

ANNUAL REPORT

2012-2013

Australian
League of
Immigration
Volunteers

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ALIV Teens Program at Maroubra Beach

Committee members for ALIV

The Committee members for ALIV at anytime since the end of the financial year is:

Mohita Zaheed

Mehdi Zeinali

Laura Haylen

Jenny Tang

Katharina Kretz

Jimmy Dang

Shreya Kumar

Aakash Kohli

Kate Hinsley

Paul Dignam

Jessica Anagnostaras

Tessa Matthews

Jessica Dias

Nesha Jeyalingam

Principal activities during the year

The principal activities of the Association during the course of the financial year were to provide social services to those kids and families from asylum seeker backgrounds who need support integrating into the Australian community.

There were no other significant changes in the nature of the activities of the Association during the year.



ALIV volunteers at a social gathering

President's Report

It has been a fantastic year for ALIV with an increase in the number of kids and families in our programs and a stellar increase the number and dedication of our volunteers.

This year we have continued to explore how ALIV can best serve the needs of our clients and have introduced a new re-vamped family program and a behavioural development program for our most high at needs clients.

The new generation of the family program identifies that the needs of each family are highly divergent and tailors a program to meet the needs of our clients that are experiencing particular hardship. The program has been widely welcomed by our volunteers and families with several families seeking to access the more intense level of assistance.

The behavioural development program similarly was born from a need to work more closely with kids demonstrating strong anti-social behaviour such as violence and anger. While the regular kids and teens programs offers an opportunity for mentorship this program in particular works far more closely with each child and focuses on individual developmental needs.

We have also managed to run a record number of camps this year with even more kids getting to experience one of ALIV's amazing camps. Camps continue to be the highlight for kids and volunteers in our programs and increasing the ability to deliver more programs in this area has been a key achievement.

Finally, the biggest highlight of the year has been the growth in our program management and admin teams and the sheer quality of their participation. The dedication of the volunteers coordinating the programs and their ability to keep volunteer engagement high has really made ALIV's growth this year feasible.

With such a strong team behind ALIV, I have even higher hopes for 2014-2015 and know that we will continue to strive for increased engagement with our kids and families and with our volunteers.

Mohita Zaheed
ALIV president

Kid's Program

We have had a successful year with the number of children in the program increasing from 15 – 21.

This year we have all felt somewhat like proud parents as we've seen great improvements in the kids' confidence and self-esteem level. By attending the programs the kids have been able to understand the appropriate ways of communicating and interacting with both peers and volunteers in a community setting. Many become good friends and look forward to the event for the coming month.

We have also opened up the program to some of the younger kids with 3 five year olds and 2 six year olds coming on board. This has really changed the dynamic of the program and increased the diversity of our group with some children full of energy and hyperactive while others are shy and reserved.

The kids program structured to allow development not only in their interaction skills but also their creativity and behaviour. Some of the programs that we have run this year include ice skating, bike riding, reverse garbage, a day at a park and beach and a swimming day.

We have also continued to build a strong relationship with our volunteer base and the increased number of kids has seen more and more volunteers turn up to each program.

We have had a great year and look forward to an even bigger one coming up.

Tessa Matthews and Sylvia Qiu
Kids Program ICs

Teen's Program

2013 was an extremely successful year for the Teens program. It was fantastic to have several new families join our program and watching bonds form between children and volunteers.

The Teens program has been in operation in its current format for just 2 years having previously been a family program that included parents and guardians. The evolution of this program in this short term has been quite spectacular with a strong focus on building the social, communication and development skills of those involved.

A particular highlight came with the addition of a new family with three boys, one of whom has severe cerebral palsy. The progress he has made in the last six months has been incredible as a once shy and quiet boy now lights up the room as soon as he enters it and frequently volunteers his ideas and wants to take team captain positions and lead the group. The other kids have also consistently shown their inclusive and considerate nature. It has been a pleasure watching them constantly going out of their way to make him and everyone else feel included and taking the time to make sure no one is left behind.

The Teens program aims to create an 'older brother/sister', mentor relationship between the kids and volunteers. We hope to create a positive environment for these young adults to express themselves and grow while still having fun. For many of the kids involved, ALIV gives them an opportunity to do activities they would never normally be able to do and to enjoy themselves without other stresses and worries they may face at home.

The growth in every child has been incredible, particularly in communication skills. Many of our programs have featured developmental creative activities that require kids to explain and show their finished work to the group. From the beginning of the year to now, the difference in confidence and speaking in front of a group is enormous.

Other program highlights included archery classes and exploring the amazing adventure park at Blaxland Riverside Park. The kids also enjoyed more creative activities like painting a huge group mural about what ALIV meant to them which produced some incredibly moving and inspiring results. Other major achievements for this group included seeing kids overcome fears as they learnt to swim and were taught to ride a bike for the first time.

Our priorities for next year continue to be to increase focus on child development and ensure another year for fantastically engaging activities for both our volunteers and kids.

Jess Anagnostaras and Paul Dignam
Teens program ICs

Behavioural Development Program

The behavioural development program was created in January 2013 to address the special needs of a particular group of the children with significant behavioural, attention and trauma-related issues.

Previously these kids had been involved in other ALIV programs but began to require closer attention due to their often destructive behaviour at programs.



Behavioural Development Kids at a Graffiti workshop

The program comprise of 11 kids (all boys so far) who regularly attend the monthly programs. A small group of committed volunteers fill one-to-one mentoring roles, providing the very close supervision necessary for these particular kids.

The program provides a combination of fun and developmental activities with an aim to build confidence by creating self-awareness and constructive coping strategies. These programs/ activities have included a visit to a high rope course; pottery, cooking, graffiti art and acting classes; and a skate-park visit with lessons. Combined with these activities are a variety of group games and icebreakers which are aimed particularly at creating strong interpersonal relationships amongst the kids and also between the kids and their volunteers.

Throughout the short life of this new program, we have noticed some amazing advancements in the behaviour of the children. By providing continuity and predictability in the program we have been able to begin to put structures in place to work on issues of discipline and responsibility.

One particular highlight has been the inclusion of regular mindfulness meditation sessions with the boys. Mindfulness meditation is now commonly used in therapeutic practices and has been proven to greatly assist people with attention problems and with previous traumatic experiences. As these boys enter their teenage years, self-awareness activities are important as they allow them to identify strong emotions such as anger, sadness and elation. This identification is the key to making changes for themselves.

Our biggest success of the year however has been our incredible group of dedicated volunteers that have risen to the challenges that are inherent in running programs with these kids. Their commitment is what has allowed us to continue to evolve our programming and as we mature as a program we hope to deliver even stronger results going forward.

Aakash Kohli and Kate Hinsley
Behavioural Development program ICs

The Charity Program

Having re-launched ALIV's charity program last year this year was all about growth and skill development.

The Charity Program is targeted at ALIV's most socially and emotionally developed kids. These kids have a passion for volunteering and through the charity program are able to give back to the communities that have given them so much. The Charity Program equips these kids with performance skills such as balloon tying, face painting and magic as well as developing the kids' confidence in being able to then use these skills to entertain others.

The kids have successfully used these skills to perform for the Starlight foundation making a tonne of balloons animals for sick kids in hospital and a fun filled day with kids with cerebral palsy. The kids also raised funds for the deaf and blind foundation and entertained market goers on other occasions.

The sense of accomplishment for these kids from being able to give back to the wider community continues to wow and inspire our volunteers who put in the hard yards to make sure the kids have the right skills and the confidence levels necessary for their star roles!

With a whole year under our belt we hope to continue challenging these kids to be the best they can be and also inspire our volunteers through their passion.

Jess Dias and Nesha Jeyalingam
Charity Program ICs

Family Program

The Family program was launched mid 2013 with two “pilot-project” families. The Family program embodies ALIV’s desire to work with the holistic family unit and acknowledges that many of the challenges faced by the kids in our monthly programs cannot be addressed without the inclusion of the family. Where the previous generation of the Family program sought to provide general skills to families in a large group environment this program is highly specialised and undertakes a needs assessment for each family and tailors a program to deliver on these needs.

Many of our families face difficulties in identifying and accessing resources within the meet their needs on a longer term basis. The program takes a strong focus on community and a key goal for the family program is to assist families in overcoming social isolation.

The key highlight for the program this year was assisting one family in developing skills to better cope with a child with ADHD and gain awareness that ADHD is a common challenge that can be worked with and managed, whilst reducing any stigma they once associated with the condition. We also made significant progress with the other family in the program where the key challenge was to develop a framework for positive interactions between family members.

The program has made some giant strides however continues to be in a process of development as we look to fine tuning our approaches. There are a number of ALIV families that have sought to access support through the family program and we will be looking at available resourcing to continue to grow this program which has received such strong positive support from our clients.

Katharina Kretz and Danny Popovic
Family Program ICs

Camps Programs

The astronomical growth in the camps program has left us all a little bewildered but also very excited. We held a total of six camps during the year with over twenty kids in attendance at each camp. With the number of camps growing so strongly we've been able to improve the structure of camps to focus on particular sets of our kids and also to hone in on areas of development.

Camps this year focused on three sets of kids in particular. Firstly we have strongly encouraged participation by kids from our newest families. Having these kids along to camps have provided us with a structured format to assess their developmental needs but at the same time have provided these kids with an experience like nothing they have ever been involved with.

Secondly, we have held camps specifically designed to work with the kids in our behavioural development program. The longer and more intense time spent with volunteers have allowed us to focus on specific needs of each child and to start putting in place the framework for the regular programs.

Finally, as some more of our kids hits the teenage years we've identified many challenges such as insecurities, self-image issues, eating disorder and drug and alcohol abuse that are common in all teenagers are amplified with the kids we work with due to language barriers and social isolation.



ALIV Teenage Survivor Camp participants

So to provide a safe and fun forum to discuss all things teenage related we ran a Teenage Survivor Camp. Three fun filled days in the wilderness where the volunteers led some tough conversations on how best to manage the challenges of being a teenager. The kids learned basic bush skills with many for the first time discovering that a tent is not the most comfortable place for a night's rest.

With such success in our camps program the next year is going to be focused on refining our program structure to squeeze even more fun filled development into these events. With volunteers chomping at the bit to attend a camp undoubtedly it will be another big year for the camps program.

Homework Program

The last year was a great year for the Homework Program, which saw impressive improvements in the kids' progress thanks to the hard work of our volunteers.

The Homework program continued in a similar format to previous years, albeit with more effort made to match the kids' needs to volunteers' skills during program. Especially with some of the kids moving onto HSC subjects, this has helped to ensure that the clients get the help that they need and that volunteers can feel their skills are being put to use.

We also saw many new kids come into our program, with both the Wednesday and Thursday program seeing small growths in numbers. Demand for assistance with homework among kids from asylum seeker and refugee backgrounds is as high as ever; however, often we have been constrained by the number of volunteers available.

Of course, ALIV is immensely grateful to the volunteers who have dedicated their time and energy to the program. Many volunteers arrive at the program from a long day at work or in class but still manage to exhibit a tremendous amount of enthusiasm and patience. Also we would like to extend a big thanks to our admin team who helps to make sure the program runs smoothly each week.

The benefits can definitely be seen in the kids' progress this year in all areas. The kids are generally eager to come to the library each week and work on assignments and homework. Although there were certainly weeks when the kids, drained from school and sport, had trouble with their concentration, overall, their effort is to be commended. As a reward, we have dinner together at nearby restaurants which is always the highlight of the night with many stories and laughter to be shared.

All in all, it has been a successful year for the Homework program, in which we've seen impressive growth in the kids, our team of volunteers, and the program itself.

Jenny Tang
Homework IC and Vice President

Financial Statements

<u>Operating Statement</u>			<u>Balance Sheet</u>		
\$	2011-12	2012-13	\$	2011-12	2012-13
Revenues			Assets		
Grant	41,000.00	-	Cash and Cash Equivalents	429627.9	66632.6
Donation	645.49	20,535.00	Total Current Assets	429627.9	66632.6
Membership	4,470.00	3,130.00	GST Receivables	45932	18267.46
Fundraising	1,000.00	-	Other Non-Current Assets	34820	0
Service contracts	58,511.83	-	Total Non-Current Assets	80752	18267.46
Other Deposit	6,047.16	45.85	Total Assets	510379.9	84900.06
Interest	1,538.53	1,227.77	Liabilities		
GST Rebate	45,932.00	-	Total Current Liabilities	0	0
Total Revenues	159,145.01	24,938.62	Total Non-Current Liabilities	0	0
Expenses			Total Liabilities	0	0
Kids / Parents	66,618.13	51,353.38	Net Assets	510379.9	84900.06
Volunteer	9,144.39	20,895.81	Equity		
Equipment	7,436.88	5,062.34	Retained Earnings	510379.9	84900.06
Administration	1,111.88	9,492.89	Total Equity	510379.9	84900.06
Transport	3,136.45	17,344.62			
Food	28,716.14	4,934.96			
Capital Purchases	-	-			
Grants out	-	315,000.00 *			
Other	1,707.57	5,123.49			
Total Expenses	117,871.44	253,712.00			
Results from Operating Activities	41,273.57 -	404,268.87			
Profit/(Loss) for the period	41,273.57 -	404,268.87			
Retained Earnings at beginning of year	429,627.90	470,901.47			
Retained Earnings at end of year	470,901.47	66,632.60			

* ALIV provided a one off grant to Online Volunteering Australia (OVA). The sum provided represents the proceeds of ALIV's project with SERCO. OVA is a registered Charity