



Reporting On Our Progress in 2022



Contents

Part 1:
Our story so far

Part 2: Our
progress in 2022

Part 3: Our reflections
about how we do the
work

Part 4: Our next
steps



This report was developed by the Centre for Community Health (CCCH), the learning partner to the By Five Innovation & Equity Hub. CCCH is a research group of the Murdoch Children's Research Institute and a department of the Royal Children's Hospital.

Part 1: Our story so far

The gap in outcomes between rural and urban children in Victoria is large and growing, and this is an issue that is particularly stark for the Wimmera Southern Mallee (WSM).

By Five Early Years Project 2016-2020

Between 2016 and 2020 an early childhood-focused place-based initiative, known as the By Five Early Years Project, was founded and delivered as a response to this gap in outcomes for children in the WSM. The initiative was funded by the Victorian Departments of Education and Training (DET) and Health and Human Services (DHHS), governed by the Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership and co-led by DET and CCCH at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute.

By Five Innovation & Equity Hub 2021-2025

In 2021, the Wimmera Development Association (WDA) was funded for a four-year period by DET to transition the By Five Early Years Project to a community-led early years innovation and equity hub. Building on the foundational and enabling changes achieved during 2016-2020, By Five's goal is to narrow the gap in school entry outcomes for children in WSM, by focusing efforts on the following priority areas:

- Equitable access to services for all children and families in the WSM
- High-quality services for all children and families
- High engagement and participation in services by children and families
- Confident and connected families across the WSM
- Community environments that support all children and families to thrive

The By Five Innovation & Equity Hub is responsible for facilitating engagement with the WSM community and service system to identify, design, test, and implement innovative solutions. As a result, it will produce learnings that can be applied in other parts of rural Victoria and Australia.



The Wimmera Southern Mallee region includes the traditional lands of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagalk peoples and sections of the land of the Dja Dja Warrung people.

1

Setting the foundations for the next phase

- WDA took ownership of By Five establishing a new local team to ensure the initiative is locally driven.
- The SC4C steering committee broadened its scope to become the By Five Innovation and Equity Hub Steering Committee.
- The By Five team developed the [By Five Strategic Plan 2022-2025](#) which outlines the plan to improve the outcomes of children in the WSM.
- Together with CCCH, the By Five team and steering committee designed a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework that will guide and track implementation, learning and impact.

2

Evolving By Five's flagship Paediatric Project

- 135 co-consultations with 99 children ranging in age from 4 months to 18 years were conducted, enabling improved paediatrician access for the children in the region.
- The project modified its delivery by 1) running small sessions tailored to families experiencing vulnerability, 2) introducing multidisciplinary case-based sessions, and 3) ceasing referrals from non-clinicians.
- Wave 2 of the Paediatric Project Evaluation was undertaken, comprising process and impact findings to inform the next steps.
- Of particular note, families described feeling reassured, reduction in stress (for both parent and child), and increased skills and confidence to manage their child's health condition since attending the co-consultation

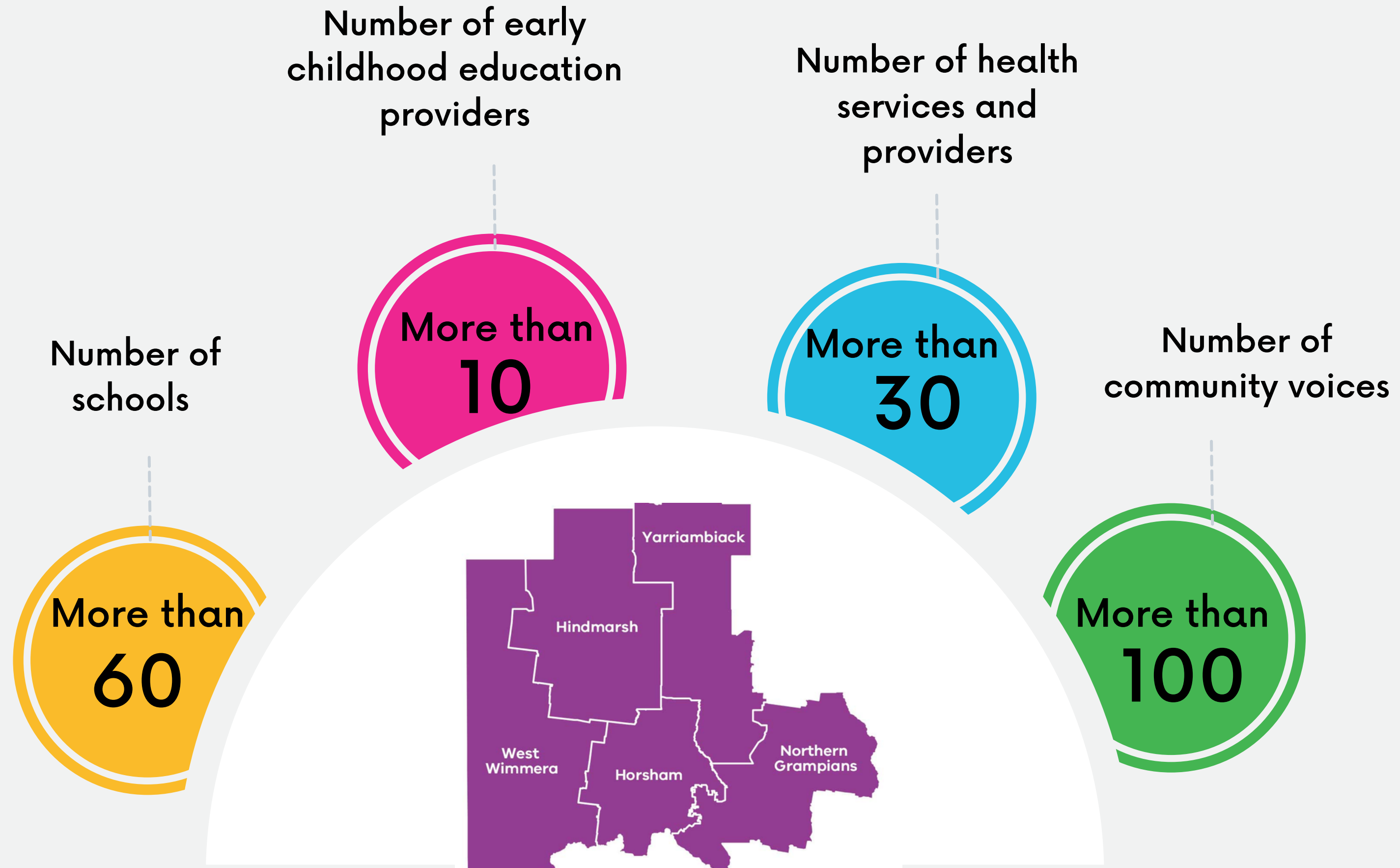
3

Learning about drivers and barriers to service access

- Project managers dedicated to the new Allied Health and Antenatal Care projects were recruited.
- Deep learning was undertaken about the status of, and drivers and barriers to access to 1) antenatal services, 2) early childhood education and care, and 3) paediatric allied health services across the region. This involved gathering local data and key stakeholder insights, resulting in the creation of reports for each service area.
- Key service stakeholders were identified and engaged to support the commencement of addressing the enablers and barriers to antenatal services and early childhood education and care.

Figure 1: Number of By Five contacts in key categories based in WSM

Connections made across the WSM



Connections made outside of WSM



Figure 2: Types of connections outside of WSM

In 2022, the By Five Innovation and Equity Hub established a learning partnership with the Centre for Community Child Health (CCCH) at the Murdoch Children's Research Centre. The objective of the learning partnership is to support and build the capacity of By Five to learn within projects and across the initiative, whilst simultaneously building a learning culture.

Learning activities comprised individual coaching, group reflection sessions and workshops about approaches to planning, implementation and evaluation of place-based initiatives. Key reflections from the By Five team resulting from learning activities in 2022 are shown to the right.



Part 4 : Our next steps



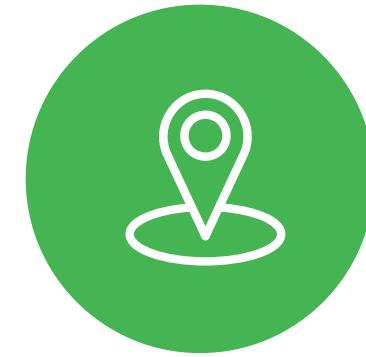
Action 1

Start implementing our Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning framework to support understanding of our progress and impact.



Action 2

Commence work on the recommendations cited in the ECEC, Allied Health and Antenatal Care reports, to build the enablers and tackle the barriers to service access.



Action 3

Continue to expand the By Five Paediatric Project in conjunction with RCH and local health professionals based on findings from the evaluation.



Action 4

Identify opportunities to strengthen the capacity for family and community engagement across the initiative's priority areas.



If you would like more information about the By Five Innovation and Equity Hub Initiative please visit our website: www.wda.org.au/services/byfive

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