



2019 in Review

www.irisfoundation.org.au



Iris Foundation is a grassroots organisation that depends on the generosity and commitment of local people to continue our work.
As well as major supporters listed below, we would like to acknowledge all the individuals and groups who contributed via donations, volunteering, opportunities and other gifts throughout 2019.

Our Vision

To prevent suicide on the Central Coast

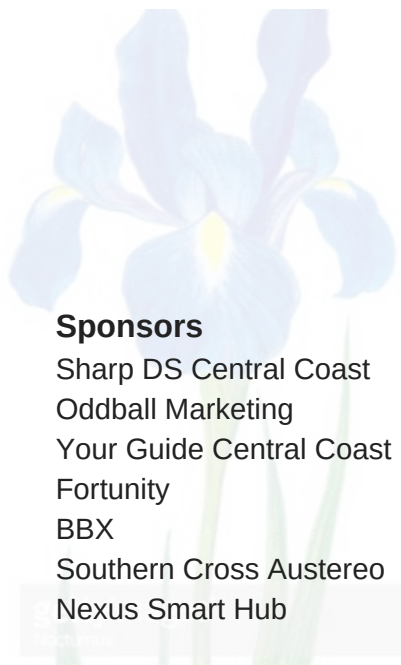
Our Purpose

To foster resilience, hope and connections in our community as a means to reducing the risk of suicide

Supporting businesses, organisations and individual donors over \$500

Wyong Milk Factory
Royal Hotel Wyong
Bunnings Lakehaven
Hunter Business Hub
Essence Images
5E Digital
Trendpac
Robson Partners
Woolworths Distribution Centre
Scenic Tours
Robert and Silvana Natoli
Northlakes Toukley Rotary

Our Thanks



Sponsors

Sharp DS Central Coast
Oddball Marketing
Your Guide Central Coast
Fortunity
BBX
Southern Cross Austereo
Nexus Smart Hub

Grants and Foundations

Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation
Wyong Roos Foundation
Wyong Rugby League Club Group
Wyong Community Bank
Branch of Bendigo Bank
Mingara Recreation Club
Doyalson Wyee RSL
Club Wyong RSL
Westpac Foundation
Sisters of Charity Foundation
LifeSpan - Central Coast Local Health District
Count Charitable Foundation

In reflecting on 2019, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who played a part in achieving a very successful year. To our grant providers, donors, community partners, volunteers, service supporters and community supporters - Thank You!

I would also like to sincerely thank and acknowledge our dedicated Board members and Foundation staff including our very talented program facilitators who help young people develop their unique gifts, talents and resilience.

Sue Liptrott, Executive Officer

For the past two years, Iris Foundation has been a Champion of the LifeSpan initiative. Through our part in the practical implementation team, we have actively promoted the valuable community online resource

[QPR - Question, Persuade, Refer.](#)

This resource is still available in 2020 and can be accessed through www.irisfoundation.org.au.

The Central Coast region is one of only four sites selected in NSW to trial LifeSpan - an innovative, evidence-based, world-class approach to suicide prevention. LifeSpan concluded December 2019.

LIFE CONNECTIONS

4 programs delivered in 2019

The Life Connections program aims to educate individuals to become more aware of their inner resources and build resilience – the ability to withstand stress and catastrophe.

Participants gather practical tools to help them bounce back quickly from setbacks and day-to-day challenges and to feel more connected with themselves, their families and the wider community.

In 2019, four Life Connections programs were hosted by various organisations in both Central Coast and Newcastle areas. Mental wellbeing was measured at the beginning and the conclusion of each course.

Y-CONNECTIONS

2 programs delivered in 2019

Two pilot programs were delivered to Year 7 & 8 students at Tuggerah Lakes Secondary College, Berkeley Vale Campus. The results are encouraging and further programs have been allocated for 2020.

It is estimated that 1 in 7 Australian children experience mental health issues and about half of all serious mental health issues in adulthood begin before the age of 14.



Y-Connections is an age appropriate well-being program for students in Years 7 & 8.

The program is applicable to all students but can be of particular benefit to those who experience issues such as social withdrawal, anxiety, difficulties with peer relationships, low school attendance, isolation, identity issues or disengagement.

COOL CONNECTIONS IN SCHOOL

16 programs delivered in 2019

Cool Connections is an in-school program for students in the later years of primary school. It aims to increase self-esteem, build confidence and social support, and to help children identify positive qualities about themselves – unearthing their own 'superpowers'.

Over 450 students across 13 schools have benefited from the program to date. The impact of the program can be seen by teachers, parents/caregivers and the participants themselves.

From the students:

*I can talk to people easier. I am more confident.
I am much happier, happier than I have been in a really long time.
I am more positive about myself. Now I can stand up to people.
I am happier, I don't cry myself to sleep as much as I used to and I am braver.
When people say negative things, I don't get as upset.
I loved the way you always taught us to find our bright side because I think I found it.
Thank you for everything you do, you have taught me to use my imagination, to create.*



Cool Connections in School has been evaluated by Suicide Prevention Australia Hub and is listed as a 'Program of High Merit'. The Hub assess quality and effectiveness of programs across Australia.

CBWN unites women in business and community on the Central Coast through networking events. CBWN is open to all women who are looking to develop connections and share their stories and resources with the aim of creating mutual support, inspiring opportunities and developing resilience.

CBWN membership opened in December 2018 and 12 months later exceeds 200 members.

Activities this year included:

- 15 Networking events - Breakfast, Luncheons, After Dark Sparkle events
- Educational Workshops
- International Women's Day event
- Christmas Twilight Markets
- Fundraising
- Volunteering opportunities



CBWN 2019 Resilience Awards

The inaugural 2019 CBWN Women's Resilience Awards were presented during a gala luncheon at Club Toukley RSL on 6th March.

The awards recognised Central Coast women who demonstrated courage and strength in challenging times. Carol Lenthall was very surprised and visibly touched to be named our 2019 honouree.

Iris Foundation continues to support local grass-roots initiatives

In 2019 supported initiatives include:

• Men Care Too

Awareness, wellbeing and engagement of men in unpaid, informal caring roles and the communities around them. www.mencaretoo.org



• GOATS Festival - Going Off At The Swamp

A family event that shines a light on young local musicians, held each April at Koala Park, San Remo. Through sponsorship, Iris Foundation helps to provide recognition to over 150 young people, aged five to 25, who take part in the Festival.



• TIMBA - This is My Brave Australia

Iris Foundation was proud to support the inaugural Central Coast show held in October. This Is My Brave Australia shows aim to break the stigma and stereotypes surrounding mental health challenges through storytelling, poetry, song, dance and creative expression live on stage.



Tree of Dreams™

The Tree of Dreams® is an annual campaign to raise awareness of suicide prevention on the Central Coast. The campaign works towards heightening awareness of the impact of suicide, and increasing conversations about preventing suicide in the lead up to World Suicide Prevention Day, 10th September.

Once again, the Tree of Dreams®, situated at the Wyong Milk Factory, was adorned with hundreds of messages of HOPE – STRENGTH – REMEMBRANCE – SUPPORT collected from people across the Central Coast.

The Tree has become a memorable tribute to those we have lost, but also a positive display of hope and support to remind us all to encourage life and reach out to each other when times are tough.



River Reflections

This year, alongside the Tree of Dreams, Iris Foundation was proud to host the inaugural River of Reflections event in recognition of lives touched by suicide in the Central Coast community.

A crowd of around 100 local people gathered on the banks of Wyong River on September 9. Many wrote messages of hope, support and remembrance on lighted lanterns, which were then released to float peacefully down the river - a moment to honour and respect those they have lost, their life lived, their love and the gifts they gave. It is also an opportunity to show those touched by suicide that they're not alone, to foster hope and build connectedness, to raise awareness for suicide prevention. The group took the opportunity to reflect, talk together, share snacks and hear from speakers with a lived experience of suicide.



Wyong Race Club



UoN INS BBQ Fundraiser



Wyong Roos Foundation



Bunnings BBQ Lakehaven



Coffee & Cake by the Lake



Raw Challenge volunteering



Robson Partners



NSWBC Regional Awards



Wyong Milk Factory Art Gallery opening



CBWN 1st Birthday



Iris Program Facilitators



Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation



Tree of Dreams Budgewoi



RU OK? Day Woolworths Distribution Centre



International Women's Day



Royal Hotel Wyong Spectacular