

Buddies Refugee Support Group



Annual Report 2018–19



From the Learn English Holiday program, April 2019

Introduction

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as the first people of Australia. We acknowledge the language and cultural diversity and traditions that existed in this land for tens of thousands of years before the arrival of the first settlers' fleet. We acknowledge Kabi Kabi and Jinibara Peoples of the hinterland and coast of the Sunshine Coast where Buddies members walk today.

“ In this spirit of recognition, reconciliation and respect Buddies members work to create a community fostering belonging, welcome and inclusion. ”

Buddies Refugee Support Group Ltd is registered in Queensland as a non-listed public company limited by guarantee. Lesley Willcoxson, Mitra Khakbaz, Shaye Yuill, Paul McKinlay and Scott Grimmett were elected to serve as directors at the AGM of 26 August, 2018.

During 2018-19 Buddies continued to make a difference through fundraising events and activities, Learn English Holiday programs, community engagement and education programs, by hosting welcome events and providing much-needed financial support to individuals and the organisations that coordinate support to the most vulnerable members of our community - people seeking asylum with no income support. Our work builds the capacity of the communities we work with and live within to connect with the stories of real people affected by policy decisions. These collective efforts have enabled us to slowly challenge the myth, and change the negative narrative surrounding people seeking asylum.



In December the Directors appointed Andrea Douglas as Company Secretary and welcomed James Fowler to the role of Bookkeeper. We are very grateful to them both and to Gillian Duffy and Kristi Nageli who served as Treasurer and Secretary before them. We are also very grateful to the members of the Finance group – James Fowler, Dee Williams, Penny Rivlin and Tricia Reade – who work to ensure both accountability and appropriate use of the money raised by Buddies, and also to Wendy Oakley who ensures that over 1100 people each week receive Buddies’ and refugee-related news through the Buddies Bulletin.

“ As we end the year 2018-19 the Board of Directors
acknowledge the tireless efforts and volunteer
contributions of individuals and communities that
make Buddies’ vision a reality.”



We thank our members for their financial and gift donations, as well as supporting events, attending monthly meetings, and having as many conversations as possible with members of Sunshine Coast communities – to engage them, to invite them to join us, and to encourage them to support and take a stand against negative policies. This annual report provides a summary outline of the activities and initiatives that have taken place during the year.

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— Buddies’ Directors

Buddies Mission

“ We advocate for the just and compassionate treatment of refugees and asylum seekers, consistent with the international human rights standards that Australia helped develop and has endorsed.

We support policies towards refugees and asylum seekers that reflect respect, decency and traditional Australian generosity to those in need, while advancing Australia’s international standing and national interests.”

Buddies values

Respect –
for everyone’s human rights

Compassion –
for those suffering discrimination and persecution

Generosity –
to help those in need

Welcome –
to those from somewhere else

What we do

Hospitality

We get to know refugees and people seeking asylum living in south-east Queensland. We offer practical support to new arrivals. We provide people seeking asylum and refugees with advice and assistance to access professional services including legal, medical and allied health services.

Education

We seek the truth about refugees and asylum issues in Australia and make this public through meetings and forum, talks to schools and community groups, weekly newsletters, web and social media.

Advocacy

We lobby politicians and other decision makers and use publicity to advocate for the just and compassionate treatment of refugees and asylum seekers.

Fundraising

We raise funds and provide direct financial assistance to refugees and people seeking asylum and to the advocacy and support organisations they rely on.

Queensland Multicultural Awards

Buddies was one of 28 finalists chosen from 133 individuals and organisations nominated across seven award categories. Although we didn't win the Community award, being chosen as one of the four finalists in that category was in itself a significant achievement, especially given that Buddies is entirely a volunteer organisation.

Buddies was represented at the awards luncheon on Sunday 19 August 2018 by Margaret Landbeck, Lesley Willcoxson, Kayla Szumer, Diana Woolley, Angela Mercuri, Margaret Norman, Audrey Raymond, Scott Grimmett and John and Barbara Foley – representing a mix of those whose vision led to the establishment of Buddies and development of some of its key programs, and those who are currently involved in continuing this good work.



Community awareness, advocacy and education

“ When we form relationships with like-minded local and national groups we amplify the impact of our actions. ”



Kids Off Nauru

Buddies joined the national campaign #KidsOffNauru in August 2018. The goal of this campaign was the evacuation of all children from Australian internment on Nauru, no later than by Universal Children's Day on 20 November.

On 20 August there were 119 children on Nauru. Through September and October 168,000 Australians asked the Government to bring these children to safety to be given the care and protection they need and deserve. Despite such a massive effort, 17 remained on Nauru as of the campaign deadline, although their removal was achieved by February 2019.

The campaign raised public awareness of the incarceration of children and re-positioned it as a problem that needed to be solved rather than a necessary side-effect of destroying "the business model of people smugglers". It was also a key issue for Kerryn Phelps' campaign which saw her win the Wentworth by-election on 5 November. The Urgent Medical Treatment bill she proposed was passed by Federal Parliament despite the Government's opposition.

In support of those still incarcerated, Buddies' members participated in prayer vigils at St Mark's Buderim on 19 July and 2 November, part of the program of national prayer vigils co-ordinated by Love Makes a Way.

We'd like to thank everyone in Buddies who got involved whether through the vigils, the rallies in Brisbane and outside Peter Dutton's electoral office, letter writing to MPs, signing petitions, or working to raise awareness about the plight of these children. Special thanks to Diana Woolley for good local media coverage and to Angela Mercuri for coordinating Buddies' involvement in this campaign.



Refugee Welcome Zone

Noosa Council declared itself a Refugee Welcome Zone by unanimous vote in November of 2018, joining more than 160 local governments around Australia that have done the same. Buddies is continuing to investigate support for a Refugee Welcome Zone declaration for Sunshine Coast Regional Council and this year also looked at the Welcoming Cities program as an alternative for the Sunshine Coast.



Walk Together

Buddies partnered with Welcome to Maleny and Amnesty International (Maroochydore) to organise Walk Together in Cotton Tree Park Maroochydore on Saturday 27 October 2018. Buddies was successful in obtaining a Mayoral discretionary grant from Mayor Mark Jamieson to make Walk Together bigger and better in 2018 – this event was proudly supported by the Sunshine Coast Council's grants program.



The day began very early for organisers setting up the stage, and bumping in stall holders and food vendors! We are grateful to Lisa McDonald (MC) and our speakers Dr Jandamarra Cadd, Tim Buxton (founder of YouBelong, a community organisation supporting Yazidi and Kurdish refugees in Toowoomba), Sweet Chilli Choir, Dr Beverly Muito and David Hollinsworth.

Further entertainment was provided by Balkan Gypsy band “The Unusual Suspects”, Jevan Cole, Jenny Fitzgibbon, Simo and “One Vibe”.

The success for Buddies included two new members and 11 new subscribers to the Bulletin as well as 23 signatures for the Refugee Welcome Zone petition as well as the 170 people who joined in the walk itself! Many thanks to the fantastic team who spent many weeks organising the event: Gillian Duffy, Angela Mercuri, Len Mangan, Peter Hogg, Diana Woolley, and Fergus FitzGerald from Buddies; Nina, Ruth, Mandula and Kathy from Amnesty International (Maroochydore), Abby, Lisa from Welcome to Maleny and Dominique from Festuri.

Festuri

Buddies had a stall at Festuri in Cotton Tree Park on 22 September. We gained four new members, 12 new subscribers for the Bulletin and 32 signatures for petitions.



Harmony Day

Buddies joined the SCRAN (Sunshine Coast Refugee Action Network) stall for Harmony Day at Cotton Tree Park, Maroochydore on 23 March 2019. A truly multicultural event with singing, dancing, drumming, stalls and a fashion show representing cultures from around the globe. Thanks to Andrea Douglas, Gillian Duffy, Dee Williams, Paul McKinlay, Diana Woolley, Peter Hogg, Janine de La Begassiere, Len Mangan and Jason Reynolds. Thanks also to Mandula, Nina, and James.

We gained 50 signatures for the Refugee Welcome Zone petition; 29 signatures for the Community Sponsorship Program petition, twelve new subscribers for the Bulletin and a new member for Buddies.

The Bulletin

Wendy Oakley has continued her invaluable service in 2018-19 in preparing 49 issues of The Bulletin – one for nearly every week of the year! Distributed by email, the Bulletin provides Buddies with an opportunity to communicate widely about issues and policies affecting refugees and asylum seekers and also Buddies' activities. The Bulletin gives us an 'institutional memory' that would be the envy of much larger organisations – preparing this Annual Report to this quality would be quite impossible without it!

Web address: <https://www.refugeebuddies.org/bulletins-current-year>

Facebook and website

Anneliese Broadway has continued this year as Administrator of our Facebook page, and we thank Anna for her ongoing involvement in this form of Buddies' communication, despite her very busy life!

Web address: <https://www.facebook.com/BuddiesRefugeeSupportGroup/>

Mike Law has been our webmaster since mid-2018, bringing his IT expertise to the role of maintaining and updating our website, and we thank him for his considered improvement to the site this year.

Web address: <https://www.refugeebuddies.org>

Community engagement through film

The Staging Post

(Angela Mercuri)

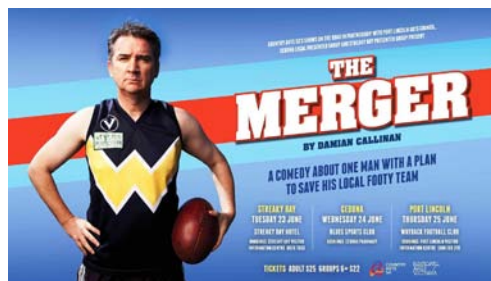
On 13 September 2018 over 40 people attended the screening of *The Staging Post* at Berkelouw Books in Eumundi. Buddies organised this event in partnership with Berkelouw Books, Berkelouw Café and Starry Nights Outdoor Movies and we are particularly grateful to these partners because:

- Berkelouw Books waived the venue hire fee and provided us a \$50 gift voucher;
- Berkelouw Café gave a generous discount on the finger food for our patrons;
- Starry Nights Outdoor Movies generously donated their time and equipment to the screening;
- All three partners publicised the event through their own networks!



The Merger

This screening on 24 October 2018 was offered to Buddies by the Majestic Cinema, Nambour. Approximately 80 attended the screening, which was very well received. A raffle of a bottle of Buddies (Goodwill Wine) sparkling wine and donations raised \$173.



Border Politics

On 6 March 2019 at Majestic Cinemas, Nambour, this film screening was organised by Buddies, Amnesty International, Noosa Welcomes Refugees and Welcome to Maleny. Approximately 160 people attended and one quarter of this audience were neither current members of a refugee volunteer organisation nor receiving the Bulletin. This highlights our responsibility to be constantly marketing our organisation and our message!

Refugee Week Community Film Festival

We screened Constance on the Edge on 17 June 2019 at St Mark's Anglican Church Buderim as Buddies' contribution to the larger Refugee Week Community Film Festival organised by SCRAN. Elijah Buol spoke to the audience before the screening about his experience of arriving in Australia as an unaccompanied minor from South Sudan. He is now a leader in Australia's African community and this year won "Queensland Local Hero of the Year" as part of the Australia Day Honours.

Special thanks to Paul McKinlay for pulling together all the parts of this Buddies' screening and to the volunteers who brought soup and the team who served it.



Other Refugee Week Community Film Festival screenings assisted or attended by Buddies members included those at the University of the Sunshine Coast, Nambour Community Centre, Berkelouw Books (Eumundi), The J (Noosa), Caloundra Community Centre, and Maleny.

In total, over 400 people attended the eight screenings, over 260 signatures were gathered on petitions, 26 people signed up to our Bulletin, while 16 new members joined Buddies. The festival also generated at least seven newspaper articles, and raised over \$1,200 that was shared between the Cisarua Learning Centre (Indonesia), the Refugee Council of Australia and the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre.

This outcome is the result of a truly remarkable effort by Gillian Duffy, Dee Williams, David Walters, Angela Mercuri, Jason Reynolds, Brendan Crimmins, Len Mangan, Diana Woolley and Margaret Norman of Buddies; Lisa McDonald, Rosemary Bower and Chad Oliver from Welcome to Maleny; Bob Cullen from Caloundra Catholic Community Social Justice Network; Nina and Mandula from Amnesty International (Maroochydore); Gabby, Tammy, Yas, and Thorsten from Noosa Welcomes Refugees

Buddies contributed some assistance and support to a number of other events during 2018-19 that were coordinated by SCRAN.



Engaging with schools, universities and community groups

Learn English Holiday

Each year the involvement of year 11 and 12 students as volunteers in the Learn English Holiday program provides a valuable opportunity for the next generation to interact with refugees and people seeking asylum and learn first hand about the issues facing them. Inevitably they talk with their classmates and families about the experience, and the new understandings they have are passed on to others.

Secondary schools

This year the experiences of refugees were also shared directly with Year 10 students of **Immanuel College** who, as part of a day long social justice experiential activity, spoke with four of our Learn English Holiday participants about their experience of life pre- and post-Australia.

Blackall Range Independent School also invited Buddies to be involved in helping their students understand the experiences of refugees, and there we ran a simulation on the refugee journey for about 70 students from Year 1 to Year 12. The simulation, according to the school's social welfare officer, "was a real experience for the students, particularly those who hadn't really heard much about refugees and what they might have to go through. The staff were inspired to continue on more education on the topic throughout the week as well, so it really had a lasting impact on all of us at the school".

Griffith University and University of the Sunshine Coast

On behalf of Buddies Mo Darbas spoke with a group of **first year medical students from Griffith University** on refugee health issues and again the feedback was very positive.

At the **University of the Sunshine Coast** Buddies was involved in discussions that have led to the establishment of two full-fee and living allowance scholarships for people seeking asylum. In addition to USC's involvement in the Learn English Holiday program, the University also now provides the venue for Buddies' monthly meeting, and we are very grateful for this.

Community groups

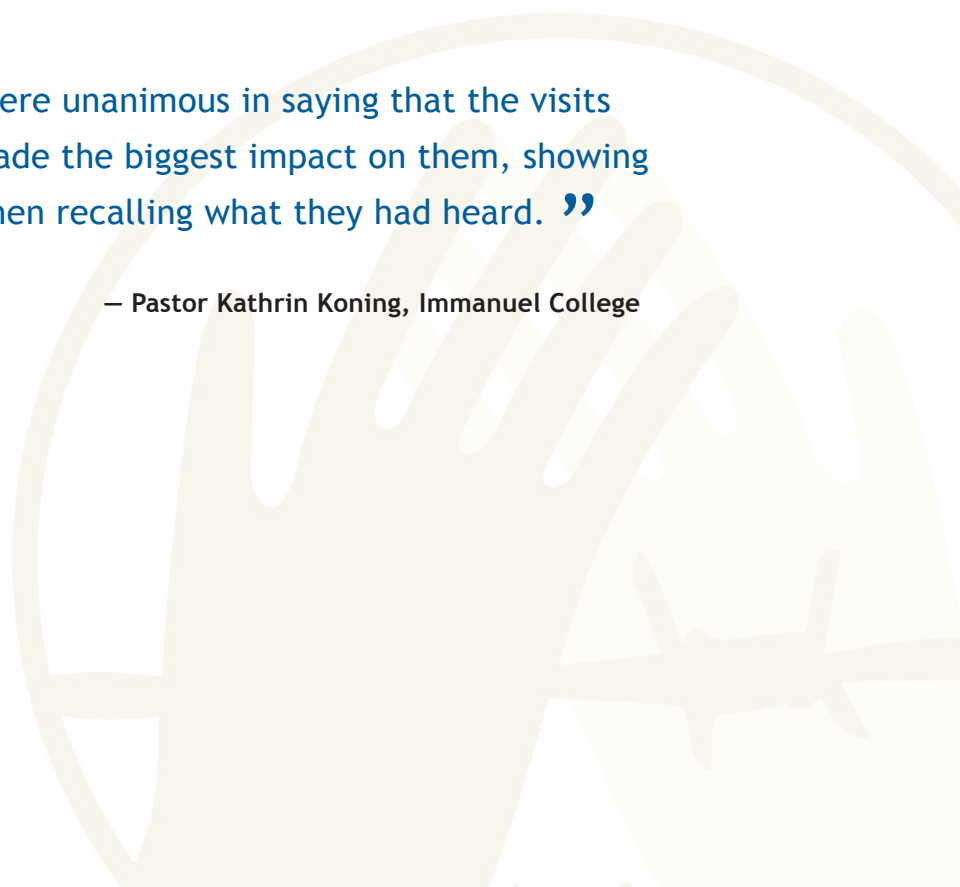
Engaging with community groups, Margaret Norris and Margaret Cameron talked with the **Sunshine Coast Social Workers' Practice Group** about the work that Buddies does, and Lesley Willcoxson was guest speaker at the annual staff retreat of the **Lutheran World Service**, talking about both Buddies and current refugee policy and practice. Lesley Willcoxson also spoke to Tim Wong-See on the ABC online radio program **Sunday Afternoons** about Buddies and the issues faced by refugees trying to integrate into Australia.

“ The simulation (of a refugee journey) “was a real experience for the students, particularly those who hadn’t really heard much about refugees and what they might have to go through. The staff were inspired to continue on more education on the topic throughout the week as well, so it really had a lasting impact on all of us at the school.” ”

— Grace Baker, Social Welfare Officer, Blackall Range Independent School

“ The students were unanimous in saying that the visits from the refugees made the biggest impact on them, showing great empathy when recalling what they had heard. ”

— Pastor Kathrin Koning, Immanuel College



Fundraising

Eumundi car parking

Buddies has maintained our agreement with Eumundi Markets to manage their car park on the first Wednesday and the first Saturday of every month. This brought in \$5,687 in the last financial year.

Firstly thanks go to Kendall and Yokki for setting Buddies up in this program and continuing thanks to Penny and Dee for becoming our rostering team, organising our volunteers who serve in all weather conditions, sometimes during very busy holiday times, staffing the gate and directing traffic!



Containers for Change

Buddies has established itself as a recipient in the State Government's new container deposit scheme. Use our program number "C10181760" when you deposit eligible containers and 10¢ for each will be credited directly to our bank account!

Fruit sales

Yokki Rother and Kendall Snowden pick from Scott Grimmett's orchard through the avocado and custard apple season. The sales all benefit Buddies and raised \$1,900! Special thanks to Bronwyn and Thene Bell for their help harvesting this year.

Goodwill Wines

Buddies has renewed our agreement with Goodwill Wines whereby Buddies receives \$2 from every bottle purchased by our supporters through their website. This raised \$768 in the year.

Website: <https://goodwillwine.com.au/charities/buddies-refugee-support-group>

Donations

Buddies continues to benefit from regular cash donations from many supporters.

Sausage sizzles

Combined, our five Bunnings sausage sizzles raised \$4,732! Special thanks to all participants, especially Dee Williams, Penny Rivlin and Lesley Willcoxson for organising.

Hospitality

Learn English Holiday

The Learn English Holiday (LEH) program offers refugees and people seeking asylum an opportunity to improve their English and learn about Australian life and culture in the context of a homestay. Our volunteer homestay hosts give our guests what is usually their first opportunity to experience Australian life “up close and personal” and through this experience many lasting friendships have formed. For refugees and people seeking asylum, the Sunshine Coast holiday gives them a break they otherwise could not afford and the chance to get away from the stress of settling into a new life in a new country.

The involvement of the wider community in our LEH program testifies to the broad support for refugee welfare that actually exists on the Sunshine Coast.

The landmark achievement of 2018-2019 for the LEH program was putting into action our plans made with the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC). Mel Bacon was the first student from the USC Social Work and Community Development program to complete a placement with Buddies. Mel provided invaluable assistance organising the homestay aspects of the September LEH, and documenting the LEH placement procedures so that those following in her footsteps have clear guidance. Such was the mutual benefit of the arrangement, that each September the LEH program will benefit from the involvement of a USC student.

LEH now brings together Buddies, Multicultural Development Australia, the University of the Sunshine Coast, three schools on the Coast – Immanuel Lutheran College, Matthew Flinders Anglican College and St John’s College Nambour – and it is also supported by community organisations (St Marks, Buderim) and businesses (Wildlife HQ, Fisheries on the Spit), making the program a true community collaboration.



***Two LEH programs ran in the past year:
23-28 September 2018 and 7-12 April 2019***

23-28 September 2018

This Learn English Holiday program was hosted by Immanuel Lutheran College Buderim and involved 27 participants. They were mainly from Syria but also included Yzidis from Iraq and Syria, two people from Afghanistan and one from the Congo.

On Monday and Wednesday participants explored cultural differences between Australia and their home countries while on Tuesday they discovered a bit about Australia's indigenous heritage through Chris' didgeridoo playing and by using dot painting to discuss places and connections in their journeys to Australia. On Wednesday the multicultural dinner provided great food, great music and lots of dancing. On Thursday we got to practice what we'd learned about surf safety in the waves of Mooloolaba Spit beach and also played beach soccer. We enjoyed a lunch of fish and chips on the beach before spending time with animals at Wildlife HQ. On Friday the focus was on how to find a job or a course of study that could lead to a job.



Organisers: Mel Bacon, Kayla Szumer, Robin Dobson, Lesley Willcoxson, Margaret Norris, Margaret Cameron, Ana Perez. Thanks to the many people and organisations who made the September LEH possible:

- 48 classroom volunteers were there to help, including students from two schools (Immanuel Lutheran College, Matthew Flinders Anglican College);
- Dr Jo Loth and five students from USC Drama;
- Barry Ryan QUT careers counsellor;
- Kate Davies, TAFE student support officer;
- Indigenous musician, Chris Williams;
- Fisheries on the Spit and Wildlife HQ, which both extended generous discounts;

- Immanuel Lutheran College which lent us their facilities, photocopied and put together our book of materials;
- St John's College, Nambour which lent us their bus;
- Mel Bacon, USC social work student who did her practical placement with us, using her considerable skills to organise the homestay program;
- 20 Immanuel church volunteers who provided us with morning tea every day;
- 12 people who volunteered as drivers; and
- 14 homestay hosts who generously shared their lives and homes with our guests for a week!

Photos at: <https://www.refugeebuddies.org/learn-english-holiday-sept-2018>



7-12 April 2019

This was the seventh course we have run and was again a most successful week. We had 26 participants from 5 different cultural/national backgrounds and they were hosted by 13 families on the coast. All participants, except one student from St James College, were referred by MDA and matching people with homes was done by Kayla Szumer. There were two children in the group this time.

Matthew Flinders Anglican College hosted the classes and we are particularly thankful for their generosity in opening up their school. The Rev Lizzie Gaitskell was vital in smoothing our use of the school's facilities, as well as recruiting a great crew of students to assist in classes. Matthew Flinders did all our photocopying – work booklets for students and volunteers, and a memory booklet – and we appreciate this help in keeping our costs down.

Our teaching program was organised by Lesley Willcoxson, Margaret Norris, Ana Perez and Margaret Cameron. Over the week we had sessions led by other people, specifically Jo Loth (who with her USC drama students helped us explore Australian cultural behaviour), Chris Williams and Jan Kent (who involved us in Indigenous music and painting), Dr Ziena Al-Obaidi (who discussed adaptation to a new culture) and Kate Davies (who worked with individual students on their study and work pathways to the future).

Experience is reinforcing for us that — beyond these few valued collaborators — we do not necessarily need many guest presenters or other experts to teach our classes because over the week we develop relationships with our students and these probably have a bigger impact than expert input on the quality of the learning outcomes.

On Thursday we went to the beach for the morning (the Spit at Mooloolaba), had a fish and chip lunch and then transferred to Wildlife HQ for the afternoon, where Kristi Nageli talked about and let us touch a snake, a lizard and a koala. Again, Fisheries on the Spit and Wildlife HQ gave us great deals to make this excellent experience affordable for our program's very small budget! This year a generous, anonymous supporter donated the cost of our fish and chip lunch at the beach, and for this we are most grateful.

Every day our morning tea was organised by ladies from St Mark's Anglican Church Buderim, with extra fill-ins from Buddies. The dinner on Wednesday night was also hosted by St Mark's. This relationship with the Church is most important as more locals get the opportunity to interact with our visitors.

The attendance of Cr Jenny Mackay of Sunshine Coast Council was a first for Learn English Holiday and it was a wonderful night with the hall bursting at the seams. Our usual professional DJ was not available so Thorsten Kels stepped in at the last minute, and included in the musical repertoire our guests' collections of music from their own countries.



Transport over the week for the group was provided by St John's College who loaned us their bus and their school driver to bring our visitors from Brisbane (and back again), and also transfer the group from the beach to the zoo. The bus enables much more flexibility in what we do and eases transport issues. Thanks also to our team of volunteers driving participants from their host families to classes each day.



Our teaching program is responsive to the needs and language levels of our students and this is a significant challenge because we never know the specific needs and levels until we meet our group. One way we respond is by having a large number of volunteer tutors in the classroom so that at times each participant has one-on-one assistance. This enables people to be helped precisely as needed. This time we had 30 classroom volunteers, including 11 students from Matthew Flinders Anglican College – many thanks to all of you.

A particular theme running through our activities is understanding cultural differences. We aim to help our participants both develop their English language skills and feel more comfortable with their new lives in Australia. We hold a “graduation” on Friday afternoon and give each participant a booklet of memory photos.

Participants are surveyed at the end of each course and several of our activities have been developed in response to feedback. Likewise, classroom volunteers, teachers in the program, and host families are all asked for feedback, and this feedback guides our subsequent programs.

Noosa Welcomes Refugees 'Greet the Sea'

Buddies was able to use our status as a registered company to auspice this community project by Noosa Welcomes Refugees. The 'Greet the Sea' weekend offered young adult refugees (18-25 year olds) living and studying in the Brisbane region the opportunity to visit Noosa and stay with local host families for a weekend. Participants took part in an organised program of beach-based activities, aiming to encourage communication, social networking, and cross-cultural understanding.

'Greet the Sea' was made possible by a grant from Noosa Council.



Swim Safety English

On Saturday 8 September, Buddies enjoyed the company of over 20 Syrian and Iraqi women who had come to the Coast to celebrate their completion of swimming lessons. The lessons were organised by Multicultural Development Australia and Queensland Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma.

Buddies volunteered to help host our visitors, Caloundra Unity Church provided a delicious lunch and the day was one of warm interaction, lots of chatting and laughter and for some, the challenge of swimming in waves!



Service providers we support

In addition to the direct support we provide to refugees and people seeking asylum we also work indirectly through other organisations that identify and provide for those most in need.

Romero Centre



This year Janine de La Begassiere stepped up to lead our perpetual grocery drive, allowing Margaret Norman and Kristi Nageli to retire. Janine has worked hard at reinvigorating our members' participation in the grocery drive. In April, the Guardian reported the Government's decision to slash income support for community-based asylum seekers had forced hundreds more to emergency housing services and food banks. Our support of Romero is needed now more than ever before.

Dear Sunshine Coast Buddies,

Please accept our deep and sincere gratitude for the amazing generosity, kind heart and support you have provided to the Romero Centre and its people seeking asylum. We have been truly moved by your donations and we have been overjoyed to see some of you face-to-face when you were dropping off goods to the Romero Pantry. Our community is our inspiration and you are truly among the leaders!

....Sunshine Coast Buddies have been a part of all we do and this includes: supplies for our pantry, payment for emergency accommodation for over 12 women and 66 children, payment for electricity for a family of six, and a car registration for a person seeking asylum who needed the car for employment.

There are no words to express the gratitude that we carry to be passed on to you on behalf of Romero's people. You really make a difference. The truth is that we Romero, cannot do much without you as you are the caring, compassionate act and we are just your "hand".

Thank you so much!

On behalf of people seeking asylum and Romero staff,
Beata Ostapiej-Piatkowski
Romero Centre Manager



Dear Penny and Buderim Buddies

As we move towards the second quarter of 2019, I wanted to write to you to provide an update about the impact of your monthly donation.

Communityfy Asylum Circle provides transitional supported accommodation to 18 men with bridging visas and no access to Centrelink payments. Many of these men arrived at this accommodation with no income, very few belongings, no work and no relationships with people living in the surrounding suburbs.

With your financial support we have been able to assist these men purchase Go cards so they can attend employment and medical interviews, purchase food and essential medications and in some cases cover low-cost White Card training so they could begin work in the construction industry.

This has made a huge difference to these men originally from the Congo, Cameroon, Iran, Sri Lanka and Iraq. The Asylum Circle team have been heartened to know that 10 residents who have established enough employment and financial security while staying at Bardon have now relocated to live independently in Beenleigh, Coopers Plains, Tarragindi, Sydney, Ipswich, Bundaberg and Oxley.

Anne Hilton and I are sincerely grateful for your generous donation and the way supporters have stood beside 172 residents as they start new lives in our suburb.....

Yours sincerely,
Mandy Cox
17 April 2019



Dear James and Friends and Buddies Refugee Support Group,

.....On behalf of the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre I sincerely thank you for your generous support. Together we protect, support and empower people seeking protection from harm.

Your support means we are able to resource quality programs that not only ensure people seeking asylum are treated fairly, but also offer them the opportunity to achieve social and economic independence in Australia.

Being an asylum seeker cannot prevent me from doing anything when there are organisations like the ASRC that advocate for us...being an asylum seeker can't stop my dreams, it's not a barrier now

– Dori, ASRC member

With your support we remain strong in the face of many challenges. Thanks for standing with us to provide a safe space and vital support for people seeking asylum.....

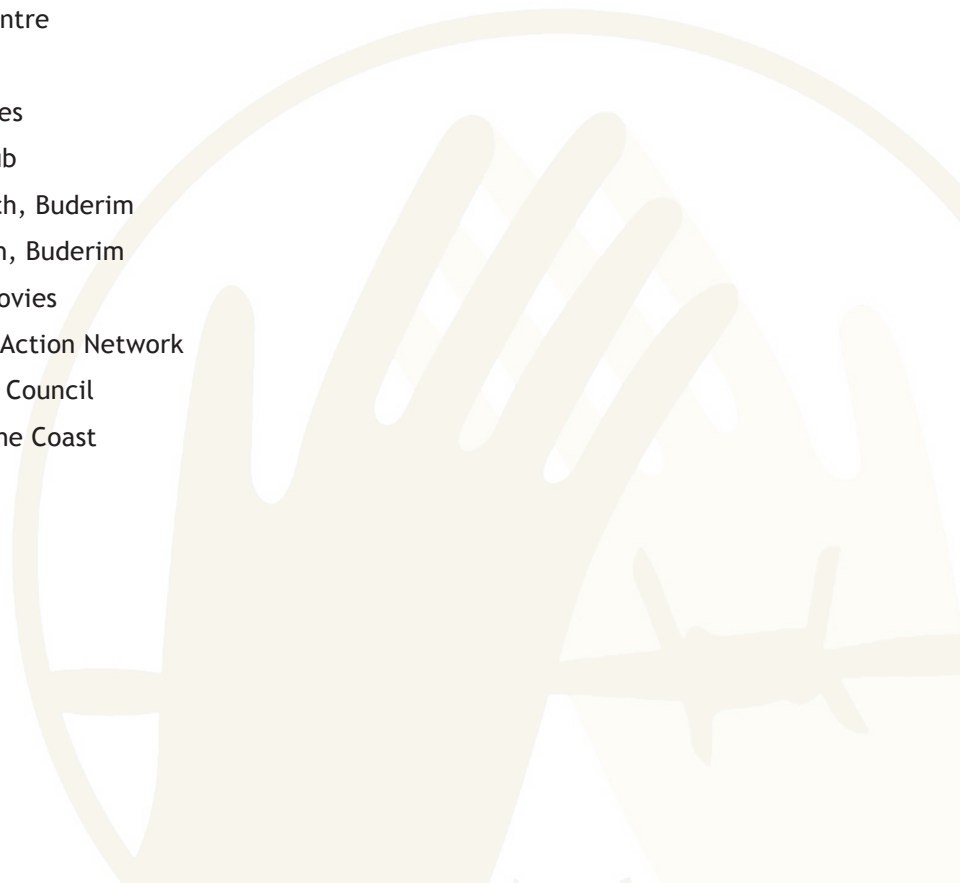
Kind regards,

Jo Gumley
Community Fundraising Coordinator
Asylum Seeker Resource Centre

Our supporters & partners

Buddies is grateful for the support of the following groups:

- Amnesty International (Maroochydore)
- Asylum Seeker Resource Centre
- Berkelouw Books & Cafe, Eumundi
- Bunnings Warehouse
- Communify
- Digitech, Buderim
- Eumundi Markets
- Event Cinemas, Noosa Heads
- Festuri
- Fisheries on the Spit
- Goodwill Wines
- Immanuel Lutheran College, Buderim
- Majestic Cinema, Nambour
- Matthew Flinders Anglican College, Buderim
- Multicultural Development Australia
- Nambour Community Centre
- Noosa Council
- Noosa Welcomes Refugees
- Romero Multicultural Hub
- St Mark's Anglican Church, Buderim
- St Mary's Catholic Church, Buderim
- Starry Nights Outdoor Movies
- Sunshine Coast Refugee Action Network
- Sunshine Coast Regional Council
- University of the Sunshine Coast
- Welcome to Maleny
- Wildlife HQ



Statement of Accounts

Full year summary, 2018-2019

Cash at Bank as at 1 July 2018	\$ 13,134	
INCOME		
Membership fees	\$ 1,200	6%
Donations	\$ 4,057	19%
Fund Raising	\$ 13,760	65%
Grants	\$ 1,998	10%
Total Income	\$ 21,015	100%
EXPENDITURE		
Operating Costs	\$ 1,384	5%
Community Awareness	\$ 3,831	15%
Fund Raising Costs	\$ 617	2%
Direct Support for People Seeking Asylum & Refugees	\$ 7,778	30%
Donations to refugee support & advocacy groups	\$ 12,250	47%
Total Expenditure	\$ 25,860	100%
Cash at bank as at 30 June 2019	\$ 8,289	