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Message from the CEO

Melissa Haley

It is my pleasure to present the **Annual Report** for **2024–2025**, a year marked by both consolidation in some key business areas and significant growth across others. We achieved a **30% increase in revenue** and **expanded our team by 60%**, reflecting our commitment to sustainable development and operational excellence.

This year, we undertook a comprehensive review of the Safe and Connected Youth Program, moving beyond the South Australian Ruby's Reunification model to create a more accessible and responsive service for young people and their families. This shift ensures we meet individuals where they are, providing support regardless of where the family are in their conflict journey.



We achieved a 30% increase in revenue and expanded our team by 60%, reflecting our commitment to sustainable development and operational excellence.

Our partnership with the College of Transformation Education and Training has enabled us to offer accredited training in Counselling and Leadership, and Business Management. This initiative not only benefits CRS staff but also extends to colleagues from the Salvation Army and MBSFM, strengthening our networks and fostering shared learning.

With support from the Commonwealth Government, we launched a trial program to support young boys at risk of, or perpetrating, family or sexual violence - demonstrating our proactive approach to social challenges.

Our National Accreditation body introduced significant reforms to further professionalise the mediation industry, and I am proud to say that CRS continues to meet the highest standards as an accredited training and accreditation provider.

A major milestone this year was the implementation of an online learning management system, which has already delivered 150 hours of professional development, compliance, and wellbeing training to all our staff.

We remain steadfast in our commitment to safeguarding. This year, we reviewed and updated our Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Policy to meet and exceed the new ACT Child Safe Standards. We appointed a dedicated Safeguarding Officer, and both our Board and staff participated in safeguarding workshops to ensure a culture of safety and accountability.



A major milestone this year was the implementation of an online learning management system, which has already delivered 150 hours of professional development, compliance, and wellbeing training to all our staff.

We are thankful for our partnerships with Multicultural Hub and the Salvation Army where we each bring a specific skillset to ensure successful outcomes for children, youth and families. We also welcomed new partnerships with Volunteering ACT and Early Childhood Australia which bring a new depth and service offering to CRS.

Our strong partnership with MBSFM continues to provide vital support to the Safe and Connected Youth program, while Rotary Canberra has enabled young people to participate in enriching activities during school holidays.

The organisation's success is a testament to the leadership of our Board, chaired by Mirjana Wilson. My deepest gratitude goes to Mirjana and the Board for their unwavering dedication and support.

I sincerely thank the CRS team not only for their dedication to improving each client's wellbeing, but the continued commitment to reflective practice, ongoing research, and daily support they give each other.



Message from the Board Chair

Mirjana Wilson

I am honored to present this report as we celebrate what has been another very successful year supporting families, workplaces and the community to prevent, manage and resolve conflict. Conflict Resolution Service (CRS) is a Not-For-Profit (For Purpose) nationally accredited dispute resolution service whose growth and reach has been extraordinary and well above the expectations we had set.

Although the Board has been fewer in terms of director numbers, we have maintained our unwavering commitment and worked with our exceptional CEO, Melissa Haley, to achieve outcomes we can be proud of. CRS maintains a solid financial position, has increased and consolidated programs of operations and developed and sustained a highly skilled staff team to deliver on the strategic and operational goals.

Strategy

In February this year the Board and Executive undertook a strategic priority and actions review and refresh. This process was undertaken with enthusiasm and professionalism and a desire to better understand our current working landscape from a fiscal, new opportunities and risk perspective.

We discussed and raised questions around:

- Which external factors would influence our strategy over the coming 1-3 years
- What our stakeholder environment looked like
- What are our organisational strengths and weaknesses and what opportunities were presented or could potentially happen over the next 12 months
- Understanding our unique value proposition
- The risks vs impact of consolidation, seeking opportunities and undertaking a full constitutional review.



CRS maintains a solid financial position, has increased and consolidated programs of operations and developed and sustained a highly skilled staff team to deliver on the strategic and operational goals.

Safeguarding

Throughout 2025 CRS has embraced Safeguarding at ALL levels: we prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults. At all levels we have engaged in professional development and training, and it is featured at all meetings and throughout all reporting mechanisms.

The Board in particular is responsible for:

- Setting an organisational culture that prioritises the safety of children, young people and vulnerable people.
- Ensuring safeguarding governance, risk and incident management policies and procedures are in place, adhered to, and effective, including conformance to relevant regulatory obligations and Standards.
- Establishing and maintaining appropriate and effective internal monitoring and control systems are in place.
- Ensuring that CRS observes all relevant safeguarding laws and regulations and work with authorities as required.
- Maintaining updated knowledge and skills in safeguarding and can champion key safeguarding messages internally and externally

Board Directors

In the last 12 months we have said goodbye to board directors, Jane Diedricks and Torrien Lau. On behalf of the whole Board, I would like to thank them both for their contributions to CRS governance activities. Both possessed a wealth of experience and skills and in particular Torrien introduced the implementation of more streamlined reporting mechanisms and improved transparency for both the directors and the CEO.

We welcomed new board directors Dilek Katlioglu and Bianca Drosario, both bringing a much-valued skillset to our Board in the areas of compliance, audit, marketing and brand awareness. As CRS evolves and expands the programs that it delivers in the community the Board has specifically looked at what governance and strategic financial frameworks are relevant and necessary for a growing organisation. Financial reporting systems have now been consolidated and give the Board confidence that we can accurately assess our viability and sustainability.

Acknowledgements

It is appropriate for me to mention that much of what has been achieved this year would not have been possible if CRS was not so well led by our CEO Melissa Haley. A highly respected professional, both internally at CRS and externally amongst the many and varied stakeholders that the organisation engages with. On behalf of the Board, I extend our utmost thanks and congratulations to her.

To my fellow Board directors, thank you for your passion, commitment and the skills that you have brought to our work at CRS. Your support of me as the Chair is also very much appreciated.

The Board is very much looking forward to what the 2025-2026 year will bring as we continue to explore opportunities and work to meet the needs of our community.



Message from the Treasurer

Yushi Zhang

CRS has continued its trajectory of financial growth and resilience in FY2024–25, reflecting our steadfast commitment to serving the community and adapting to evolving needs. I am pleased to report that CRS achieved a surplus of \$76,025, more than doubling last year's result of \$37,215. This outcome underscores our focus on strategic program delivery, sound financial stewardship and operational efficiency.

Total revenue for the year reached \$4.56 million, a significant increase from \$3.23 million in FY2023–24. This growth was predominately driven by broadening our service offerings and deepening our impact, such as Restorative Family Therapy and Be.Me. programs.

While our operating costs rose in line with program expansion, particularly in employee benefits, program delivery, and staff development, we maintained a disciplined approach to cost management. This balance between growth and prudence has allowed us to support new initiatives while preserving financial stability.



Total revenue for the year reached \$4.56 million, a significant increase from \$3.23 million in FY2023-24.

CRS's financial position remains strong. Total assets increased to \$1.51 million, up from \$1.37 million last year, and our cash reserves grew to \$967,691, reinforcing our capacity to respond flexibly to community needs and ensure continuity of services.

I extend my sincere appreciation to our CEO, dedicated staff, partners, and fellow board members for their unwavering support and commitment to CRS's mission. With a solid financial foundation and a clear strategic direction, I am confident in our continued journey of growth, service and impact.



Strategic Advisor to the CEO & Safeguarding Officer

Cindy Young

The 2024–25 financial year was a year of elevating practice and extending impact at Conflict Resolution Service (CRS), with a focus on embedding safeguarding and strengthening practice systems. We introduced innovative therapeutic responses and forged strategic partnerships that broaden access to conflict resolution across families, schools and workplaces. These developments reaffirm CRS's commitment to ensuring our services remain safe, high-quality and responsive to community needs.

Throughout the year, safeguarding was the foundation of all CRS practice. It shaped our culture, guided decision-making, and ensured that every program upheld the rights, voices and safety of children and young people. We strengthened our safeguarding framework by embedding the National Child Safe Principles across all governance, policies and practice systems.

Our teams completed bespoke safeguarding training tailored to our service context and engaged in ongoing reflective practice sessions to apply safeguarding in daily work. Supervision and management structures were reshaped to ensure safeguarding is not only a system, but a culture consistently reinforced in daily practice.

Throughout the year, safeguarding was the foundation of all CRS practice. It shaped our culture, guided decision-making, and ensured that every program upheld the rights, voices and safety of children and young people.

Alongside this, we advanced our clinical governance by updating practice guidelines, outcome measures and engagement processes to ensure services remain rigorous, evidence-informed and consistent. Reporting, risk management and quality assurance processes were also enhanced to align with and exceed national standards. Safeguarding has always been central to CRS, but in 2024-25 it was consolidated as the non-negotiable core of service delivery.

The launch of the Be.Me program was a defining milestone of 2024-25. Funded by the Department of Social Services (DSS) as a trial initiative, Be.Me has been developed by CRS as a therapeutic response for adolescent boys aged 12–18. The program works with young men who have experienced domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV) and are using, or at risk of using, violence in the home. Be.Me highlights CRS's capacity for service innovation, developing models that are both evidence-driven and responsive to community need.

Collaboration was another hallmark of the year. CRS worked with government, national funders and community partners to ensure services remain connected and accessible. A highlight was our partnership with Early Childhood Australia. Together, we co-designed a suite of online learning modules to support parents and caregivers to share parenting more effectively, communicate with each other and their children, and build capacity to navigate conflict.

Be.Me highlights CRS's capacity for service innovation, developing models that are both evidence-driven and responsive to community need.

We also established a new partnership with VolunteeringACT (VACT), providing members with discounted workplace mediation services as a member benefit. This initiative increases accessibility to professional conflict management and supports healthier workplace culture, helping people resolve issues early, rebuild relationships and prevent harm.

Overall, this year has been defined by the way safeguarding, innovation and collaboration have worked hand in hand to strengthen our practice. With safeguarding at our core, and new innovations and partnerships taking shape, CRS is delivering stronger outcomes for families and our community.

This progress has been made possible through the dedication of our staff, whose commitment to safeguarding and quality service ensures our impact continues to grow. I look forward to carrying this momentum forward and working with our teams and partners to achieve even greater impact in the year ahead.



Message from the Director - Services

Luana Kirwan

Over the past year, we have experienced notable progress, strengthened our foundation, and expanded our influence throughout both our Children, Family and Youth Programs and Alternative Dispute Resolution services. Together, these streams highlight our organisation's unique role in supporting families, young people, workplaces, and communities to address conflict and build stronger connections. What stands out most to me is the way our teams have responded to increasing demand and growing complexity with such professionalism, compassion, and creativity.

Through the Safe and Connected Youth Program, families and young people received intensive support during crucial times. We are proud that so many young people were able to remain safely at home or re-establish connections with their families. Even in situations where returning home wasn't possible, valuable relationships were maintained. Families consistently told us that the program gave them new ways of communicating, while young people reflected that, for the first time, they felt heard.



What stands out most to me is the way our teams have responded to increasing demand and growing complexity with such professionalism, compassion, and creativity.

The Family Support Program achieved outstanding outcomes, often through small but powerful changes that made a lasting difference — a parent feeling they finally had a voice in family discussions, or a young person describing the relief of feeling calmer and more in control after months of unrest.

The Family Connections Program

continued its important work with multicultural families, creating opportunities for understanding and growth across generations. One parent shared that "every family should do this" because of the new insight and connection it fostered with their daughter.

The Restorative Family Therapy Program, delivered in partnership with the Salvation Army, also played a vital role in helping young people in transitional accommodation restore relationships and build the skills they need to step away from the homelessness sector. Every young person who engaged in this program strengthened or sustained their family connections, showing the power of relational, therapeutic practice.

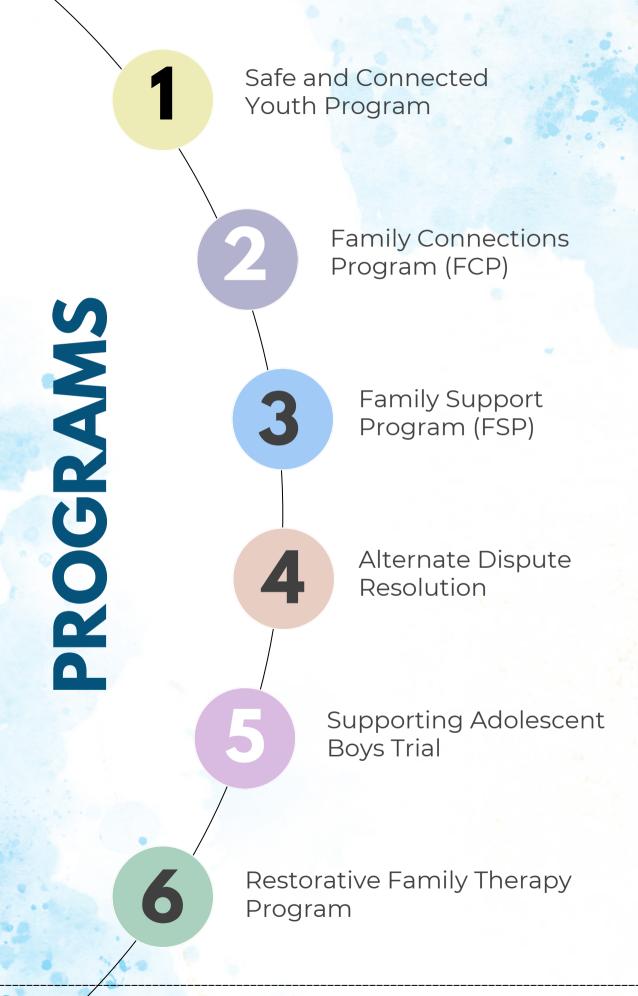
Alongside our family-focused programs, our Alternative Dispute Resolution services continued to provide accessible and impartial conflict resolution to individuals, workplaces, and communities. Client feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with participants consistently saying they felt heard and respected, and that mediation addressed the issues that mattered most to them. Workplace and community mediations in particular highlighted the trust placed in us as a constructive alternative to adversarial processes.

Behind these achievements is a dedicated team of practitioners whose skills and commitment are the true engine of our impact. This year, we invested in their growth through training in trauma-informed practice, cultural safety, mental health first aid, and advanced mediation skills. Their resilience and compassion continue to inspire me, and I am proud to lead such a committed group of people.

Our partnerships remain central to everything we do. Collaborations with government, community organisations, and corporate supporters have allowed us to deliver wraparound care and reach families who otherwise may have fallen through the cracks. Our active involvement in sector forums has also enabled us to advocate for systemic change and ensure the voices of young people and families are reflected in policy and practice.

As we look ahead, we are focused on strengthening prevention and early intervention initiatives across our services. Most importantly, we will continue to listen to and be guided by the voices of the people we serve, ensuring our programs remain responsive, inclusive, and grounded in evidence.

I am deeply proud of what has been achieved this year. From young people finding the courage to reconnect with family, to workplaces resolving long-standing tensions, to parents discovering new ways of understanding their children, the outcomes of our services are life changing. They are a testament not only to the skill and dedication of our staff but also to the resilience and determination of the individuals and families who walk through our doors. Together, we are building safer, stronger, and more connected communities.



SAFE & CONNECTED YOUTH PROGRAM

SACY comprises two key components:

Early intervention for families in conflict who can still stay together at home.

Reunification support for those experiencing episodic homelessness or nearing housing instability. Funded by the ACT Government, the Safe and Connected Youth Program (SACY) provides children and young people aged between 8-15 years and their families with targeted support to improve family functioning and reduce the risks and harms of family breakdown. The program works with children and young people at risk of or experiencing homelessness to improve parent-child and parent-parent relationships using a child centred, family focused approach.

The program emphasises preservation, restoration, and reunification between children/young people and their families. Young people and families engaged in the program have access to a multidisciplinary team of practitioners who can provide counselling, mediation, therapeutic case management and accommodation support. This therapeutic team works holistically with the child/young person and their family to provide intensive, trauma informed support.

89%

of YP were able to safely remain or return home

100%

of YP remained connected to their families even if they did not remain in the family home

36%

of the families engaged in the program accessed therapeutic accommodation

80

young people accessed the program across the year



WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY

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"Thank you for speaking with my dad, whatever you've said, he's listening to me more now and doesn't get as angry."

~ Michael





"Thank you for letting me come to [The House]. It gave me the chance to have a break and chat with my mum after we'd both had some space"

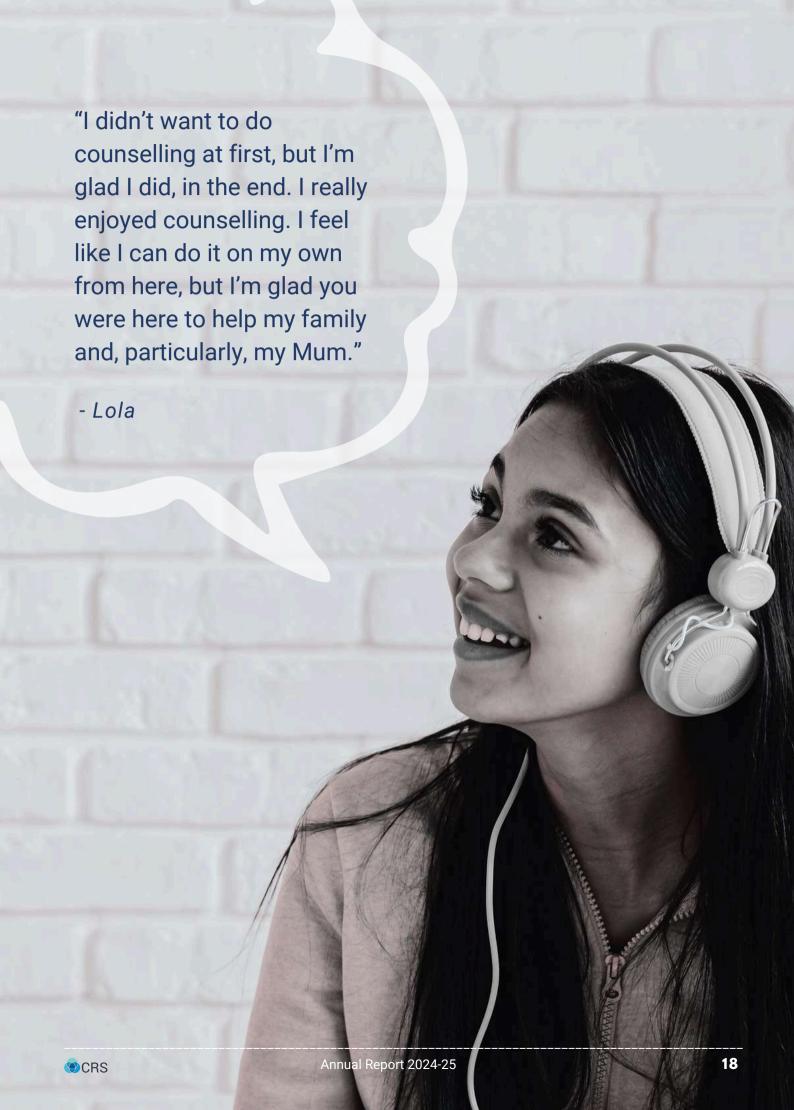
~ Sally





"I really didn't think my daughter would ever come home but month by month this is starting to look like more of a reality"

~ Donna



WHAT OUR TEAM SAYS



"I like that no two cases are the same.
Each referral comes with its own story,
dynamics and experiences. Even when
situations appear similar on the surface,
the underlying context is always unique. It
means we are constantly learning,
adapting and growing as practitioners."

~ Anthoniette Asumadu (Practitioner)

"Every day is different. Each client brings their own strengths, challenges and personality, which keeps the work meaningful and engaging. There is always something new to learn in how we support young people and families."



~ Cathrine Mupangure (Therapeutic Case Manager)



"It is powerful to see a young person who has previously been shut down or withdrawn begin to speak about their experiences and learn new ways of communicating with their family. Watching trust rebuild over time is incredibly meaningful."

~ Ella Edwards-Smith (Practitioner)

FAMILY CONNECTIONS PROGRAM (FCP)



"There has been huge growth and development for us both every family should do this. It makes a huge difference."

~ Tracey

The Family Connections Program (FCP) is delivered in consortium partnership with Multicultural Hub Canberra and has a focus on supporting multicultural families where there is conflict experienced with the family. FCP supports young people aged 15-24 with the goal of improving interpersonal perspective taking, conflict management and enhanced cultural communication and understanding.

The skill building is targeted towards decreasing the risk of youth homelessness, which can be an outcome of prolonged and non-resolved conflict between young people and their parents/ carers.

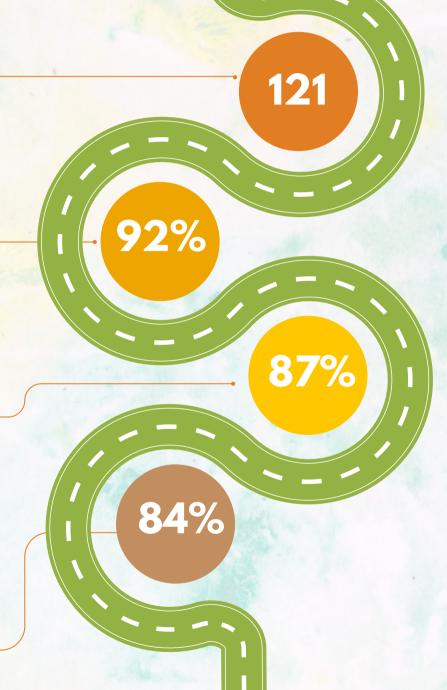
PROGRAM STATISTICS

Clients accessed the program across the year

Young people reported decreased amount of conflict at home

Young people reported improved level of expressing their goals and identity in respect to their family's cultural expectations

Young people reported improved health and wellbeing outcomes.



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"I know I can't just torch everything because everyone is annoying me. I've learnt what's the point of putting myself in that situation? I'll just not put myself in it."

~ Felix





"My daughter's behaviour has improved, and she is doing much better on regulating her emotions which has significantly reduced conflict at home."

~ Carlos







Throughout the year, CRS actively engages with the Canberra community through events and outreach activities - raising awareness about our services and promoting positive conflict resolution. From participating in the Multicultural Festival 2025, to connecting with young people at Erindale College, Harrison School, and ACT Youth Week, and meeting community members like the Italian Seniors Group in Belconnen, our team remains committed to fostering understanding, connection, and harmony across the ACT.











WHAT OUR TEAM SAYS



"One of the most rewarding parts of the work is seeing'lightbulb moments when something clicks for a parent or young person, and you see the positive changes that follow from that insight."

~ Ella Edwards-Smith (Practitioner)

"I enjoy working collaboratively with Salvation Army staff to provide Psychoeducation and support to vulnerable young people. There are at times challenging, yet insightful, conversations with young people regarding their family/peer relationships and communication/conflict/interpersonal skills developed via their life experience. I am always amazed by the resilience of young people, despite their childhood trauma backgrounds".



~ Clare O'Brien (Practitioner)



"It is incredibly rewarding to see the growth that can occur over the course of the case journey. When everyone is working collaboratively - workers, family, networks, and the young person - we see real shifts in confidence, communication and hope."

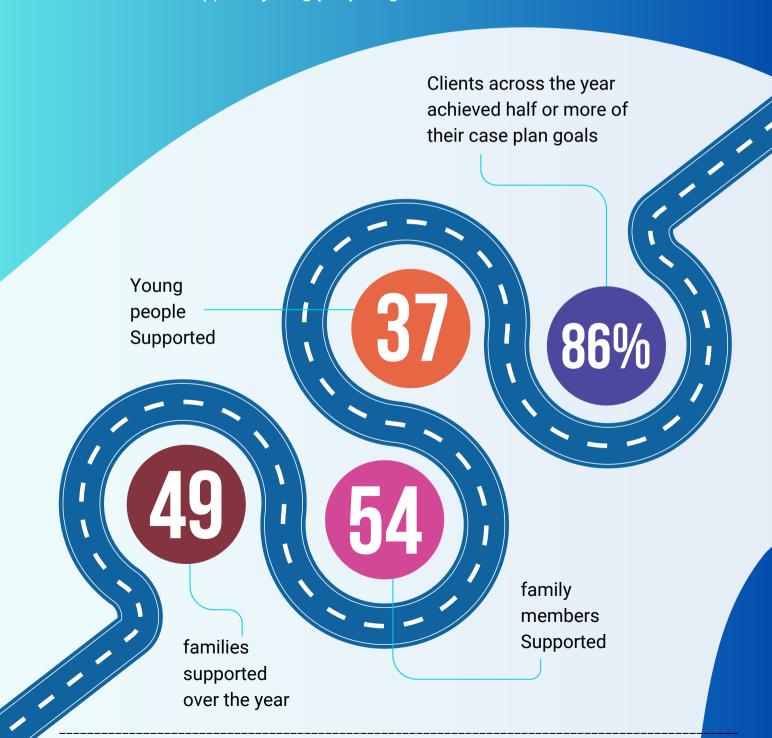
~ Cathrine Mupangure (Therapeutic Case Manager)



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FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Family Support Program (FSP) work with clients to enhance and support their effective communication and to improve conflict management skills. This is achieved through individually focused coaching sessions, psychoeducation and family mediation meetings. FSP supports young people aged 8- 24 and/ or their families.



"The first week after you saw (the young person) is the most relaxed I've seen her."

~ Roger





"He did the best he has done in more than 12 months (getting up for school) Thank you so much for your help with (my son) today."

~ Lynette

"As a parent it was more helpful than counselling, because I have a voice, and can learn what's actually going on for my daughter from her."

~ Brian & Erin





"We have all benefited from meeting with you. We think there has been some personal growth for (our daughter), but we have learnt stuff too."

~ Bree

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

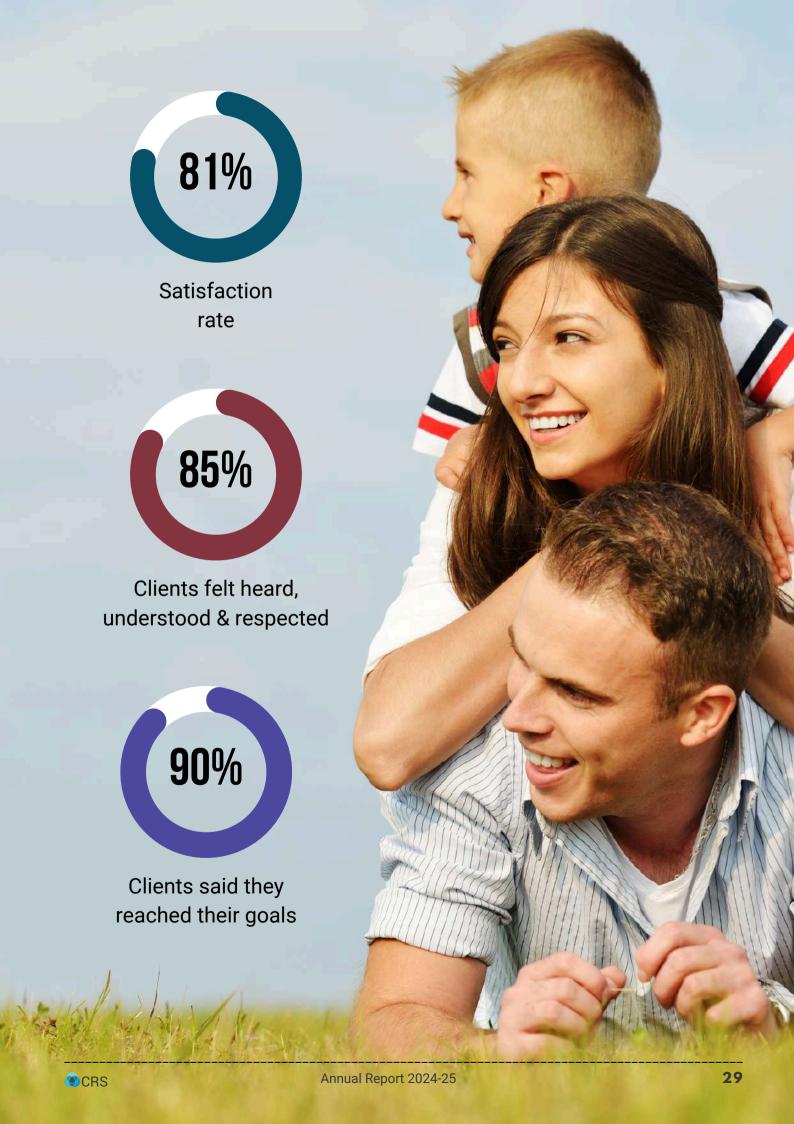
Conflict Resolution Service (CRS) provides a suite of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) services that support individuals, families, workplaces, and communities to resolve conflict constructively without the need for legal intervention. Our services are designed to be accessible and responsive, addressing a wide range of issues including workplace challenges, business disputes, family conflict, and youth-related matters.

CRS creates a safe and confidential environment where parties are empowered to engage in open dialogue, explore options, and reach agreements that are fair and sustainable. By focusing on collaboration and preserving relationships, our ADR services continue to deliver positive, lasting outcomes for the people and communities we serve.

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The mediator's warm and professional manner encouraged goodwill, which helped us reach agreement quickly and reduced the stress of the situation."

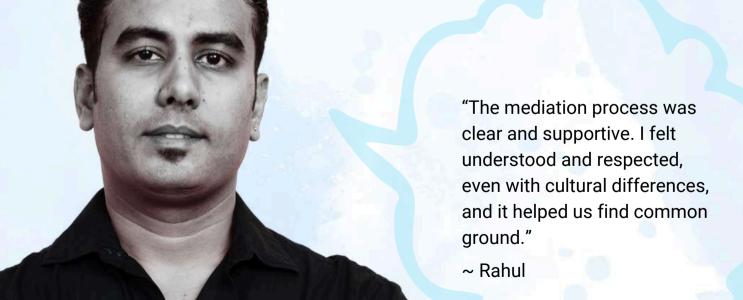
~ Morgan



"I appreciated how the mediator kept us focused on solutions rather than conflict. The process moved forward smoothly and respectfully."

~ Gabby









Court

75%





Workplace

100%

RESOLUTION RATE



Community

100%



"The supportive guidance helped me understand what mediation involves and how to express myself. I felt confident and included throughout."

~David







CRS continues to build strong community connections through participation in key local events such as the RFT Winter Warmers Event, Welcome to Canberra Expo, Youth Homelessness Matters Day, and the Kooky Olympics — promoting awareness, collaboration, and support for individuals and families across the ACT.







"I value being part of breaking cycles of conflict and trauma. Supporting a young person to move toward stability, safety and connection - especially when they may not have experienced that before - feels deeply meaningful."



~ Cathrine Mupangure
Therapeutic Case Manager

"This role keeps me connected to the emerging issues young people are experiencing. It helps me stay current and better understand the barriers, pressures and influences impacting them in real time."

SUPPORTING ADOLESCENCE BOYS TRIAL

The Supporting Adolescence Boys Trail, the Be.Me program is a strengths-based, trauma-informed program for young men aged 12–18 in the ACT who've been impacted by family, domestic or sexual violence. We also work with young people who are at risk of using violence themselves, supporting them to build skills for respectful relationships and brighter futures.

I appreciate the support, I think highly of her [support worker] and would like to continue working with her if possible.

Since launching in February 2025, 15 young people have taken part in Be.Me through a mix of one-on-one counselling and therapeutic case management. Be.Me provides assertive outreach, meeting young people wherever they are, at school, at home, or in the community to remove barriers to access and ensure they feel seen, heard and supported. This approach allows us to offer consistent and compassionate care that adapts to each young person's circumstances and needs.

Program Statistics

100%

of young people have reported improvements in their personal circumstances and progress toward their goals

180

therapeutic sessions were provided to young people from February to June 2025.

70%

of young people report they are better equipped with the tools and resources to navigate their emotions.



"It's been over 6 months since I've used violence."

~ Nick (17 yrs)





"I can trust and feel secure working with adults now."

~ Jack (14 yrs)

"Things have been improving at home since our son has been working with the Be.Me team."

~ Parent feedback



WHAT OUR TEAM SAYS



"Working with young people and their families, and seeing the gradual changes over time, reinforces how meaningful this work is. I feel privileged to be part of each family's journey and to witness their strengths and positive qualities emerge when given the opportunity."

~ Tom (Therapeutic Case Manager)

"It has been deeply meaningful to engage therapeutically with families and vulnerable young people participating in the Be Me Program, and I am confident that the efforts of the program will continue to create lasting, positive and sustainable change."



~ Dave (Therapeutic Case Manager)



"I love the energy and honesty the young people bring to the program. I've learned so much from each of them and deeply admire their resilience through the challenges they've faced. It's been a privilege to be part of their journeys and to cheer them on through every win. Every breakthrough, no matter how small, feels huge."

~ Margaret (Counsellor)

In partnership with



RESTORATIVE FAMILY THERAPY PROGRAM (RFT)



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The practitioner reported a client having stated to her that they had said they appreciated her support, they think highly of her and that they would like to continue working with her if possible.

The Restorative Family Therapy Program (RFT) is delivered in partnership with The Salvation Army; working to support young people who are accommodated in their Oasis Youth Housing and Support Program. The program works with young people aged 15- 24 to restore and improve their interpersonal relationships. The RFT family practitioner uses client-led engagement, to determine the young people's goals and case plan.

There is an emphasis on relatable psychoeducation, perspective building and communication skills- all targeted towards redirecting young people from the homelessness sector through reestablishing and strengthening their relationships.



of young people retained or improved the level of engagement that they had with their extended families.

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For the first time, I feel like I can really talk about my feelings. At home my emotions were always shut down, but I'm learning it's okay to express myself and be heard.

~ Sally

"

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In the past, whenever I got emotional, I felt ashamed.
Working with [my practitioner] has helped me see that emotions aren't something to be embarrassed about.
They're part of being human.

~ Raia

"

66

One of my goals now is to learn how to build healthier relationships and set stronger boundaries, so I can connect with others in ways that are safe and respectful for me.

~ Raquel _____

"

"It's painful to feel distant from my family and to be rejected because I'm not as 'successful' as they want me to be. But I'm starting to understand that we're just different people, and that doesn't mean I'm less worthy."

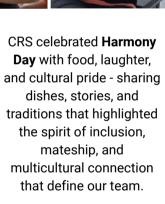
~ Sid























CRS proudly celebrated three years of the Safe and Connected Youth (SACY) Program and the launch of a new BBQ facility at Ruby's House - marking a milestone in our ongoing work to reconnect families, support young people, and strengthen relationships across the ACT community.















Thank May

Charity Partners



Facilities Management

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Partner Organisations



















