



Impact Report

Organisation name

KidsXpress Life

Your name and position

Maria Rallis - Communications Officer

Please tell us a short story about someone who has benefited from this funding.

Amy* is a young girl in Mt Druitt who is the youngest of four children and was referred to our mobile therapy program in 2017. The parents have an AVO out against the oldest daughter, and the two middle sons both have a history of violence at the same primary school. The school is unsure how much violence is occurring outside of the school environment.

Amy arrived to the first session at school appearing visibly scared, holding her head low, avoiding eye contact, and looking as though she might cry. The KidsXpress team began the session with a Hello Song to establish a safe ritual. When it became apparent that Amy was still uncomfortable, we invited her to sit with one of our therapists, which she accepted. They stayed in the school hall with the rest of the group but moved away to speak privately.

Within a few minutes, Amy shared that she was being hurt by her brothers and that her parents were not keeping her safe at home. After a little more conversation and connection, Amy agreed to share the same information with the school, which she did. Both KidsXpress and the school then put in Child Protection Reports to FaCS. Importantly, the school was able to contact the family and speak directly about the disclosure – at which point, more information was revealed by her brothers. The school then continued to work with the family and other agencies to put strategies in place to keep Amy and her siblings safe.

After reporting that they hadn't seen Amy smile for months, Amy began to express joy both during the KidsXpress sessions and in her classroom and the playground. This was often done through initiating shared play and spontaneous dancing. Amy continued to show signs of fear around her siblings and parents; however, considerable progress over the course of the 10-week program was evident. She also had some difficulties transitioning to the after-school program, and KidsXpress was able to support her to calm through playing music and writing songs before being taken to the group.

The road ahead for Amy and her family is not a short or easy one. But, she is an uplifting example of how a school and a program working closely together can make good progress towards keeping a family safe. She is also testament to the joy of play, music, art and dance.

*Name changed.

Please describe the impact that the specific TFN funding has had.

With the funding raised through TFN, KidsXpress was able to deliver group therapy for 15 children, aged between 4 and 14. The children attended sessions which were co-led by 3 specialist therapists over a 10-week therapy structure. During the sessions, the children, all of whom had been impacted by an overwhelming life event (and in some cases, multiple events) were able to immerse their senses, imaginations and entire bodies into the communication of difficult emotions or experiences, and reflect on that process with our team of therapists using music, art, drama, dance and play therapies.

At the completion of the program, the children's carers and/or referral professionals reported improved well-being, increased resilience and enhanced interpersonal relationships to varying degrees of up to 78% for all participating children. In the words of one mother "The KidsXpress program showed my son that there was a different future. Because of that we are now living it".

Please provide a quantitative breakdown of how TFN funds have been used

Total revenue by TFN \$35,112

Cost of Expressive Therapy Program per child \$2500

\$2500 x 14 = \$35,000

Balance of \$112 was put towards funding a 15th child with the difference of \$2388 covered by existing KX funds.

Describe any ways the funding was used that differs from that described your original pitch

The funding was not used in any way that differed from that described in the original pitch.

How many people have been affected by programs or activities that were supported with TFN funding?

14 children across 3 schools in Sydney's Western region were direct beneficiaries from the \$35,000 portion of funding.

An additional child had the cost of their participation subsidised by TFN funding to the amount of the remaining \$112.

Indirect beneficiaries include the parents and families of the 15 children and their teachers who reported improved classroom relationships and education outcomes.

What measures did you use to assess the impact?

The outcomes of KidsXpress' program focus on the key transformative indicators (KTIs) of a child's wellbeing, as opposed to concentrating solely on addressing symptoms which have manifested from a traumatic experience (i.e. ADHD and anxiety). KTI's are used in combination with qualitative measures from multiple stakeholders, in order to best understand the degree of change, and the context in which children's wellbeing has improved.

The KTIs are:

- Self-Regulation
- Self-Awareness
- Self-expression
- Connection with others
- Receptive communication
- Empathy
- Ability to recognize the impact of self on others
- Ability to work in a group

By assessing the KTI's for each of the 15 students who were supported through funding provided by TFN, it was established that referral issues were impacting families less and relationships between family members had improved. Furthermore, classroom relationships and overall participation in the classroom were widely reported to have improved.

We also use the standardized models of evaluation which include:

- i) group development scoring based on MacKenzie's (1983) Group Climate Questionnaire – a widely utilised and validated measure of group development.
- ii) An adapted version of the Cyclops model which involves follow up monitoring of participants at 3, 6 and 12 months.

On a broader scale, a study by Deloitte Access Economics (2016) found that the KidsXpress' program improved the quality of life in client children by an average of almost 50%, significantly reducing the burden of diseases such as anxiety and depression. This in turn generates a net benefit of almost \$2million in social value, meaning that for every \$1 invested in KidsXpress, a return of \$2.80 is generated in savings and social value within 1 year.

Describe three ways that your organisation has changed in the last 12 months since the event

KidsXpress has undergone significant changes in the last 12 months since The Funding Network Pitch event. They include:

Relocation: In December 2017 we farewelled our Moore Park-based home of 11 years and moved to our new premises in Macquarie Park. With an abundance of natural light (previously lacking) and closer proximity to our outreach partner schools in Sydney's West, the relocation has proven to be particularly beneficial for our clients and staff.

New Dyad Therapy Program for children and their carers: After successfully delivering a pilot project in early 2017, KidsXpress formally launched a new dyad therapy program in mid-2017 which specialises in treating children and non-perpetrating parents/carers who have survived domestic and family violence. This program expands upon our primary expressive therapy program by having both the child and their parent/carer together in the therapeutic process, enabling our therapists to support the socio-emotional development of both individuals and also, help facilitate greater understanding and more effective communication between the parent and child, fostering a more supportive and healthy relationship. This aligns with the recommendations of our recent international research trip, which determined that greater engagement with parents/carers will maximise and sustain the outcomes of our program in the long-term.

Acquisition of a Training and Education Program: In January 2018, we joined forces with Getting Better Australia which helps build the capacity of schools by offering trauma informed education programs. This program specialises in professional learning and support for educators to effectively cater for the social, emotional and behavioural support needs of all students using a trauma informed approach. We're very excited that this program will extend beyond Sydney and reach rural areas of NSW, as well as other Australian states. By empowering educators, KidsXpress will be able to sustainably support the well-being of all children who have been impacted by trauma nationwide for years to come.

Over the last 12 months, did you receive any additional financial support from anyone you met through TFN?

No

Over the last 12 months, did you receive any goods in-kind and/or pro-bono services from anyone you met through TFN?

No

How important was TFN funding in helping you achieve your objectives this year?

We would have found it difficult to achieve our objectives without TFN funding

Has the TFN pitch coaching and mentoring helped you successfully secure funding from other sources you did not meet through TFN?

Yes

How much and from whom?

Confidential.

What were some of the other benefits of participating in TFN?

From the reason of its genesis to how it got off the ground to the children who have been supported, KidsXpress has an abundance of stories to share. Supporting our children through Expressive Therapy and training is only one of our main tenets. The other is to create awareness of the impact of childhood trauma and the need for early intervention in addressing it. To be invited to establish a deeper donor connection and share our story with the TFN community has been of enormous and immeasurable value to KidsXpress and we were truly humbled to have been awarded the opportunity and additional exposure. Regarding the pitch coaching, it was instrumental in teaching us how to structure future pitches as well as how to best align our key messaging framework.

Do you have any other comments or feedback on the TFN experience or funding process?

No