

Acknowledgment of Country

knowmore acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters across Australia upon which we live and work. We pay our deep respects to Elders past and present for their ongoing leadership and advocacy.



About knowmore

knowmore Legal Service is a nation-wide, free and independent community legal centre providing legal information, advice, representation and referrals, education and systemic advocacy for victims and survivors of child abuse.

Our Vision

A community that is accountable to survivors and free of child abuse.

Our Purpose

To facilitate access to justice for victims and survivors of child abuse and to work with survivors and their supporters to stop child abuse.

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Respect

We deeply listen to our clients, honour them as people, ensure our services are culturally safe and respond flexibly and supportively to the differing needs and experiences of our clients.

Integrity

Our clients have confidence in our expert advice and our independence. We are known for being honest and can be counted on to do what we say we will do.

Collaboration

We deeply respect the strengths of those we work with and work to enable them to make their own choices.

We partner with other organisations to have the greatest impact and reach the maximum number of clients.

Courage

We are willing to face challenges and be proactive and innovative in looking for solutions.

Chairperson and CEO's report

This year knowmore marks ten years supporting survivors. Over that time the service has evolved and grown and developed a unique multi-disciplinary approach to assisting clients. The past year particularly has seen knowmore grow exponentially and the organisation has helped more survivors than ever before. With six offices now operating across the country, staffing numbers have expanded to meet this increase in demand.

In early 2022, knowmore received additional funding to support survivors of childhood sexual abuse and Stolen Generations survivors removed from the Northern Territory, Australian Capital Territory, Jervis Bay, and Victoria. To ensure services are accessible for more Stolen Generations survivors, knowmore opened a new office in Darwin. This full-service office provides knowmore's multi-disciplinary support to clients with a particular focus on supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survivors applying to the Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme. The Darwin base has facilitated increased outreach efforts in the Northern Territory, meaning teams have been able to reach more rural, regional, and remote communities.

knowmore's extensive First Nations staff cohort and consistently high levels of engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survivors remains a source of pride across the organisation. To support this, the new role of Director, First Nations Engagement was created. Gary Oliver commenced in this position in early 2023 and is responsible for ensuring our services are culturally safe and that we are meeting the needs of all our First Nations survivors, communities, and stakeholders across Australia.

Following the pandemic years, opportunities for modifying service approaches and systems have returned. knowmore is progressively looking to adapt and innovate to deliver impactful services for clients and extend this to broader engagement, advocacy, and education initiatives for and with survivors. Further planning is underway to refine and expand outreach efforts across Australia. knowmore is working on creative strategies to reach rural, regional, and remote communities in a way that delivers the greatest benefit.

Work on a fresh strategic plan for knowmore has commenced and will provide a strong direction and guide the organisation's future programs and development. The National Redress Scheme is already roughly half-way through its planned life.

This third knowmore Strategic Plan will identify key directions

for broader roles for knowmore, beyond the scope and the life of this scheme, utilising the highly respected, trauma-informed, culturally safe multidisciplinary approach. The Board and staff look forward to working with the broad knowmore community in this next stage of this journey.



Warren Strange
Chief Executive Officer



Michael Smith
Chairperson

Farewell Warren

In July 2023 knowmore said farewell to long-term Chief Executive Officer Warren Strange. knowmore acknowledges and thanks Warren for his incredible contribution. Over ten years, Warren provided steady, skillful, and professional leadership through the many developments and challenges the organisation has faced. Funding expansion and contraction, rapidly launching new services, and implementing COVID responses were all issues that Warren approached with his trademark dedication, consideration, passion, and commitment.

Thank you Warren, you will be missed, and all the best.

Our story

Timeline of knowmore

12 November 2012

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse is announced

3 April 2013

First public hearing held at the County Court Victoria

May/June 2013

Initial knowmore Sydney team recruited (15 roles)

September 2013

Public hearings (case studies) commence with Case Study 01: Scouts and Hunter Aboriginal Children's Service

March 2013

NACLC funded to establish a legal advisory service for people engaging with the Royal Commission

8 July 2013

Official knowmore launch by Attorney General Mark Dreyfus MP QC; 1800 line goes live

April 2014

First Royal Commission case study report released

February 2018

Federal Government announces funding of \$37.9m over 3 years for knowmore to assist survivors with their redress options

1 July 2018

Commencement of National Redress Scheme

6 December 2019

knowmore obtains a grant of \$1 million from the Financial Counselling Foundation to fund free financial counselling for survivors

2 January 2020

knowmore receives funding from the DSS to assist Redress Support Services to build capacity and improve outcomes for survivors

21 June 2018

National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Act 2018 receives assent

22 October 2018

National Apology to victims and survivors of institutional child sexual abuse

1 July 2020

Second anniversary review of the National Redress Scheme commences

18 February 2020

Australian Government tables its response to the former JSC's report

September 2015

Royal Commission's Redress and Civil Litigation report released

4 November 2016

Australian Government announces the establishment of the Commonwealth Redress Scheme

August 2017

Royal Commission's Criminal Justice report released

14 December 2017

Final sitting of the Royal Commission

3 September 2015

knowmore's funding extended to December 2017 to match extended reporting date for Royal Commission

May 2017

knowmore receives additional funding in Federal Budget to transition to providing redress related services

26 October 2017

Commonwealth Redress Scheme legislation introduced to Federal Parliament

15 December 2017

Royal Commission delivers its final report (17 volumes)

November 2020

knowmore commences operating as a stand-alone CLC

23 June 2021

Final report of the second year review of the National Redress Scheme is published along with the Australian Government's interim response

1 January 2022

knowmore is funded to assist survivors of child sexual abuse in non-institutional settings

July 2022

New Joint Standing Committee on Implementation of the National Redress Scheme is established

June 2021

knowmore receives funding through DSS to deliver financial counselling services to people participating in the NRS

October 2021

Australian Government announces the launch of the National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse

1 March 2022

Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme commences and knowmore is funded to provide legal and financial counselling services

August 2022

knowmore is funded to provide financial counselling services to survivors applying for Victorian Stolen Generations Reparations Package

Reflections on 10 years with knowmore

Aunty Glendra Stubbs,
Elder in Residence

Over ten years working with knowmore I have seen a lot of clients and a lot of changes and development. knowmore passed me interviewing them because they were committed to providing wrap-around services which did no more harm to clients and not just collecting service numbers. I started work as an Aboriginal Engagement Advisor on the first day of the Royal Commission and we quickly got to work building a service that was culturally safe to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

Over the years, I have traveled across the country and visited so many places providing cultural support to people that knowmore was helping. I have been to remote and regional communities as well as into many prisons to make sure that everyone had the opportunity to access truth, justice and healing.

Now, as knowmore's Elder in Residence, I am so proud of the work knowmore does and the difference it makes for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients. Talking about child sexual abuse is the most difficult conversations that this country has had, but addressing the issue is something that we have to do.



Cultural competency

As the first ever appointee to the newly created Director First Nations Engagement role, I was pleased to join knowmore this year and in particular to lead the First Nations staff and strategy across the country. My new role reports direct to the CEO and participates in the Executive Leadership Team. The role of this position is one of leadership within a cultural framework combined with an overarching strategy to ensure the cultural competency of knowmore going forward.

This financial year our team shared with colleagues the celebrations of NAIDOC week and Reconciliation week, and the emotion of the anniversary of the National Apology and Sorry Day. We commenced planning for our RAP, and advised our Board on knowmore's position on the Referendum.

As a service that strives to at all times be culturally safe and trauma informed, knowmore is committed to a multidisciplinary approach. Integral to this is the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Engagement Team.

There are many factors that indicate the success of this model one of them being 48% of our client group being First Nations. Through the cultural lens our service model has had an impact on this client centred approach.

Our service model has Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff lead our engagement in urban, regional and remote areas. We have gender specific roles identified through the service methodology; clients have the choice of male or female Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement advisers. The role of these advisers is to work with all disciplines in knowmore and services provided to clients across the footprint of our country.

An important part of our service delivery is the cultural lens which we share across all disciplines, this has been an important factor in focusing the work we do by building a platform which is the foundation of Indigenous intellect based on the values and lore that are evident in indigenous society across the contemporary landscape that captures and embraces the traditions of the oldest living culture in the world.

Gary Oliver

Director, First Nations Engagement



Our service model

At knowmore, we put the people we serve at the heart of what we do, providing a wrap-around service to best support those clients. As a culturally safe, trauma-informed, multidisciplinary legal service we understand the critical importance of working in ways that recognise the unique lived experiences of every client and providing an opportunity for justice-making for the harms they survived as children, while seeking to prevent the re-traumatisation that can come from navigating complex legal systems.

Our service delivery model is recognised as best practice nationally when it comes to working with survivors of harm or abuse. By utilising the expertise of multiple professions including Aboriginal engagement advisors, social workers and counsellors, and financial counsellors to work alongside our legal team, we provide holistic support for the victims and survivors of childhood abuse who come to us. Clients are regularly supported by more than one staff member at a time and there is no 'lead' discipline in our work; we are led by the client and their needs.

The experience of every client deeply matters to us, and this multidisciplinary service approach begins at the point of entry, with a dedicated and specialised intake and administration team who connect our clients in with the help they need. Our commitment to trauma informed, culturally safe services means all of our client facing staff regularly receive specialist training to ensure they have the right skills to work effectively and safely with abuse survivors, as well as maintaining their own wellness at work.

Our model and approach recognises the many ways that complex trauma can affect a person's life, and the resulting needs they may present with. By seeking to support and address some of these needs, knowmore hopes to provide a service response that helps people to navigate the justice system safely, while having the greatest opportunity to benefit from the legal processes they are engaging with.

Graham's story

Graham* is over 80 and had never disclosed to anyone, including his family, the abuse he suffered as a small child at a church-run school. Graham experiences a range of issues and serious health impacts resulting from this abuse and had been hospitalised numerous times. Whilst Graham felt extremely nervous approaching knowmore for assistance, he was motivated to make an application to the National Redress Scheme so he could have some money to leave to his family.

Graham found talking about his experiences of child sexual abuse very distressing and was supported by a knowmore social worker during his legal appointments. The social worker could monitor Graham's stress levels, assisting him with breathing and grounding techniques and ensure he was okay to continue the appointment with his lawyer.

Over several careful appointments, Graham was able to complete his application to the NRS which was submitted on his behalf. He received an offer of a redress payment and counselling support and indicated that he would like to receive a direct personal response.

Despite his nervousness, Graham was delighted with the outcome and reported that he felt more confident now he had the offer but was very glad that the process was over. Graham said that 'a great burden had been lifted' and that he was very relieved he broke the 'silence, secrecy and shame of the childhood sexual assault that has haunted 70 years of his life'. He also said that 'If I had of spoken up when I was a child about the abuse I wouldn't have been believed'. The outcome of his redress application had a very positive impact for Graham, he said 'it's the greatest miracle that has ever happened' and that he couldn't have done it without knowmore's support.

** The name of this client and some particulars have been changed to protect privacy*

Who we have helped

knowmore has helped survivors all across Australia.

We have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement workers to support our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survivors.

Our Support Services team of specialist social workers and counsellors assists survivors through the process of accessing our legal service.

We also have financial counsellors who advise to survivors about their rights and options in receiving and protecting their National Redress Scheme payments.

We helped **7,023** survivors.



We answered our free advice lines **30,516** times.



We assisted with **895** redress applications.



ABS location

Major cities of
Australia

43%



Inner
regional
Australia

22%



Outer
regional
Australia

16%



Remote
Australia

5%



Very remote
Australia

5%



We provided cultural
support to **1,221**
survivors.



We provided
financial
counselling to **1,077**
survivors.



Our specialist
social workers and
counsellors supported
1,112 survivors.



Our 22-23 year

Our
clients



48%
identify as
Aboriginal
and/or Torres
Strait Islander

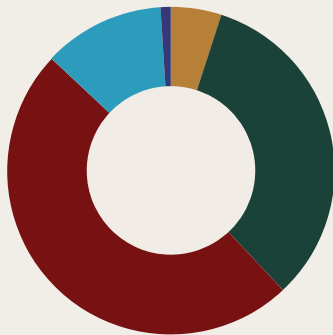


48%
identified
as female



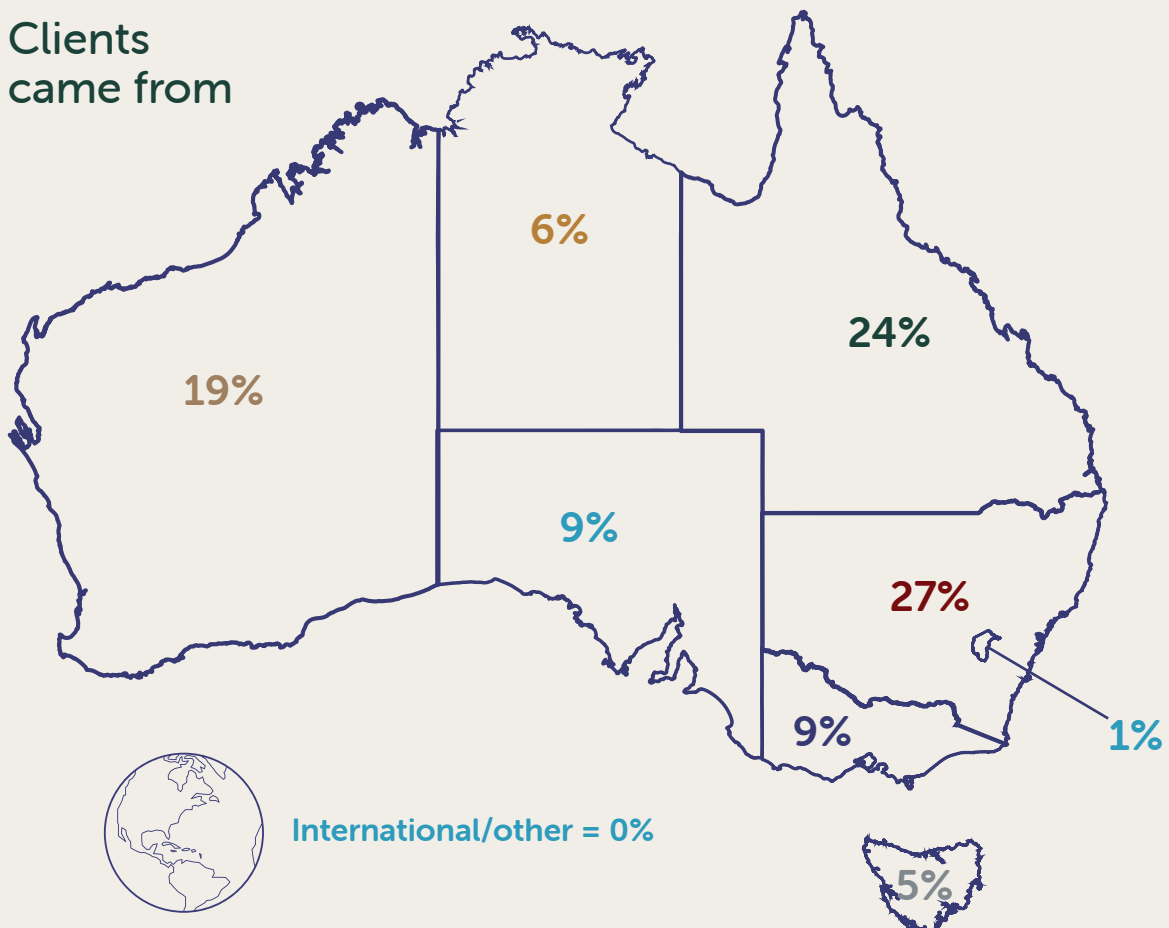
52%
identified
as male

Age



0-25	5%
26-45	33%
46-65	49%
66+	12%
unknown	1%

Clients
came from



Since 1 July 2018

Our clients



37%

identify as
Aboriginal
and/or Torres
Strait Islander



43%

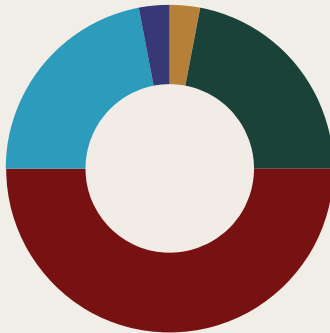
identified
as female



57%

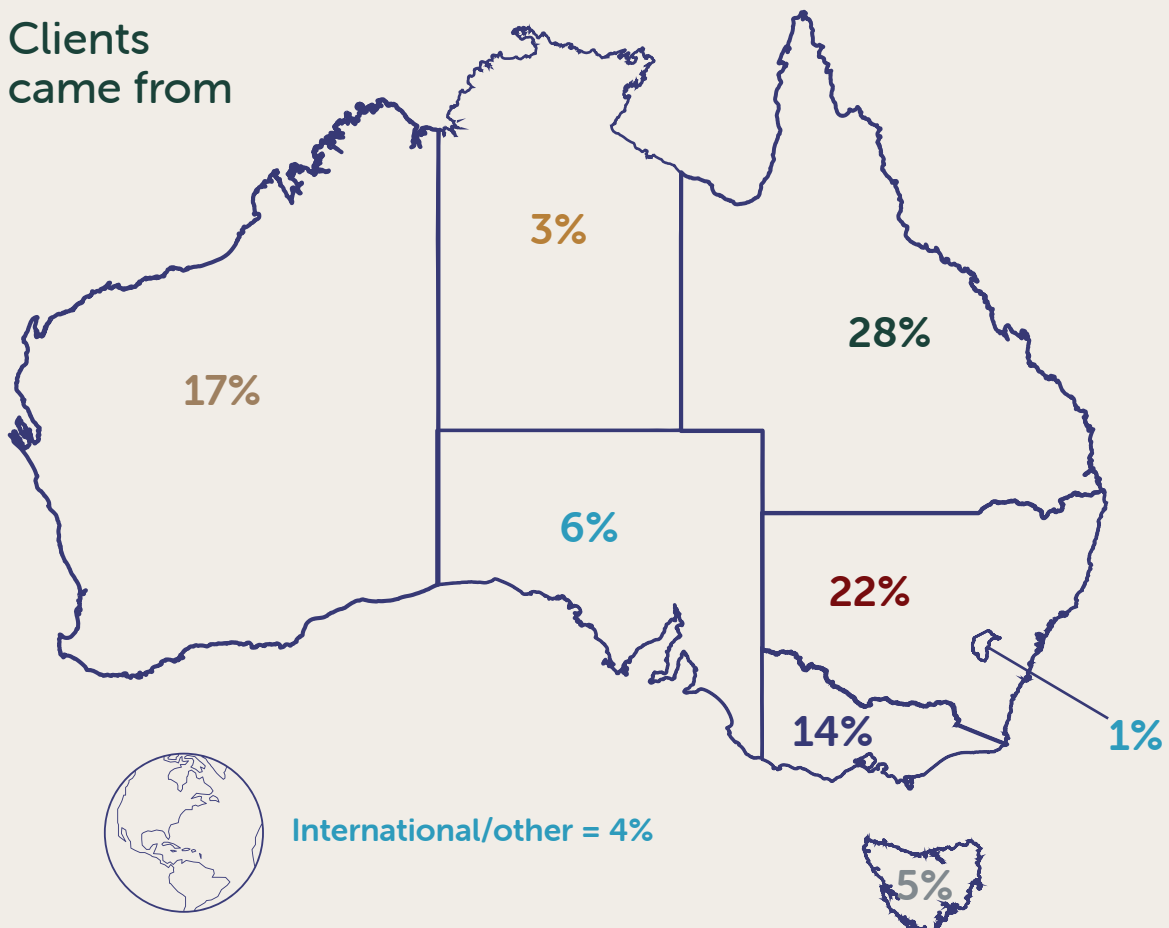
identified
as male

Age



0-25	3%
26-45	22%
46-65	50%
66+	22%
unknown	3%

Clients came from



Outreach

knowmore's outreach program is a critical part of our service, as we strive to provide access to our services nationally.

knowmore travels to Tasmania frequently to support Tasmanian survivors. The smaller size of and connectedness within communities means survivors often face greater barriers to disclosure.

As a national service, supporting the only state without an office requires regular contact with a focus on building strong local relationships, especially after the COVID pandemic prevented visits for nearly 2 years. There is also a consistent preference by Tasmanian survivors and staff at organisations to meet face-to-face rather than virtually.

Our outreach in Tasmania has led to a marked increase in referrals which has remained strong throughout our consistent visits. We have been to all regions of the state, meeting with a wide array of services. In particular we prioritised return visits to grassroots community groups that support populations with an intersectionality of risk factors. The breadth and consistency of this approach has been extremely well-received.

Knowledge of our service and the Schemes that we work with has spread to towns and communities that are traditionally less open to large national services like knowmore.

When we visited an Aboriginal child and family service in the lower socio-economic area of the Huon Valley it was wonderful to see their surprise and interest; a marked contrast



with their reserved and ambivalent response to our first visit.

Our consistent engagement with Tasmania's community legal centres has been similarly successful, with all staff confident with referring survivors to knowmore for legal advice and support.

Similarly our collaboration with homelessness services like Colony47, Hobart City Mission and Bethlehem House, and Tasmania's Neighbourhood House network has led to strong, flexible collaboration. In addition to helping to facilitate information sessions with their staff and volunteers this ongoing collaboration has allowed us to provide survivors choice and therefore a more trauma-informed

experience with our service, with many organisations offering their premises for appointments or sending and receiving documents on behalf of survivors.

With most staff of these services, especially regionally having little or no awareness of us or the Schemes we work with, this outreach work facilitates contact with, and the upskilling of, grassroots workers, which has a direct flow-on effect to survivors. Without outreach work like this it is likely that many survivors might never have heard of knowmore. These interactions are a key part of increasing Tasmanian client numbers.



Who we have visited

We completed **92** outreach trips.

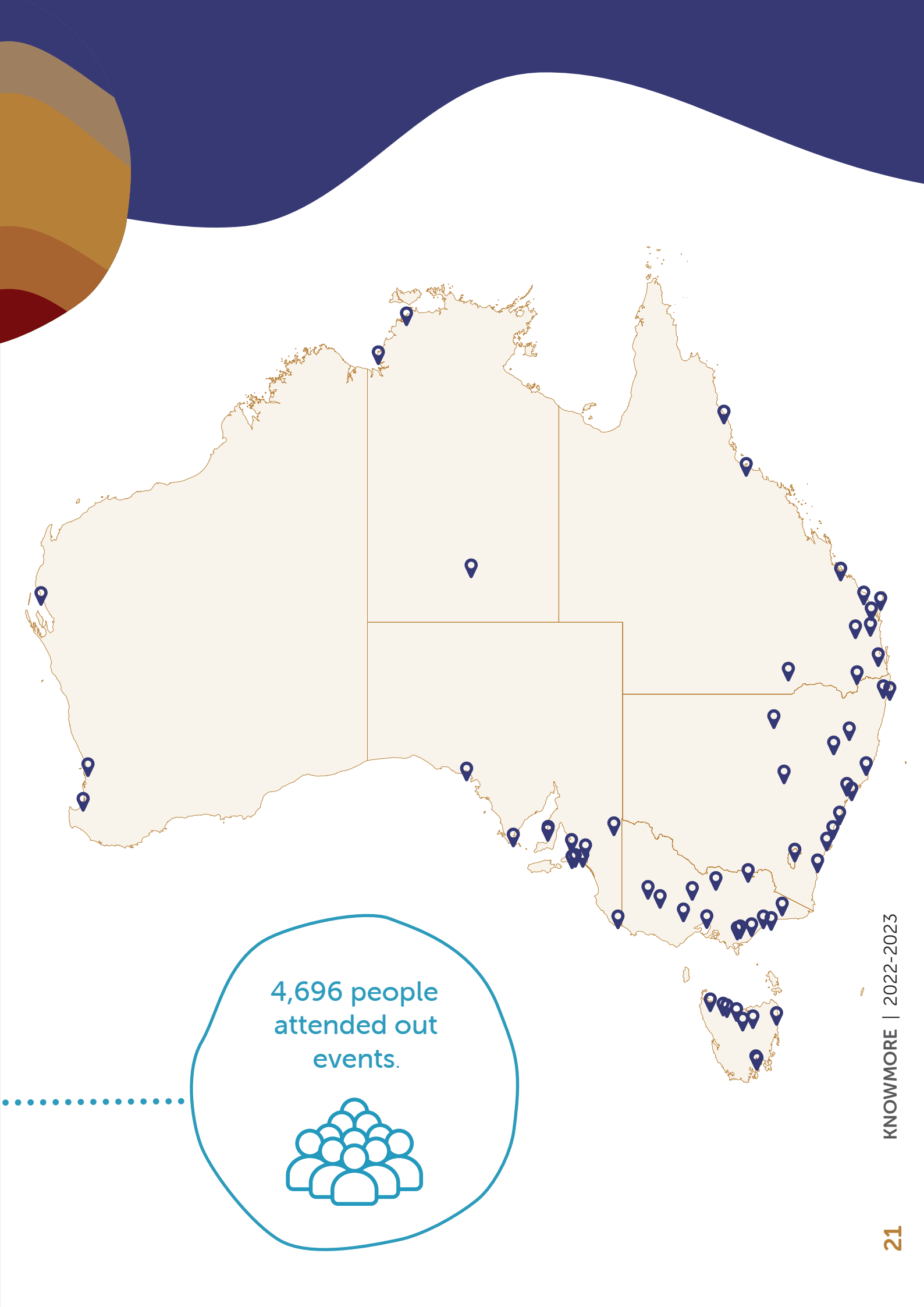


We held **827** events.



1,180 organisations attended outreach events





4,696 people
attended out
events.



Advocacy

knowmore's mission is to facilitate access to justice for victims and survivors of child abuse and to work with survivors and their supporters to prevent child abuse. We undertake systemic advocacy to improve laws, policies and practices that impact the lives of victims and survivors and increase the risk of child abuse in our society.

knowmore undertakes systemic advocacy to:

- improve laws, policies and practices that impact the lives of victims and survivors
- help governments, institutions and communities prevent and better respond to child abuse
- increase awareness and understanding of the experiences and needs of victims and survivors.

Key focus areas for knowmore's advocacy are:

- improving the National Redress Scheme for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse (NRS)
- improving the Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme (TSGRS)
- advancing civil litigation reforms
- improving criminal justice responses to child sexual abuse
- improving services to support victims and survivors
- making institutions safer for children.

Aims for the future

knowmore is continuing to progress advocacy work across all key focus areas. Major priorities for 2023–24 include:

- ensuring improvements are made to the NRS, including by advocating for the urgent implementation of second year review recommendations that have been accepted by government
- supporting Stolen Generations survivors to access redress, including by advocating for further protections for TSGRS and VSGRP payments
- engaging with all Australian governments to advance the implementation of outstanding Royal Commission recommendations
- developing resources to support self-advocacy by survivors.

10 years of advocacy at knowmore

Since 2013, knowmore has:

- written 115 submissions, including
 - 15 to the Royal Commission
 - 12 on the National Redress Scheme
 - 23 on civil litigation
 - 45 on criminal justice
 - 19 on making institutions safer for children
- given evidence at 17 public hearings
- contributed to law reform in every jurisdiction
- collaborated with other community legal centres and community services on systemic campaigns, including the campaign for an Australian Charter of Human Rights and the #RaiseTheAge campaign.

In the last 4 years alone, knowmore has undertaken activities on more than 100 systemic advocacy projects.

Advocacy

Key achievements

In 2022–23, knowmore undertook more than 40 systemic advocacy projects. Key achievements for the year included:

Supporting survivors to receive the full benefit of their redress payments

knowmore engaged with a range of stakeholders to ensure payments received under the NRS, TSGRS and Victorian Stolen Generations Reparations Package (VSGRP) are protected and do not negatively impact on other payments or services received by survivors. This included:

- working with the Department of Social Services to implement a letter that survivors can use to report NRS payments to Centrelink
- working with the banks to implement a banking code that allows VSGRP payments to be identified and protected
- receiving confirmation from state and territory legal aid commissions that NRS and TSGRS payments will be excluded when assessing a person's financial eligibility for legal aid.

Advocating for improvements to the National Redress Scheme

knowmore made significant contributions to the ongoing inquiry of the Joint Standing Committee on Implementation of the NRS, raising awareness of how the redress scheme needs to be improved for victims and survivors. This included:

- making a comprehensive written submission endorsed by 7 Redress Support Services and community legal centres
- giving evidence to the committee at a private briefing and a public hearing
- speaking about knowmore's advocacy on ABC Radio National's *Drive* program.

knowmore also contributed to ongoing work to implement recommendations from the second year review of the NRS.



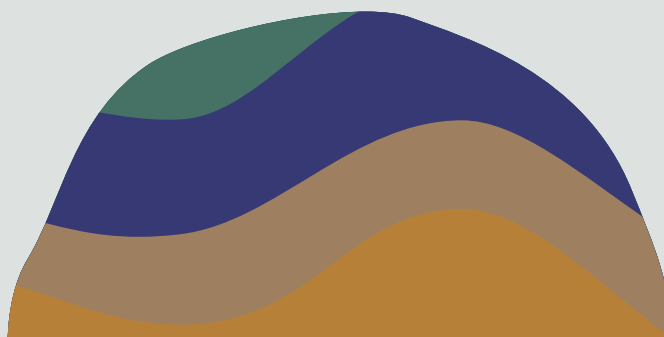
Contributing to legislative reforms to implement recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission)

knowmore participated in numerous consultations to help ensure the Royal Commission's Criminal Justice and Final Report recommendations were reflected in new laws across Australia. This included consultations on:

- laws in the Northern Territory to implement the Royal Commission's recommendations about certain child sexual offences (Criminal Justice Legislation Amendment (Sexual Offences) Act 2023)
- laws in Tasmania to establish the framework for Child and Youth Safe Standards and a reportable conduct scheme, in line with key recommendations from the Royal Commission's Final Report (Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023)
- proposed laws in Queensland relevant to the Royal Commission's recommendations about jury directions in child sexual offence cases.

Acknowledging the 5th anniversary of the Royal Commission (15 December 2022)

Over the last 3 months of 2022, knowmore and other support services joined with survivors to reflect on the impact of the Royal Commission and the survivors who came forward, and to consider some priority areas for change over the next 5 years. The 5th anniversary reflections page on knowmore's website showcases this work.



In the news

Need help as a survivor of child abuse?

Hobart Magazine, Hobart, June 2022

'knowmore aims to support survivors all over Australia. We are committed to listening to their experiences with respect and acting in their best interests'

Warren Strange, Chief Executive Officer

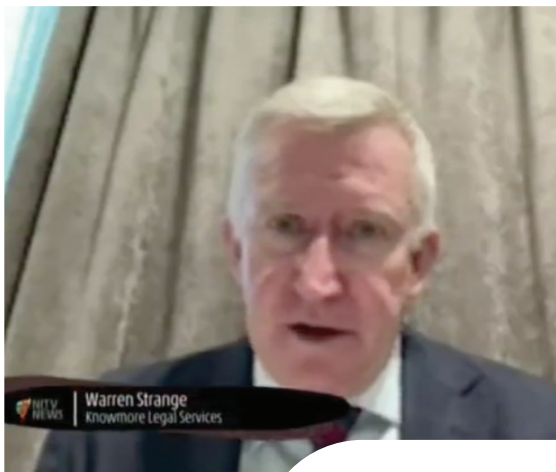
Child sexual abuse survivors struggle for justice as small sporting organisations are slow to sign up to National Redress Scheme *ABC*



Independent legal service to visit

Yorke Peninsula Country Times - Kadina, 16 August 2022

Joint Committee hears some survivors still have no timeline on their redress application *NITV*



'the increasing application numbers, and the demand for our services, is just unprecedented at the moment'

Lauren Hancock, Manager of Law Reform & Advocacy, ABC Radio

'The process of applying is still going to be a demanding and re traumatizing one for survivors. And we strongly recognise the need for people to be supported in that process.'

Warren Strange, Chief Executive Officer, ABC Radio

'We have people here that have cultural knowledge and can help you along your journey'
Aboriginal Elder in Residence Aunty Glendra Stubbs

knowmore Legal Service

Manilla Express, Manilla, 03 August 2022

The West Australian

South Western Times | Bunbury Herald | South West

Knowmore Legal Service travels to Bunbury to raise awareness about National Redress Scheme for child abuse



Luke McPherson | Bunbury Herald
Tue, 16 August 2022 4:00AM

Luke McPherson

'We hope we can provide holistic support to them to try and reduce the stress that inevitably goes along with bringing up some of the previous trauma'

Simon Bruck, Principal Lawyer, ABC Radio

One woman's fight to have her day in court has dragged on for 20 years ABC



Service helps people access scheme

Bunbury Herald, Bunbury- 18 August 2022

'We can't continually do more and more with less resources and that is going to impact upon the trust of our entire client group'

Warren Strange, Chief Executive Officer, ABC Radio



Going neutral

knowmore has partnered with Trace to measure and offset our emissions to become carbon neutral and will be looking for ways to reduce our emissions.

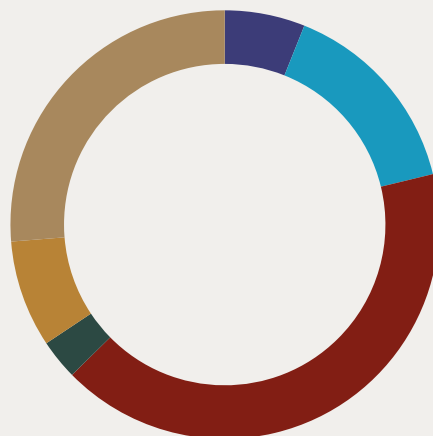
What is Trace?

Trace is an Australian-born, female-founded climate-technology company on a mission to reduce the barriers for individuals and businesses to go carbon neutral.

Trace's platform makes it easy for businesses to get a quote on offsetting their footprint in as little as 2 business days, and then measures the business' footprint for free in order to provide a detailed breakdown of the source of its emissions.

Trace handpicked a portfolio of climate projects for knowmore; each of which provides carbon credits to offset emissions but also to support UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Our projects



Efficient cookstoves, Nepal

Coorong Lakes Biodiversity Conservation, Australia

Katingan Peatlands Conservation, Indonesia

Cool Fire Traditional Land Management, Australia

Siam Cement Biomass, Thailand

Darajat Geothermal, Indonesia

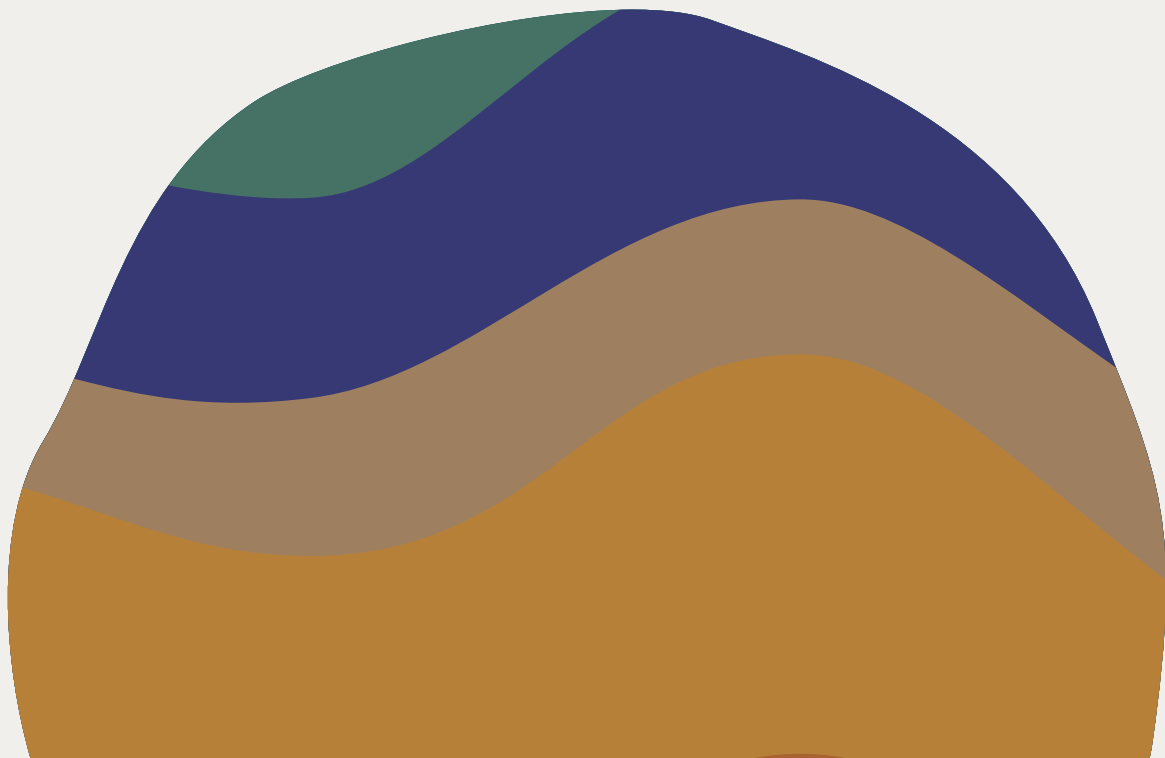


Looking forward

knowmore has achieved a lot over its first 10 years. The organisation has grown from a program of the National Association of Community Legal Centres with a single funding stream to be an independent community legal centre with 6 funded programs. Through that progress, the organisation has developed and maintained a commitment to delivering services through a multi-disciplinary model that is trauma-informed and culturally safe.

A strong foundation of systems capability across client intake, support, service delivery, law reform and advocacy, and corporate services provides an excellent base to deliver additional and complimentary services. knowmore has demonstrated success assisting survivors participating with commissions of enquiry, compensation schemes and other issues.

Today, as a truly national community legal centre with established capacity and offices across the country, knowmore is uniquely placed to make a valuable contribution to the legal assistance sector. A strategic planning process is currently underway which will deliver a plan that confirms a future direction for the organisation and guides development and structure. Key to the realisation of this plan will be maintaining core organisational values and a workforce that is integrated, scalable, and always keeps a sharp focus on clients' interests.



Contact Us

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knowmore is a national service. We regularly travel to key locations around Australia offering face-to-face information, community legal education and client appointments. If you, your support group, or community would like someone from knowmore to visit you, please contact us.

Funding

knowmore is funded by the Commonwealth Government, represented by the Departments of Attorney-General and Social Services and the National Indigenous Australians Agency, and by the Victorian Government, represented by the Department of Justice and Community Safety.



