



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024 - 2025

## Acknowledgement of Country

Ruth's Women's Shelter is proud to be located on the lands of the Gimuy-Walubara Yidinji People. We acknowledge their connection to country through the lands & waterways; and pay our respects to their elders, past and present.



*Women's Business - Artwork by Merryn Apma Daley*

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# OUR VALUES

## SAFETY

Providing a physically & emotionally secure & inclusive environment where clients & staff feel supported, safe & free from all forms of abuse

## RESPECT

Honouring each individual with empathy & dignity without judgement, recognising their inherent worth

## EMPOWERMENT

Build pathways to improve the capacity of clients & staff by empowering them with the tools and resources for self determination

## COLLABORATION

Working collaboratively with clients, staff & stakeholders to develop & achieve common goals

## INTEGRITY

To act with honesty & professionalism by upholding the values of our organisation

## RUTH'S MISSION

Ruth's will provide a safe environment for women and their children experiencing domestic & family violence

## RUTH'S VISION

To end violence against women and their children



# Ruths Womens Shelter Strategic Plan Overview 2025 - 2028



## Workplace Solutions

Increasing staff support, training and enhance supervision.

Improved communication delivery, engagement and staff support.

Continuous improvement of case management tools, resources and client support.

## Partnership & Community Engagement

Influential relationships enhancing the service and visibility and accessibility within the community.

Advocating and collaborating with partner services and collectives to inform them of our service delivery.



## Expansion of Service Delivery

Safe Places - operational planning, risk planning and recruitment.

Ruth's Women's Shelter - sustainability of shelter space including ongoing maintenance works.

## Ruth's Own Properties

Evaluate and assess current assets.

Creation of a mobile client outreach role to support clients in transitional properties.

Utilise surplus income to finance ongoing operations, new initiatives, or strategic projects.



“ My second time at Ruth's left me extremely empowered and confident with what I know now about the coercive control and domestic violence and how with the right level of support, awareness and planning the is a significantly higher chance I can and will remain safe and be able to recognise this behaviour and act in the future.

“ I was helped to finally understand the level of risk aswell as reflect and acknowledge the importance of making a clear honest and realistic safety plan, having a good support network and encouraged to make decisions that were beneficial to my immediate my safety whilst in ruth shelter.

# Our Service

Ruth's Womens Shelter has a rich feminist history. In September 1977 Ruth's was founded by Patricia O'Hara, Jean Bleyerveld, Ruth Thomas and Joan Trewern.

## FUNDING

Ruth's is funded by the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability, Child Safety and Women and Violence Prevention for delivery of Shelter to our clients.

Emergency Relief Funding for clients within the service is provided by Centacare.

Ruth's Safe Place was funded by the Federal Department of Social Services.

On an as needs basis, grant funds are received from Community Gambling Fund.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Ruth's is proudly compliant and registered through HDAA in accordance with the Human Standards Quality Framework (HSQF).

Ruth's upholds a registered charity status with the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits commission (ACNC).

## SERVICE

Ruth's provides crisis accommodation in a communal setting.

Funding is provided for 6 rooms ranging from a single bed and cot to 4 single beds and cot. Facilities are shared including two communal kitchens, playroom, lounge areas and outside areas. All clients are case managed.

## OUR PEOPLE

Ruth's is governed by a long standing and supportive Management Committee.

Ruth's is operated by a Manager, Team Leader, Finance Officer, Case Managers, After Hours Support Workers and an Admin Service Support Worker.



Australian Government  
Department of Social Services

# MANAGEMENT REPORT

The 2024/2025 year has marked another strong chapter in our unwavering commitment to providing safe and supported accommodation for women and children escaping family and domestic violence.

It has been a year of reflection, growth, and focus on the future of our organisation, alongside navigating the ongoing changes that impact the day-to-day operations of our service. Continuous improvement remains a core priority, as we strive to enhance the support we provide to clients, foster staff wellbeing, and strengthen our operational practices.

In March 2025, Ruth's Committee and staff came together for a comprehensive Strategic Planning Day. We reflected on our achievements over the past three years and realigned our strategic direction and goals for the 2025–2028 period. This was a significant and grounding moment that reaffirmed our mission and renewed our shared vision for the future.

We are currently in the midst of a pivotal growth phase, with the completion of our new Ruth's Safe Place. We are now awaiting final departmental approval for occupancy. This milestone brings with it many new opportunities for the growth of our team. As we move forward, consistency, transparency, and a collective call to action will be essential—ensuring our values remain front and centre in all decision-making.

Partnerships continue to be a cornerstone of our work. We are deeply grateful for the strong, collaborative relationships we hold with local and regional services, which allow us to offer a holistic, wraparound approach to client care. These partnerships strengthen our collective impact and ensure the women and children we support receive comprehensive, informed, and respectful assistance. We extend our sincere thanks to The Women's Centre, Warringu, Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service, the High-Risk Team, Access Housing, Act for Kids, and NQ Women's Legal Service for their continued support and shared dedication to our mission.

Over the past 12 months, every member of our workforce has brought passion and professionalism to their roles, striving for the best possible outcomes for our service users. In November 2024, we farewelled our long-standing employee Virginia from her Case Manager role, as she moved into our after-hours team on a casual basis. Her dedication over the years has left a lasting impact, and we are grateful for her continued presence.

# MANAGEMENT REPORT

Staff well-being and professional development remain top priorities. We have worked to ensure our team remains informed and supported, particularly in adapting to new legislative changes, including the introduction of Coercive Control Legislation in May 2025. The demands on our sector continue to rise—due to increasing crisis complexities, evolving political landscapes, and ongoing reforms. These challenges require resilience and skilled expertise, and we are proud of our team for continually rising to meet them.

We also welcomed new team members this year and honour those who have contributed in the past. Your commitment and adaptability are vital to the life of this service, and we thank you for showing up every day with integrity, compassion, and determination.

A major highlight of the year was our attendance at the 5th World Shelter Conference in September. Representing Ruth's alongside attendees from over 60 countries was a powerful and humbling experience. Topics ranged from the professionalisation of feminist practice to tech safety, global innovation, and the shared challenges faced by shelters worldwide. It reminded us of the privilege we hold operating in a first-world context—and renewed our determination to remain at the forefront of these vital global conversations.

As we look ahead, Ruth's will continue to be a voice for our community—advocating for the rights, safety, and dignity of women and children. We are proud of what we've achieved and excited for the journey ahead.



**President - Tegan Hicks**  
**Manager - Emalee Anstee**

I have a wonderful experience with the staff, their comfort-ness and the guidance and protection towards me and my daughter makes us feel at home and I appreciate all the help and support that was giving us.

THANK YOU.

I wish to formally thank all the women at Ruth's women's shelter, as most would be aware I struggle a lot with social interactions and connections with others due to my mental disabilities, the women at Ruth's were patient and kind enough to learn about who I am and learnt to understand my unique personality and behaviours. My stay at Ruth's women's shelter was incredibly comforting and reassuring, I always felt safe, heard and respected. I was never judged nor did I feel intimidated or misunderstood.

# Service Delivery



**CALD Women 28%**



Longest Stay in Shelter : 189 Nights

Average Length of Stay : 64.5 Nights

43% Exited Shelter into their own home

I love my stay during emergencies the staff are welcome me with all there heart they are friendly and provide you what you need thank you a lot god blessed all of you

Ruth's shelter helped the kids and I safely leave the house. Without the shelter we did not have anywhere to go which would have made it hard to leave. Every member of the staff were truly amazing. We were supported in every aspect and they go above and beyond to make sure our needs were met

# TREASURER REPORT

It is my privilege to present the Treasurer's Report for Ruth's Women's Shelter Cairns Inc for the financial year ended 30 June 2025.

This year, our community continued to face significant challenges, including ongoing cost-of-living pressures that have impacted both our clients and our operations. Despite these challenges, Ruth's has remained steadfast in its mission, thanks to the dedication of our staff, the support of our management committee, and the generosity of our donors and funding partners.

The Shelter recorded a strong surplus of \$1,881,682 for the year ended 30 June 2025 (2024: \$105,953), reflecting a substantial uplift in grant funding. Total revenue for the year was \$3,196,623 (2024: \$1,284,428), with grant income being the primary driver – rising to \$2,889,561 (2024: \$1,022,281). Notably, we received a one-off grant of \$1,525,970 from the Safe Places Emergency Accommodation Program, which has enabled the expansion of crisis accommodation services for women and children experiencing family and domestic violence.

We also acknowledge the ongoing support from the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Service, Child Safety (Women and Violence Prevention), Department of Social Services, Centacare, and our many generous donors, including Kenfrost, the Sisterhood of the Travelling Wheelbarrow, and all those who contributed through GiveNow and other channels. Your support makes a real difference in the lives of the women and children we serve.

Throughout the year, we continued to invest in the training and development of our staff, ensuring our team is equipped to provide the highest level of care and support. This commitment to professional development strengthens our service and helps us respond to the evolving needs of our clients.

As at 30 June 2025, Ruth's net assets stood at \$3,736,868 (2024: \$1,855,186), reflecting both the year's surplus and significant investment in property, plant, and equipment. Our cash reserves at year-end were \$721,385, after investing in the Safe Places project. The Shelter remains in a strong financial position, with sufficient resources to meet our obligations and support future growth.

The financial statements have been audited by Crowe Audit Australia, who have issued an unqualified opinion. This confirms that our financial reporting is accurate and compliant with all relevant standards.

On behalf of the management committee, I extend my heartfelt thanks to Emalee and the entire Ruth's team for their unwavering commitment, compassion, and professionalism. I also thank our supporters, partners, and the broader community for standing with us in our mission.

Together, we are making a meaningful impact and building a safer future for women and children in our region.



**Treasurer - Nicole Power**

# Our Direct Client Impact

Ruth's gather feedback from clients during their stay, and upon exiting. Our clients generously shared their experiences through our survey in response to the questions below. We are so proud of the service, safety and support we provide and the positive experiences our clients have with Ruth's across the board.

**Do you feel that you were supported to make your own decisions?**

**Ruth's is high security, did you feel safe?**



**Staff were respectful to clients needs?**



**Were you comfortable in your room and during your stay at the shelter?**

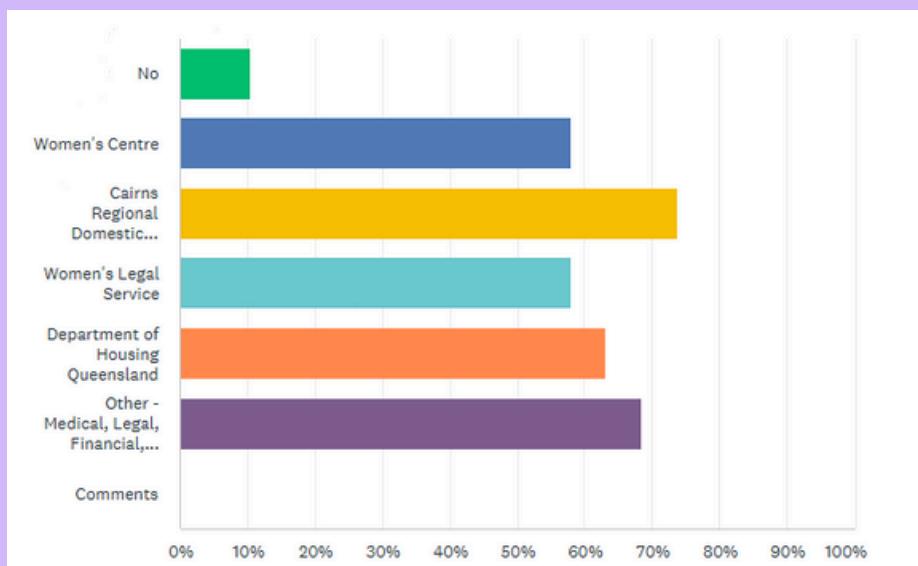
**Did you feel heard and supported?**

**Felt comfortable and safe in shelter?**

**Did you feel supported with essential items including food and toiletries?**

**What does Case Management Look Like?**

When clients were asked: Did the staff assist you to make contact with other services?



# Thankyou to our Community

Ruth's works tirelessly to build community partnerships and support networks. Our client's benefit greatly from ongoing community support, be it clothing, material items, cash donations, vouchers or fundraising.

All efforts are appreciated.

Adam Prociv  
Aillie Tooma  
**Alannah & Madeline Foundation**  
Align Yourself  
Arthur Basset  
Ben & Jerry's Cairns  
Brothers Leagues Cairns  
Cairns Golf Club  
Care Kits for Kids QLD  
Caroline Close  
Champions Real Estate  
Chisholm Family  
Containers for Change  
Corey MaCauley  
Crystal Ball Bookstore  
Donna Cahill R/E  
Elizabeth Vanderveen  
Elle Lathan  
Ethos Resources  
**Far North Queensland Greens**  
Gillian Vastenhout  
Got Your Back Sista  
Grant Thornton  
James Edwards  
Jerry Tucker  
Jessica Churches  
Kelly Philpot  
Kenfrost  
Kilfoy Cabinets  
**Lions Club Marlin Coast**  
M Akmentins

Mangoesmapping Pty Ltd  
Mark Seles  
MiHaven  
**Miller Harris Lawyers**  
Mister Minit Cairns  
Myer Cairns  
Orla Mc Guire  
OzHarvest  
Patrick Donald  
Peace Lutheran College  
Perhaps BookClub  
Peter Flatman  
Philippa McDonald  
Piccones IGA  
**PTS Traffic Management Pty Ltd**  
Pullman Cairns  
Saratat Klaihiran  
Shannon Keane  
Shona Edwards  
**Sisterhood of the Travelling**  
Wheelbarrow  
Small World Journeys  
**St Andrews Catholic College**  
St Monicas College  
**Stratford Deli Catering**  
Sue Barnard  
Terracycle Charity  
Thread Together  
**White Whale Coffee Roasters**  
Zephyr  
Zonta

