normal life and many face-to-face services saw families turning in droves to online support spaces.

The demands of working from home without childcare, online schooling and financial stress all played into rising tension, frustration, confusion and often anger for families. The demand for our peer support services grew rapidly, while simultaneously our volunteers and board directors faced their own personal and professional challenges.

It's been a time of intense juggling; working hard to make sure that we could provide the support our community needed, while nurturing the wellbeing of our volunteer team. We recognise the enormity of this impact and the significance it has played in the community and our organisation.

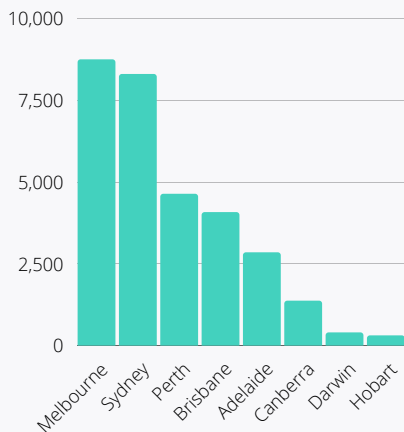


Our achievements

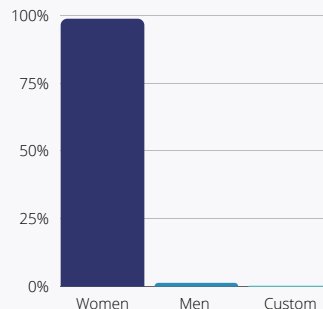
The Beyond Sleep Training Project

The Beyond Sleep Training Project operates as a free peer support group on Facebook. We also reach our community via a public Facebook page and Instagram account, and our brand new podcast.

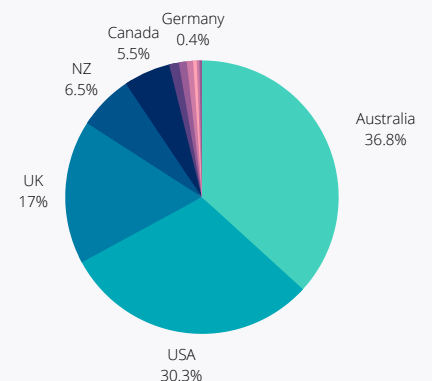
Our peer support group



Who is in our community?



Total members: 150,062



The engagement within our community

In the year from 10 October 2020- 10 October 2021, our free peer support group has provided space for:

29 070 unique posts for support
that generated

 2 858 919 reactions

 757 759 comments

*All stats correct as at 11 October 2021

Our real world impact

The Beyond Sleep Training Project

Our peer support is not just a fleeting moment in time. We support people across their full journey. Our immense impact is reflected in these testimonials.

Sormeh's story

Out of my close group of friends and my parents group, my son was the only child I knew that would never sleep by himself and also wake 45 minutes-hourly. I felt alone, exhausted, confused, desperate. I read books, articles, spoke to doctors, maternal health nurse but never found an answer.

My heart, soul and brain always said no to sleep training so I knew that wasn't the answer but the question remained: what's wrong with him, why can't I do this, why am I a bad mum?

One night at 3am as I lay in my bed with my son asleep on me, exhausted, googling for answers I came across an article by the founder of this group (Carly Grubb).

It was one of her original articles about her son. Tears rolled down my face as I read it, I remember having to hold my hand in front of my mouth to contain my cries and howling. I understood her pain, I knew it, I felt it. I had found another mum who understood me, another mum that had experienced it. The best was she was an Aussie like me.

The next day I googled more about her and found out about The Beyond Sleep Training Project and I joined straight away. I remember again crying when I was accepted into the group.

Realising I wasn't alone was a life saver for me, reading about other parents having similar concerns, being able to share mine and receiving advice was just amazing.

I always say two things allowed me to be ok (ironically both discovered on the internet!) Side feeding whilst co-sleeping and this group. It build my confidence and allowed me to follow my gut and mother instincts. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Caitlin's story

The Beyond Sleep Training Project was literally the only resource that could support me in putting the following pieces of motherhood together: exclusive breastfeeding, attachment parenting, my own sleep, health and sanity. I could always count on the group to stand unwaveringly by its ethos, the rock needed by a mother overwhelmed by opinions.

I had other places to go for help specific to each individual piece (e.g. my lactation consultant for breastfeeding questions, but even then I had to pay a lot out of pocket), but NO ONE could help me figure out how to make it all work together by normalising bed sharing and responsive night time parenting.

The Beyond Sleep Training Project is a special place. It changed my life and my children's lives. It is the first place I think to go when I'm in the weeds.

THANK YOU



Our real world impact



The Beyond Sleep Training Project

Our peer support is not just a fleeting moment in time. We support people across their full journey. The impact of having us there has been immense as these testimonials illustrate.

Morgan's story

I joined the group in January 2018. My son was 6 months old at the time and I had finally “given up” with sleep training. I had tried “gentle” methods when he was 5 months old because he was a dreadful sleeper but I couldn’t stand his crying. It had worked somewhat, but then he started daycare and they rocked him to sleep and transferred him to the crib for naps, so everything we had done at home went out the window. I couldn’t go through all of it again, especially since daycare wasn’t going to change their ways. Someone in another mom group suggested The Beyond Sleep Training Project to me so I joined for support and maybe some ideas. I read story after story for months and seeing all the other people going through similar things made me feel so much better about my son’s sleep. I learned more about normal infant sleep and realised that I couldn’t stand his crying because it isn’t biologically normal to just leave a baby to cry. The group helped me learn to trust my instincts instead of listening to society. I posted a few times over the next year or so for support with bottle weaning, a positive post about the first time he slept through, and various other questions about sleep and gentle parenting.

It’s been an amazing group to be a part of and learn from. I eventually started bedsharing with my son after his first wake. Then we transitioned him to a floor bed when I was pregnant with his sister, so dad could go in to comfort him as needed and bed share in there (and I didn’t have to worry about my tummy being kicked). Now I have an 8-month-old daughter who has been bedsharing with me since day one. I feel so supported in my parenting journey now. I know I can bring any questions or concerns to the group and I will get amazing feedback and support without facing judgment.

Thank you for all that you do. And thank you for creating this magical group!

Monica's story

This group is an important tool for parents. Whether sleep related or not I come here on a regular basis to find inspiration, a safe port to land, reassurance, knowledge and most importantly to be reassured that I am human, what I feel is absolutely normal, even the not so good feelings and I am not the only one! I have posted my questions and I had help, and through others' questions I can build my own skills and knowledge. Thank you for being there so promptly responding, showing some lights on the (not always) bright parenting days!

Our achievements

The Beyond Sleep Training Project

Our public Facebook and Instagram



75 188 follows



And through these spaces we had

2 456 246

accounts

reached



37 200 follows

747 169

engagements

The Beyond Sleep Training Podcast

Our show was launched in mid-May 2021 to grow a storytelling resource for our community. It provides accessible content in a variety of forms - podcast, episode transcript and fully captioned video episodes.



Since launch, we have had
14,238 episode downloads

In August 2021, we reached #4 in the Australian parenting podcast charts and have consistently remained in the top 50.

A recent review



"I absolutely love this podcast. It's such an important topic and deserves so much more attention than it gets! As a first time mum, I have found the support and information provided by Carly and her amazing group of like-minded parents and experts in The Beyond Sleep Training Project Facebook community have been absolutely invaluable to me and my beautiful baby girl finding our feet over our first year. I'm beyond excited to have her available to listen in podcast form as well! Thank you Carly for all that you do! Babies (and parents) everywhere are so much better off for the information you share."

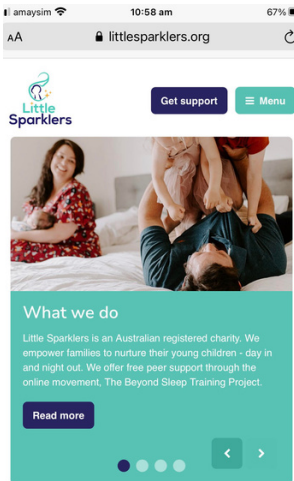
*All stats correct as at 11 October 2021

Our achievements

Little Sparklers website

Launched October 2020

www.littlesparklers.org



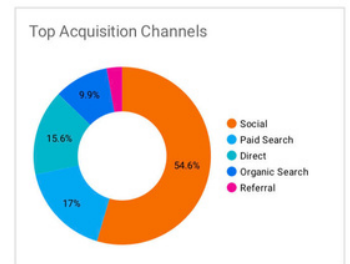
The stats so far

We've reached over 37 000 new people

Who've had 47 300+ sessions on the site

54.6% are coming from socials

17.25% coming from our Nonprofit GoogleAds



A steadily growing audience and resource base

We work hard to ensure the content and resources we provide are high-quality and evidence-backed.

Our platform was built and is supported by Joyful, the Access Group.

We were donated access to beautiful imagery by two photographers: Renee Johnstone of Vida Images and Sarah Conlan of Sarah Conlan Lifestyle Photography

Our top-performing resource Infant and Toddler sleep

Families need access to sleep resources that align with the evidence and also their values.

The website data supports this with our top pages covering relevant infant and toddler sleep topics including:

New resource

Beginning your journey beyond sleep training workbook

FREE DOWNLOAD

- Normal infant sleep
- Development and sleep
- Your newborn baby
- Sleep and temperament
- When sleep isn't normal
- Breastfeeding and sleep

The podcast is also bringing a steady supply of fresh content and resources to our website

Our board of directors

Thank you to our talented board of directors

Our volunteer board has helped steer our organisation through our formative period and through the challenges of 2020 and 2021

Carly Grubb

Our Founder and Managing Director



Carly has a Bachelor of Education (Primary) and founded Little Sparklers to further the work that she began with The Beyond Sleep Training Project.

She is a passionate advocate for babies and families, and helping new parents find their way through an often overwhelming and deeply vulnerable time. Carly believes in the power of lived experience and peer support in improving parental confidence and well-being. She has big dreams of improving the support available to families by bringing the realities and challenges of early parenting to light so support structures can meet people where they need them in practical, effective and timely ways.

Carly lives in Mount Isa, outback Queensland with her husband and three wonderful young children.

Professor Jeanine Young AM



Jeanine is a nurse, midwife and neonatal nurse with over 25 years of experience in midwifery, paediatrics and child health. As Professor of Nursing, University of the Sunshine Coast she leads a research program that examines infant care practices and their relationships with maternal and infant health outcomes.

Jeanine is passionate about providing families with practical, safe, evidence-based infant care information and support to enable families to be empowered and make informed decisions that meet their unique family needs, values and circumstances. Her passion was ignited through her doctoral studies examining mother-baby shared sleeping practices and later fuelled by her own experiences of raising two children who breastfed and co-slept to natural term.

Jeanine has lobbied during the last three decades to highlight the evidence to inform decision making about where babies should sleep - which includes both the benefits as well as the risks associated with shared sleeping. She was principal author for risk minimisation policy and guidelines now adopted by the Australian College of Midwives, Red Nose and Queensland Health, and has been recognised in Australia as pioneering infant sleep space alternatives suitable for the family bed particularly for families with identified vulnerabilities.

Jeanine was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2020 for her significant service to tertiary education, to medical research and to nursing, particularly in the field of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy.



Our board of directors

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Susie Cotterill



Secretary

Susie has held a range of senior roles across corporate, government and not-for-profit organisations. She brings extensive insight into charity regulation and not-for-profit governance to the Little Sparklers board, as well as professional expertise in communication, media relations and marketing, ITC, operations and business strategy and management.

Susie was the inaugural Director of Public Affairs and Education and the Head of Digital Strategy at the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission, the national charity regulator. She is also a non-executive Director of simple.space, a SaaS technology startup, and has held leadership and management roles implementing large and complex green fields and start-up organisations in the federal government and not-for-profit sector.

Susie is currently the Head of Communications and Brand Australian Financial Complaints Authority, a large national not-for-profit organisation, and has provided communications advice to multiple health-focused organisations including the Pharmacy Guild of Australia and the Dieticians Association of Australia.

Susie holds an Executive Masters of Business Administration and Bachelor of Communication in Advertising and Marketing.

She lives in Melbourne with her wonderful husband and her beautiful young daughter whom she nurses to sleep and enjoys cuddling as they bedshare overnight and contact-nap on weekends

Dr Shireen Durrani



Shireen is a public health physician with leadership experience across public health spheres, from directing a state communicable diseases branch during the COVID-19 pandemic to community development work with reproductive health charities in the UK and Asia. She also brings experience in clinical medicine and women's health.

Currently a medical advisor at the NSW Ministry of Health, her skills encompass strategy, management, health policy and communications. She holds Masters of Public Health and Public Policy in addition to her medical degree and specialist qualification in Public Health Medicine.

Shireen became involved with Little Sparklers through peer support work with The Beyond Sleep Training Project. She believes there is unmet community need for infant sleep and feeding advice that respects children's biology and emotional development, while supporting parents to flourish. As mother to one spirited little girl, Shireen is driven to help ensure that parents have access to modern, evidence-informed advice that is in keeping with their values.



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Amanda Donnet



Amanda is a clinical psychologist working at the intersection of infant feeding, mental health and early parenting. She brings a compassionate approach to perinatal and women's mental health, to support mothers and their families through the challenges of early parenting. She has also completed additional training in birth trauma, breastfeeding, feeding disorders, and managing unsettled and distressed babies.

Through Spilt Milk Psychology, Amanda's human-centred approach to perinatal mental health empowers families by providing practical, realistic and relatable information and support. She is a passionate advocate for the decentralisation of sleep training as the solution to maternal mental health concerns. Amanda champions the mother-baby dyad, recognising the need to take into account the practical demands of parenting, as well as the biological, psychological and emotional needs of both mother and baby.

Amanda is also dedicated to improving the knowledge and skills of health professionals in the arena of perinatal mental health. She provides individual supervision as well as training workshops in a variety of settings.

Treasurer

Eilis Kelly



Eilis qualified as an Associate of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants in 2009 and was granted Fellowship in 2015. Eilis has a strong management accounting background and experience setting up robust processes for financial operations. This has been developed working in various sectors including Financial Services, Commercial Construction, Manufacturing and Mining. Utilising her skills as a business partner, she prides herself on providing accurate and timely information to stakeholders, enabling them to make more informed strategic decisions.

Eilis sat on the Australasian Regional Board of CIMA/AICPA between July 2014 - July 2019 - rotating off as Chairperson in 2019.

Eilis became a mum in late 2017 to a little sparkler and found her village with The Beyond Sleep Training Project - Eilis is delighted to give back to the community that helped her so much and to help change the culture around "normal" infant sleep



Our board of directors

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Georgina Dowden



Georgina is a Registered Nurse and Midwife, with a background in women's and sexual health, and an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC). She lives in Ballina in the Northern Rivers of NSW with her loving husband and two beautiful children.

Georgina works in private practice, offering breastfeeding support to local families, and online consultations addressing sleep concerns to families across Australia and overseas. Her practice is based on a very simple philosophy: babies' needs are important and understanding those needs empowers parents to feel confident in following their hearts and their instincts.

Georgina also runs a weekly mother's support group in Northern NSW with another local mother, the aim of which is to provide evidence-based, positive information around feeding, sleep and infant behaviour, while also offering a space where mothers can create connections and lasting friendships with one another. Nothing brings her greater joy than seeing mothers and fathers enjoy their baby, and enjoy the journey of parenthood.

Attendance Register

Board Meeting	20/8/20	1/10/20	22/11/20 AGM	14/1/21	24/2/21	22/4/21	3/6/21
Chair	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
Co-Sec	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
Treasurer	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
Director	Present	Present	Present	Apology	Present	Apology	Present
Director	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Apology	Present
Director	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
Director	Present	Present	Present	Apology	Present	Present	Present



Our volunteers

Thank you to each and every one of our amazing volunteers

It's impossible to adequately quantify the value of the unpaid work our volunteer team put into supporting our community but in an effort to try do so, we asked our team to calculate how many hours on an average week they put into their volunteer role.

Here are the totals:

198.5 hours total/ week
= 5.2 full time equivalent

*all of which is done around our volunteer's own families, other paid employment, their own community and lives.

Celebrating 150,000 members



Behind the Screens
Bernetta Billing
 Australia
 Volunteer peer support moderator

3 children aged 7yo, 4yo & 1yo

Experiences include: high needs children, neural diversity, frequent waking, developmental delays, oral ties, vaginal Breech birth, breastfeeding into toddlerhood, breastfeeding pregnant, babywearing educator, postnatal health and fitness, pelvic organ prolapse, bed-sharing, contact napping

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Celebrating 150,000 members



Behind the Screen
Ai Lyn Saunders
 Australia
 Volunteer peer support moderator

2 children aged 3.5yo & 10 months

Experiences include: Extremely wakeful baby, sleep consultant/school failure, vasospasm and undiagnosed tongue-ties; family bed and bed sharing; induction births; breastfeeding, nursing aversion, nursing while pregnant, and tandem-feeding; gestational diabetes; low-sleep needs child; parenting spirited preschooler

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Behind the Screens
Elise McMahon
 Hong Kong
 Volunteer peer support admin, Leader, Podcast producer

1 child aged 4yo

Experiences include birth trauma, wakeful baby, undiagnosed lip tie and thrush, travelling hubby, postnatal and maternal depression and anxiety, catnapping koala baby, contact napper, low sleep needs, natural term breastfeeding, nursing aversion, parenting an anxious and sensitive little one as a neurodivergent human, non-coercive collaborative parenting, Baby/toddler/pre-school wearing

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Celebrating 150,000 members



Behind the Screens
Kristen Strange
 regional Australia
 Volunteer peer support admin

2 kids aged 7 and 4.5yo

Experiences include unicorn cot sleeping firstborn, extremely wakeful bedsharing from newborn secondborn, traditional weaning to food, baby-led weaning to family foods, breastfeeding long term, expressing, reflux, tongue ties, nipple/ductal thrush, food intolerance, babywearing, C section, forceps vaginal delivery, birth trauma, working and non-working, transition to own beds, sleeping through the night, Supportive partner, not much outside support.

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Celebrating 150,000 members



Behind the Screens
Danielle Brown
 Australia
 Volunteer peer support admin and Leader

2 kids aged 7 and 4yo

Experiences include cot user parent of a high needs and extremely wakeful baby/toddler with underlying medical issues, flexible sleep arrangements, breastfeeding (including an allergy child on a restricted diet)

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Behind the Screens
Jodi Hill
 regional Australia
 Volunteer peer support admin

3 kids aged 16, 14 and 5

Experiences include highly wakeful babies, children with autism/ADHD/anxiety/ sensory differences, breastfeeding to natural term, bedsharing.

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Celebrating 150,000 members



Behind the Screens
Jade Tolhurst
 Australia
 Volunteer peer support admin

1 child aged 2yo

Experiences include Contact napping, Cosleeping, Wakeful baby, Silent reflux, Breastfeeding with nipple shield, Living in lockdown/lack of support, Postnatal depression and anxiety

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Behind the Screens
Hannah MacLellan Hackett
 UK
 Volunteer peer support admin & Leader

1 5yo boy and 2 little boys she holds in her heart

Experiences include prem baby, c-section, natural term breastfeeding, a mixture of cot sleeping and bedsharing, low sleep needs child, tongue tie, sleep apnea, allergies, separation anxiety, baby loss, long term sleep deprivation, working outside the home.

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Our volunteers



Celebrating 150,000 members

Behind the Screens
Carly Grubb
 regional Australia
 Founder of Little Sparkler: and The Beyond Sleep Training Project & Podcasts

3 children ages 7, 5 and 3

Experiences include: extremely wakeful baby, sleep school/ training failure, breastfeeding, tongue-tie, flexible sleep arrangements, nursing aversions, weaning, PND

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Celebrating 150,000 members

Behind the Screens
Nicole Gorrng
 Australia
 Volunteer peer support admin & Leader

3 children aged 13, 9 & nearly 2yo

Experiences include single parenting, re-partnering, step-parenting, ENT issues, oral motor coordination issues, mixed feeding, bottle feeding issues, tongue tie, dustmite allergies, sleep onset insomnia, unicorn sleeper, running a business with a newborn, anxiety(me), Exclusive breastfeeding, baby-led weaning, special care unit, homebirth, physiological birth

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Celebrating 150,000 members

Behind the Screens
Emily Condon
 regional Australia
 Volunteer peer support admin & Leader

1 child, 4yo

Experiences include Homebirth, Breastfeeding to natural term, Bed sharing from newborn, Babywearing, MCN, BLW, Separate beds for me and my partner, Muddling through early parenthood while caring for my partner who had severe depression and anxiety, involving multiple hospitalisations. Working part-time Multiple advocacy/advisory health board positions...

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Celebrating 150,000 members

Behind the Screens
Tanya Knox
 Australia
 Volunteer peer support admin

2 children aged 5 and 2.5yo

Experiences include wakeful baby, tongue-tie, postnatal depression and anxiety, contact napping, breastfeeding trauma, exclusive pumping, responsive bottle feeding, babywearing, bedsharing with two children, breastfeeding a baby with an airway disorder, natural term breastfeeding, nursing aversions, nursing high needs/orchid children.

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Celebrating 150,000 members

Behind the Screens
Aine Molloy
 Aotearoa New Zealand
 Volunteer peer support Modmin & twin mama specialist

2 children identical 4yo twins

Experiences include Complex pregnancy, c-section birth, twin babies, prematurity, NICU, Oral/Nasal gastro tube feeding, tandem breastfeeding, oral ties, extended tandem breastfeeding till 3 years old, bedsharing, immigrant/living overseas, no extended family support, super wakeful babies, return to work full time at 12 months, role swap (SAHD), ENT issues affecting sleep, apneas, adenoid surgery, sensory seeking and sensory avoidant behaviours

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Celebrating 150,000 members

Behind the Screens
Gemma Najem
 Australia
 Volunteer peer support Modmin & sub-editor

2 children aged 4 & 1yo

Experiences include Contact napping, bedsharing, breastfeeding (mastitis, refusal, intolerances), wakeful baby, orchid child and disability mum

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Celebrating 150,000 members

Behind the Screens
Jess De Feyter
 USA
 Volunteer peer support admin and content writer

3 children aged 10, 9 & 5yo

Experiences include breastfeeding challenges, wakeful babies, musical beds, nursing aversions, difficult night weaning, homeschooling, mother of a dyslexic child... now missing cuddles with my big kids as they grow more and more independent each day!

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Celebrating 150,000 members

Behind the Screens
Kate Day
 Australia
 Volunteer peer support admin & Leader

2 children aged 4 and 6 months

Experiences include breastfeeding (including vasospasm, hyperemesis, nursing aversions, pregnancy & tandem feeding), very wakeful baby, food allergies, flexible sleep arrangements, both parents working and no local family support.

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Celebrating 150,000 members

Behind the Screens
Matilde-Rose Andre
 Australia
 Volunteer peer support moderator, funding support

1 child who is nearly 4yo

Experiences include: "Extended" breastfeeding (still going strong!), proud sleep school drop out, bedsharing, aversions, Perinatal anxiety and depression, high-needs/orchid/sparkler baby and child, dairy and soy intolerances whilst breastfeeding, oversharer, overtalker, crafting queen

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Celebrating 150,000 members

Behind the Screens
Miriam Reger
 Australia
 Volunteer peer support admin

2 sons aged 6 and 3yo

Experiences include living away from family, jaundiced newborn, managing serious health condition on reduced sleep & safe sleep, formula feeding (1st), breastfeeding to natural term (2nd), sleep with older children

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Celebrating 150,000 members

Behind the Screens
Katrina Nicholson
 USA
 Volunteer peer support admin, stat collector, resource updates

2 children aged 4, 2yo and pregnant with 3rd baby

Experiences include one extremely wakeful baby, two tongue-tied babies, food intolerances in a child while nursing, nursing while pregnant, nursing aversion, bed-sharing.

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Celebrating 150,000 members

Behind the Screens
Donna Smith
 Aotearoa New Zealand
 Volunteer peer support moderator

2 kids aged 5yo & 10 months

Experiences include Double NICU graduate (35 and 34/40) paediatric physiotherapist, babywearing consultant, maternal wellness enthusiast (background of clinical depression plus PND), child advocate/responsive parenting, breastfeeding (4 years with first son, 10 months so far with number 2), cloth nappies with first son (sorry environment re 2nd), bed-sharing (as a health professional), oh and accidental home birth.

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 www.littlesparklers.org

Celebrating 150,000 members

Behind the Screens
Jody Valenzuela Luck
 USA
 Volunteer peer support moderator

5 kids aged 8, 13, 15, 18, 19yo

Experiences include bedsharing, cloth diapering, difficult breastfeeding, natural term breastfeeding, combo feeding, sandwich generation (caring for a parent and young children), parenting with chronic illness, a child with insomnia, neuro-diverse child, a child with sleep issues in childhood (rather than as a baby).

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Behind the Screens
Ellen Mitchell
 Australia
 Volunteer peer support moderator

1 child who is 3.4yo

Experiences include: breastfeeding older toddlers, attachment style parenting, cap-napper, low sleep needs, daycare transition, older mum who realised I don't give a crap about what other people think of my parenting, dealing with challenging MILs, Ecologist

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Behind the Screens
Lara Addison
 Australia
 Volunteer peer support admin (founding)

2 children 5yo & 2yo

Experiences include: Recently single parent, Children with additional needs inc Autism Long term Sleep deprivation survivor, Food intolerances, cloth nappies, Breastfeeding (significant dietary restrictions)

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Behind the Screens
Danielle Giesen
 USA
 Volunteer peer support moderator

1 child who is 5yo

Experiences include: Child with chronic medical issues that cause extreme waking and sleep deprivation (reflux, food sensitivities, chronic joint pain, swallowing issues, sleep apnea), breastfeeding to natural term (still going at 5!), self-weaning, bedsharing, contact napping, solo nighttime parenting, swallowing/eating issues, intense high needs/orchid/anxious child, parenting with an anxiety disorder and chronic illness, parenting without extended family/support system/village around

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Our volunteers



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Behind the Screens
Cassandra Woods
UK

Volunteer peer support moderator
1 child who is 3.5yo

Experiences include: Passionate about child development and mental health. Cot sleeping, bedsharing, contact napping, catnapping, early nap drops, reflux and tongue-tie, postnatal depression and anxiety, breastfeeding struggles, bottle feeding, formula feeding, gentle parenting and psychology

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Behind the Screens
Katherine Ashby
Australia

Volunteer peer support moderator
2 children- 3yo & 3mo

Experiences include: Bed sharing, tandem feeding, catnapping, babywearing, c-sections

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Behind the Screens
Keren Alexandra
Australia

Volunteer peer support moderator
2 children- 3yo & 8mo

Experiences include: Wakeful babies, contact napping, musical beds, breastfeeding, allergies, breastfeeding through pregnancy, tandem breastfeeding, babywearing

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Behind the Screens
Jessica Scaringella
USA

Volunteer peer support admin, leader & Queen of pending
1 child who is 3.5yo

Experiences include: breastfeeding, bedsharing and separate sleeping combo, very super wakeful baby, self weaning, working full time

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Behind the Screens
Liz Forbes
USA

Volunteer peer support moderator
2.5yo and 2nd baby on the way

Experiences include breastfeeding, room sharing, reluctant bed-sharing, cloth diapers, nursing while pregnant, flexible sleep arrangements.

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Behind the Screens
Becca Kofonow
Japan

Volunteer peer support moderator & founding member
3 children aged 8yo, 6yo & 1yo

Experiences include: PPA, mastitis, septic mastitis, D-MER, lactation-induced Reynold's Disease, operative teatbars, emergency, poor latch, three c-sections. Military spouse, moving every 2-3 years. Trained child development specialist, Early education educator. Parent two under two, Parent of three wonderful children. Parent of 2 x tongue and lip tied children, Parent of a child with an immunological disease, Parent of a child with ADHD, Parent of two children with allergies, one severe. Parent of a child with pulmonary apnea. Parent of a child with speech and language development delays, Parent of a child with sensory processing disorders. Exclusively pumped for 19 months, directly nursed for 375 years, and currently nursing baby #3 at 17 months. Milk donor. Natural term weaning. Baby-Led weaning. Co-sleeper. Mother of Diagonia, Award babywearer. Specialising in scientifically based, peaceful parenting and lactation support for forward-devised military families.

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Behind the Screens
Rebecca Scott
UK

Volunteer peer support admin
2 children aged 4.5yo & 10mo

Experiences include: Early morning waking, Tongue-tied babies, reflux, bedsharing since birth, natural term breastfeeding, baby carrying, high need babies, very wakeful, separate sleeping, very frequent solo parenting, no family nearby, c-section, contact naps, catnapping, avoidance of car travel (due to child distress)

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Behind the Screens
Jessie Cristani
Australia

Volunteer peer support admin
2 children aged 5yo & 4yo

Experiences include: Full-time formula use for both children, two under two (20 months apart), second son had silent reflux/highly wakeful, cot user for first son then bed shared with two children.

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Behind the Screens
Ashlee Hopgood
Australia

Volunteer peer support moderator
2 children aged 5yo & 2.5yo

Experiences include: Oral ties that were missed, difficulty breastfeeding and weight loss, transitioning from pumped milk in a bottle to nipple shields to full time breastfeeding, pumping at work and maintaining breastfeeding through full-time work (with 12-week old baby), paced bottle feeding, husbands as stay at home parent / finding alternative ways to settle when continued to feed to sleep, tandem feeding/through pregnancy, refused to co-sleep originally due to discrimination (and resulting trauma) from medical system based on high BMI, neurodiverse parent

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Behind the Screens
Sabrina D'Arcy
Australia

Volunteer peer support admin
2 children aged 5yo & 3yo

Experiences include: High needs/orchids kids, low sleep needs, ongoing wakeful kids, contact napping, babywearing, tandem feeding, feeding during pregnancy, natural term breastfeeding, nursing aversions, bed sharing with two kids, c section, VBAC/with vaginal tear recovery and juggling two snugly kids, ENT issues with toddler affecting sleep, juggling cuddly kids and own health issues.

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Behind the Screens
Beth Redfield
UK

Volunteer peer support admin
One 3yo child

Experiences include: Wakeful baby, Reflux/colic, NICU, breastfeeding through thrush, wound infection from c-section and blocked ducts. Breastfeeding to 2 years old. Not much support from husband-wanted to try CIO in the early days and even now he's a toddler believes he should be sleeping "independently" (we co-sleep after first wake up) PND 6 months after the baby was born that lasted about a year

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Behind the Screens
Tammy Kavanagh
Australia

Volunteer peer support admin & Leader
2 children aged 7yo & 3yo

Experiences include: Supply issues (IGT) and disappointment surrounding not being able to breastfeed as intended, Bottle feeding, Supplemental nursing system, Formula feeding on demand, C section after induction and planned C section for breaching. Caring for family with MH concerns, Part-time cot use/bedsharing, Contact napping. Keep interest in gentle/respectful parenting. Total car seat safety nerd

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Behind the Screens
Jess Menzies
Timor-Leste

Volunteer peer support admin
One 2yo & pregnant with 2nd

Experiences include: Emergency Nurse now full-time stay at home mum. Studying to be a Breastfeeding Counsellor. A wakeful baby who woke every sleep cycle for the first year. Bed sharing, floor bed, cat napping, babywearing, breastfeeding currently, baby-led weaning, multiple interstate and international moves since becoming a mother.

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Behind the Screens
Kasey Rook
Australia

Volunteer peer support admin
2 children aged 4yo & 2.5yo

Experiences include: Multiple Allergies, difficulty breastfeeding, sleep training failure turned respectful, gentle, attachment style parent, nursing aversion, full time working Mama, extended breastfeeding, birth trauma

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Behind the Screens
Shazia Fletcher
UK

Volunteer peer support admin & Leader of recruitment & mentoring
2 children aged 6yo & 3yo

Experiences include: One cot sleeper, one bedshared and contact napped from birth. Breastfeeding, bottle refusal, oversupply, long-term feeding from one boob, breastsleeping. Working part-time outside the home. Babywearing, Wearing Partner also works part-time and shares childcare/domestic load. Support from own parents who live nearby

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Behind the Screens
Julia Arenstein
Australia

Volunteer peer support moderator
1 child who is 2yo

Experiences include: oral ties, CMPI, lactose intolerance, reflux, sleep apnea, enlarged adenoids, bottle feeding, c section, living with Crohn's disease and Ankelosung spondylitis, living away from support system, paediatric occupational therapist

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Financial Statement

Revenue/Receipts	
Revenue from government, including grants	\$0
Donations and bequests	\$21,069.71
Revenue from providing goods or services	\$750.00
Other revenue/receipts	\$38.19
Total revenue/receipts	\$21,857.90
Total income/receipts	\$21,857.90
Expenses/Payments	
Employee expenses/payments	\$0
Other expenses/payments	\$18,529.89
<i>Some of our major expenses included</i>	
<i>* Initial audit to ensure we were correctly set up \$3,100.00</i>	
<i>* Insurance \$1,608.50</i>	
<i>* Email newsletter \$2,050.00</i>	
<i>* Podcast setup \$875.66</i>	
<i>* Website set up and hosting \$9,639.00</i>	
<i>* Legal expenses to defend our name \$250.00</i>	
Total expenses/payments	\$18,529.89
Net surplus/deficit	\$3,328.01
Balance Sheet	
Total assets	\$26,382.52
Total liabilities	-\$354.66
Net assets/liabilities	\$26,737.18

What's next?

Our focus areas for 2021/22

In order to meet our strategic priorities, we have identified the following focuses for the coming year.

Focus area 1

Build the evidence base through research partnering

Focus area 2

Project planning, budgeting and forecasting initiatives

Focus area 3

Content update and review of website

Focus area 4

Future-proofing our community- multi-channel (podcast, newsletter, app, socials) and data capture

Focus area 5

Expand stakeholder engagement and build role of consumer voice

Focus area 6

Expand membership (formal) including professional offering and training

Focus area 7

Provide additional support for our people (volunteers)- onboarding and training

Focus area 8

Board recruitment and diversity

Focus area 9

Grant template to support funding



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