



Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre

Annual Report 2019-2020





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Photo credit:

Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre, Alli Sebastian Wolf & Caromoda Photography



SHNC Strategic Plan

Our Purpose

We are here to build a strong and inclusive community in Surry Hills.

Our Centre is a place where people are treated as equal and valued individuals. We encourage people to develop to their full potential and aim to support them to live meaningful fulfilling lives.

The Centre operates according to a philosophy of open management and aims to reflect the local community by encouraging participation and discussion about all issues relevant to the community and to the running of the Centre.

Our Values

- We value diversity, respect difference, recognise the whole person and encourage inclusiveness
- We recognise and seek to build on strengths – individual strengths, community strengths and our own strengths
- We value and offer hospitality, warmth and welcome
- We recognise the whole person and work with people ‘where they are at’
- We value people looking out for each other, and community connectedness
- We value and apply evidence-based and theory-informed practice
- We value collaboration and working in partnership with the community
- We value innovation, creativity, learning and growth

Our Strategies and Objectives

Strategy 1: Contribute to a resilient and inclusive community

- Provide opportunities, activities and experiences that build and sustain quality of life and wellbeing
- Build capacity and confidence to enable individuals and families to better manage daily challenges and critical or unforeseen circumstances
- Contribute to the development of community spirit where people naturally pull together in times of adversity
- Contribute to breaking social isolation and cycles of disadvantage

Strategy 2: Deliver a range of services and programs to meet the diverse needs of the community

- Provide learning experiences that builds resilience and support people to realise their full potential working to break cycles of disadvantage
- Provide a place where all people feel welcome, accepted and included
- Provide access to high quality facilities that meet the needs of the community

Strategy 3: Provide high quality Children's Services

- Maintain and develop high quality education and care for children attending our services
- Secure the future of the Children's Services
- Provide a range of accessible family-friendly services and activities that build family resilience and contribute to Surry Hills being a safe suburb for families and children

Strategy 4: Develop our capability as an organisation

- Review and strengthen our governance arrangements
- Ensure the long-term viability of the centre

Our Services

- Creative and educational activities
- Wellness programs
- Children's services: Long Day Care and Outside School Hours Care
- Information and referral
- Advocacy and support
- Surry Hills Market
- Surry Hills Festival

The Chair

I'm pleased to introduce to you the Annual Report for 2019-2020. I'm sure we all agree it's been an extraordinary journey. I'd like to acknowledge the way in which people have worked together to protect and support communities; bringing us through most damaging bush fires this country has known and the worst part of the COVID-19 pandemic. It's important to remain aware that we are not out of the woods yet, we must still all pull together to maintain our safe practice.

In many ways the virus has been an important reminder of what we can achieve when we remain focused on community support and safety. It has shone a spot light on the importance of the work we do here at Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre (SHNC). Our work and experience in community resilience and emergency planning continues to grow and develop. Recent events have proven we are well prepared and practiced in providing essential services to the community whatever the circumstances.

I extend a heartfelt thanks the board. The board of governors generously give their time and support as volunteers. They add such great value to the organisation through their different skills and personalities to the Centre in order to make sure it runs for the benefit of our community.

I extend my sincere thank you to the dedicated group of volunteers who remain constant and unerring in supporting the work we do and the communities we all work for. Their dedication to duty is admirable. Our work and our centre would be diminished without them.

Our resilient and robust staff team have continued to work hard to maintain service delivery. A special thank you to our Child Educators, the unsung essential workers who put aside their concerns and travelled daily to care for the children and families throughout lockdown. To the management team who held fast and kept others motivated and safe while continuing to support the whole community by delivering essential services and support and to the volunteers who turned out to help keep programs running.

A sincere thanks to City of Sydney who continue to provide us with this land mark building and support the work we do through the grants program. To the Department of Communities and Justice for funding and guidance. To Jenny Leong and Alex Greenwich, to the many City of Sydney Councillors who lend their support and participant in many of our events.

Most of all the community of Surry Hills and all stakeholders who contribute to Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centres success.

Karina Kreminski - Chair

The Treasurer

The financial year for the period from July 2019 to June 2020 highlights a surplus of \$130,769. To be able to achieve this healthy surplus is in part due to Government's Job Keeper scheme and Cash Flow Boost Payment. This additional support will be available to support the Centre through any unforeseen financial difficulties presented by the economic challenges generated by COVID-19 and the following pandemic.

Our gross revenue was \$1,637,663 arising chiefly from fees received (\$952,337) including our recovery of Government subsidies enjoyed by qualifying families, from the Family Assistance Office. Government grants total \$400,680 including the rental subsidy from the City of Sydney for our premises in the Surry Hills Library and Community Centre building.

Our expenses totalled \$1,506,893 of which \$1,093,740 went to payments, provisions or training for our staff and management.

As noted in last year's report, in normal circumstances, the balance between income and expenditure has become very fine. Generally, our costs are growing, but our growth in revenue is slow. Each year we take measures to redress the balance whilst ensuring the community continues to be supported through providing a cost effective and a strong program of activities and engagement opportunities. As a result Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre maintains its very strong financial position with an enduring commitment to our community.

The board extends its thanks and appreciation for the work and due diligence done by John Ferguson and Anna Kim, our accounting team, for the extensive work undertaken to secure Government support through the pandemic.

Over all the Centre is in a sound financial position, with members' equity now standing at \$1,044,968. We have no debt. We can withstand future financial pressures so long as we maintain discipline.

Tony MacMahon, Treasurer

The Secretary

The first board meeting of the year was held in February which included a statement by me (as my role on the festival sub committee) announcing the decision of the festival sub committee not to go ahead with the preparation of the Surry Hills Festival. A very difficult decision but considering what has happened this year a timely one. Plans to connect with the Creative Precinct for 2021 may see smaller community events replacing previous larger events of the past.

Deborah Sorensen and Ang Beecroft both resigned from the board this year. Deborah has been on the board for many years and her presence has been pivotal from a legal perspective for the centre. Ang Beecroft brought an informed and experienced eye from a HR presence and along with Deborah were local community members. The board extends their thanks and appreciation for the work undertaken by the outgoing board members.

Three new members have joined the board: Peta Landman (2019), Jay Scott and Jo Kowalczyk (both 2020). Between them they have many years of experience and expertise in fields that will assist in directing the Neighbourhood Centre into an even more outstanding and competitive community service.

The Board of Governors meet bi monthly as a full team, in the intervening month we meet as focused subcommittees to discuss various aspects of governance relative to the role. We also have planned to meet as a full team on the alternative months in a more casual setting to create more cohesiveness within the team and strengthen communication.

This year the board held 6 full governance meetings and 10 subcommittee meetings as shown in the table below.

Position	Member Name	Attendance
Chair	Karina Kreminski	6
Deputy Chair	Linda Bretherton	6
Treasurer	Tony MacMahon	6
Secretary	Narelle Clark	6
Member	Peta Landman	6
Member	Jo Kowalczyk	2
Member	Jay Scott	2

Narelle Clark, Secretary

12 November 2020

Our Staff

Without whom, this Centre would not function.



Gillian Elliott
SHNC Manager



Victoria Baghos
Business Officer



Stephen Lunny
Community Programs Coordinator



Anna Kim
Book Keeper



John Ferguson
Accountant

Long Day Care Team



Spring Chum Moi Lai
Coordinator-Educational Leader



Sanjana Prakash
Certified Supervisor/Educator



Joyenti Chowdhury
Educator



Kavita Dalki
Educator



Mamta Parekh
Educator



Gloria Oi Lin Roberts
Early Childhood Teacher



Selina Wang
Educator and Support Worker

Out of School Hours Care Team



India Childs

Leadership team Programs



Mahad Hassan

Leadership team On site supervisor



Rebecca Harkins

Leadership team Admin Support



Celia Bradshaw

Leadership team Enrolments



TEAM MEMBERS:

- Nina Davis
- Tom Husband
- Andrew Fairweather
- Angela Breeze
- Eugene Choi
- Ash Ure
- Samantha Ischar
- Ava Connolly

(not pictured)



Volunteers

We are deeply indebted to the numerous volunteers who give freely of their skill, talents and experience to lead many and varied groups and activities. A team of dedicated volunteers give their time to make sure our wonderful project continue to be vibrant and interactive. Volunteers bring valuable life and hospitality skills to share with the community. Social interaction and support is also a vital component of this program- not only for the volunteers but also for the large number of regular customers/community members.



Centre Manager's Report

In reviewing last year's annual report I noticed, with wry amusement, how often we referred to 2020 with enthusiasm and excitement, little knowing what the year had in store for us. This year has been extraordinary and a steep learning curve for us all. Our communities have worked together to protect the most vulnerable members of our society and we have made a really good job of managing the virus. We have seen patience and fortitude. We have seen society becoming more polite and more caring. We have seen resilience and bravery. For this and many other reasons this year's report will reflect the experiences of our own essential workers, the unsung heroes of Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre, our Children Educators. It is their voices, seldom heard, we acknowledge here.

It has been a privilege to work the Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre team this year. The board of Governors, the staff team, our volunteers have all worked with diligence, determination and with great care.

I extend my sincere thanks to all the team, the governors, the staff and the volunteers who have continued to work diligently to steer us through the worst of times. I believe now we can begin to hope.

Gillian Elliott, SHNC Manager

Spring Lai

I was very anxious during the lockdown period, especially using the public transport. I always put the mask on before getting on the bus. I remembered the first week when I got on the bus, I stopped, scanned the seats and then decided where I should sit. I kept my hands on my lap, avoiding to touch anything, not even the "button". I waited for the other passenger to press the "stop" if any. I felt suffocated with the mask on, but I had to wear it. My sisters were very upset that I had to come to work. They said why I had to risk my life. There were so many people who lost their lives due to Covid-19. They didn't want me to be one of the numbers.

When the government announced the lockdown, the majority of the families kept the child/children at home without informing us. We had a small group of children attending for a period of 4 weeks. So we could maintain the social distancing. We immediately implemented the "stop the spread of coronavirus" program into our daily program and practice. We discussed with the parents about our program and practice and worked with them to reinforce the children's learning. Parents were very impressed by what their child/children had learned which they could use in their daily life. I sent the emails to all the parents, informed and updated them what procedures and strategies we ran during the pandemic period. I requested parents to keep their child/children at home if they had flu-like symptoms and to take their child/children for Covid-19 test and send the test result to me before resuming. I displayed the "help stop the spread of coronavirus" poster on the entrance and sign in/out table to remind everyone.

I requested everyone (including staff, parents, children and me) to wash the hands upon arrival and departure. I tried to order the hand sanitiser for the centre, but there was none. Two parents were very generous to give us the hand sanitiser and hand cream. When I was able to purchase the hand sanitiser, I put one bottle on the sign in/out table for people to use.

I cancelled the excursion and incursion programs, restricted the outsiders' visiting our day care, and asked the contractors to come outside our operation hours. The staff were requested to complete the "Infection Control Training - Covid-19". All the toys, books, puzzles, etc. used during the day needed to be washed/cleaned every day. The staff had an extra huge workload. I sincerely thank them for their hard work.

After 4 weeks parents asked me whether they were able to send their child/children back to our day care. I said yes. It would be good for the children to have their life back to normal. When a few parents arrived with their child/children, they asked whether they could stay with their child/children for a while to ease them in. I said yes so families could be reassured. We are all scared of the unknown. We normally gave the parents a hug if they were sad or stressed, but we couldn't offer it to them due to the social distancing. What we did was to listen and to talking with them.

I will remember the scary unknown situations and isolation I had been through, the deadly virus and many people lost their life. Hope that we will learn from this experience.

Sanjana Parekh

Travelling to and from work was a little intimidating, especially on the train. I had to be really cautious about what to touch and what not to touch. Wearing a mask on public transport was challenging as I was not used to it, but for the safety of myself and others, I wore it. This year we can't travel, this has restricted my travel overseas to visit my family. I hope it will change soon.

While at work we did extra cleaning, such as wiping door handles after the parents left and wiping the furniture regularly. In terms of hygiene practice, I think we have improved a lot, by asking parents and children to wash their hands as soon as they arrive. We also made sure that children who were sick stayed home, for precautionary reasons. The parents were so supportive in this matter.

Another reason which motivated me to come to work during this pandemic was the families and children. Some parents really needed our care as they had no one to look after their children. I am glad that I could help the families look after their children when they needed it most.

We embedded hygiene practices in our program every day to teach children how to take care of ourselves during this time. We used pictures, posters and also role modelled different hygiene practices with the children. We also created safe distance posters to teach the children.

What I will remember is how the pandemic affected our everyday life and the events that happened during the year. It was and always will be terrifying to think about it.

Joyenti Chowdhury

With my full respect to everyone at SHNC, before I start my report, I thank our respectful manager for thinking of us. I have worked for this organisation for 20 years and this the first time I have been given the opportunity to say what I think or feel. I hope in the future I will have other opportunities to share my thoughts. So please stay with us while we tell our stories.

It was a really tough time during this pandemic. Every morning I prayed to God before leaving my house to come to work. With every day that passed I thanked God that I had passed another day with blessings, even though fear was also with me. I use public transport (train) to come to work and sometimes the train looked like a very scary place. Even though there were less people travelling I just kept praying "Please keep me safe from this virus" I did not take a day off, I knew the Centre needed me even though my family wanted me to stay home. I kept coming because I love the children in our care and I have a good and trusting relationship with our families. I believe in the work I do for Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre and this is my motto. Our families thank me for my dedication and commitment, they were able to leave their children with us without anxiety or fear. My beautiful family love me and wanted to protect me from this situation, they were telling me to stop coming to work, to stay home, they were worried about me. I respected their suggestions and their love but I didn't stop coming to work because I love my work and I also love SHNC.

Selina Wang

A lot has changed this year for all people, we need to stay calm and pay attention to new ways of being. Each morning on arrival at work the first thing we do is wash our hands and sanitise the bench top and all the furniture. We have always washed fruit and vegetables but now we wash them more carefully and for longer to reduce risk. We have also washed the toys daily, now we wash them through the day to reduce risk.

Travelling to work was also a challenge. Here were fewer people on the train, we kept our distance and wore masks, careful not to touch anything. People have been cooperative with the Government directives and I'm happy to do the right thing because it protects the whole team. We work together calmly and seriously, paying attention to the new COVID-19 processes. We observe the children's health closely and provide them with a safe and healthy environment. We care of the mental and physical health of families and colleagues. I learned to cherish my family and friends. The pandemic has brought chaos to the lives and economies around the world. Best to love and cherish what we have now.

Kavita Dalki

During COVID -19 our work has changed, every day we take preventive actions to prevent the spread of respiratory illness. Many of the COVID safe practices are familiar to us such as washing our hands and covering coughs and sneezes only now there is a new and terrifying reason to be ever more careful. Of course wearing a mask is new to many Australians.

At work communication was the key to our success. Communicating with parents on the importance of keeping children home when they are sick. Communicating with staff on the importance of being vigilant for symptoms and staying in touch with facility management if or when they start to feel unwell.

Establishing procedures to ensure children and staff who become unwell while at our facility are sent home as soon as possible. In the early days of the pandemic parents kept their children at home. Parents who kept their jobs during the lock down soon found it very difficult to care for the children and be productive in their work. As the weeks progressed parents brought their children back to us. We reassured parents that their children were in good hands.

We started teaching the children about social distancing. We encourage children to develop good hygiene, by modelling good hygiene practices. We displayed posters that promote good hygiene practices so the children would want to do it, prompting children to wash their hands before and after certain activities or toileting, eating, playing etc. Also establishing a routine helping to develop good hygiene practice that the children will learnt and remember. In the end, this pandemic affected in our personal and profession life. We will never forget this seismic event in our whole Life.

Gloria Oi Lin Roberts

Travelling to and from work I learned I must be very cautious; I wear a mask on public transports. If someone is coughing inside the carriage it makes me nervous. I always have hand sanitiser in my pocket. In my backpack, I always carry a spare hand sanitiser and Antibacterial hand and body wipe to wipe any seat or place I may touch.

In my work with children I aimed to teach the children to function in a new reality. I talk with them about social distancing, always have the regular hygiene practice in place.

The most significant impact on my family life is that I could not visit my family in Brisbane, I missed my daughter's wedding at the end of September. I have not caught up with friends face to face from March to late August. I know we are lucky to be living in Australia. I appreciate that our government has done an amazing job to keep us well. This difficult time reminded me of SARS in Hong Kong in 2003.

Mamta Pahrek

Our lives have completely changed due to Covid -19. When the outbreak started we got to know new terms such as 'social distancing' and 'essential workers'. There was a lot of uncertainty for each and every one. Everything ran out of stock as there was panic buying, no one knew what to store and what not. There was price rise for PPE and masks were also out of stock.

It was scary to travel to work as I commute daily one hour to work. Previously I had great difficulty parking at the local station, now there is ample of parking with many spots to choose from. People's perceptions changed and everyone was cautious of others.

This event has taught people to look after themselves and care about their health more. It has encouraged people to have a healthier lifestyle and to appreciate the small things. Time has no reverse gear. Enjoy each moment and always thank Mother Nature for all beautiful things. This event has brought many people closer and many who did not have time before talk more often now.

Long Day Care team

Centre Report

PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

Surry Hills Community Drug Action Team (CDAT)



Surry Hills CDAT has continued to be a dynamic and effective component of the work we do at SHNC.

In 2020, at the CDAT conference, we won two awards.

The Community Drug Action Team (CDAT) engage at-risk youth, educate parents and the wider community through risk reduction activities and campaigns to reduce alcohol-fuelled violence and drug use.

Surry Hills CDAT is chaired and hosted by Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre. Harm minimisation around Alcohol and Drug use is central to the work we do at Surry Hills CDAT. Surry Hills CDAT has grown significantly in membership over the last year.

At one of our larger meetings, 16 organisations were represented around the table.





As a part of our contribution, our wonderful volunteers help to prepare delicious food which we distribute at our events.

Our food is free to community members along with masks and hand sanitiser.

Partnership and collaboration are key to the successful engagement of our community.

Last month we had the pleasure of joining these legends from NUAA NSW and the Kirketon Road Centre at the Northcott Housing Estate for Overdose Awareness Day. It was beautiful sunny day with COVID safe food, fun and music.

But most importantly we trained over 30 local community members to recognise and respond to opioid overdose and we provided a staggering 58 naloxone kits to help these community members protect their peers, family and community.

Masked, socially distanced, and dynamic. The health promotion A Team is here in Woolloomooloo!

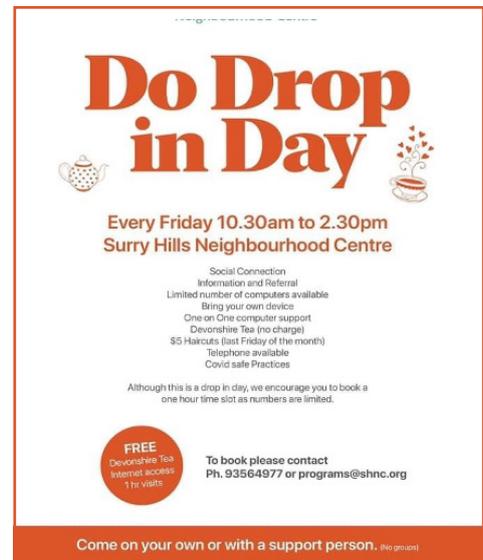


CLASSES & GROUPS

Do Drop in Day

The Do Drop in Day program was created to respond to the growing sense of isolation and increased mental health issues in our community. At this weekly event, community members can increase their sense of social connectedness in a Covid safe way.

People can meet friends, socialise, develop & share their skills, knowledge and experience; learning from each other in an inclusive, relaxing, supportive and safe environment. Staff and volunteers are on hand to support and mentor people learning new skills.



Do Drop in Day

Every Friday 10.30am to 2.30pm
 Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre

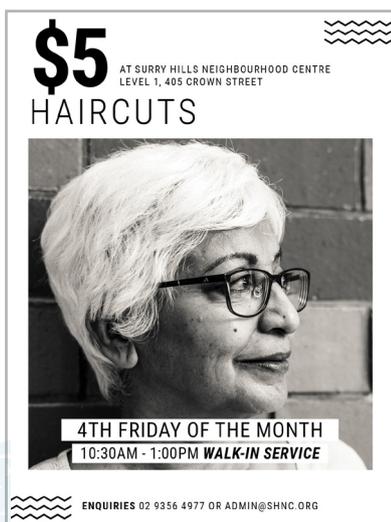
Social Connection
 Information and Referral
 Limited number of computers available
 Bring your own device
 One on One computer support
 Devonshire Tea (no charge)
 \$5 Haircuts (last Friday of the month)
 Telephone available
 Covid safe Practices

Although this is a drop in day, we encourage you to book a one hour time slot as numbers are limited.

FREE
 Devonshire Tea
 Internet access
 1 hr visits

To book please contact
 Ph. 93564977 or programs@shnc.org

Come on your own or with a support person. (No groups)



\$5
 AT SURRY HILLS NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE
 LEVEL 1, 405 CROWN STREET

HAIRCUTS

4TH FRIDAY OF THE MONTH
 10:30AM - 1:00PM **WALK-IN SERVICE**

ENQUIRIES 02 9356 4977 OR ADMIN@SHNC.ORG



Do Drop in Day offers a variety of opportunities such as; Tax Help, learn your own device, participate in RU OK Day, Naidoc Week and other key events or to just relax, chat, eat homemade food or visit our hair salon for an affordable stylish haircut.

In partnership with Be Connected laptops are available to those who need them and our Digital Mentors are onsite to support our community members. On Do Drop in Day community members are encouraged to bring their own device or use one of ours, to increase their capacity to connect on line.

Our signature Devonshire Tea is available at Do Drop in Day. Find the recipe here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YfxqtX9Jc2k&t=162s> ne.



Community Mask Making Project

Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre, with the help of our wonderful community members, are making reusable masks to be distributed amongst our community members who are on low income and may not have engaged in mask wearing yet.

Buying masks and sanitiser can add up in dollar value, we have purchased bulk sanitiser and are filling carry size SHNC bottles.

If you need one pop in on Drop in Day.



You Tube Channel



As we were unable to run our Kitchen Table Programs this year due to Covid 19 restrictions, we launched a Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre You Tube Channel.

This has enabled us to create a suite of Healthy Recipe Video's so that we can still engage with community around addressing the issues of food security.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TAIa_vjoPMk

Community Cafe

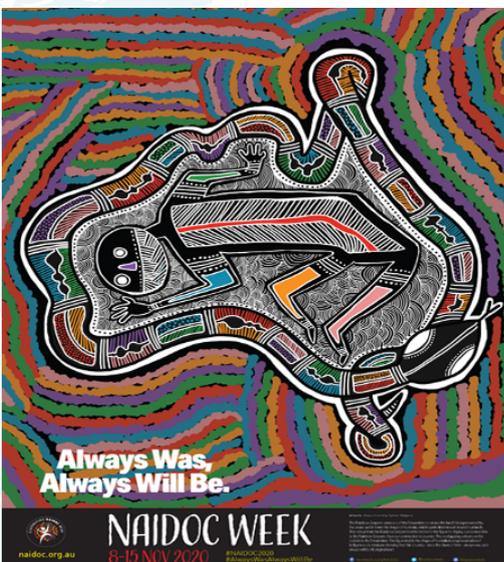
Missing the Community Cafe? We miss you too!

On Saturday September 5th September we held a virtual café on Zoom.

Community members made their own scones and we shared Devonshire Tea and good conversation online. Great to see some familiar faces. We were especially pleased our local Member of Parliament, Jenny Leong joined us. Thanks everyone and looking forward to seeing you all in the real world soon!



NAIDOC Event



Our Annual NAIDOC Week event was held in November, postponed due to Covid-19, at the Centre. This year's the film is They Have Come to Stay - This landmark series chronicles the birth of contemporary Australia as never told before, from the perspective of its first people. It explores what unfolds when the oldest living culture in the world is overrun by the world's greatest empire, and depicts the true stories of individuals - both black and white. The story begins in 1788 in Sydney with the friendship between an Englishmen, Governor Phillip, and a warrior, Bennelong. (Commissioned by SBS)

Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre News Letter



Spring into Surry Hills this Saturday 3 October!

Explore our vintage market in search of treasures and have lunch on Crown St. Travel by light rail, train or bus for a hassle free afternoon. See you there and keep yourself and others as safe as you can.



Surry Hills Market This Saturday!

Vintage fashion, valuable antiques, books, hand-made beauty products, designer labels, vinyl records and more – the market has it all. We are open regardless of the weather.

7:00am to 4:00pm on the first Saturday of every month!

We are Covid safe. So please maintain social distancing, wash your hands and stay home if you feel unwell or have any cold like symptoms.

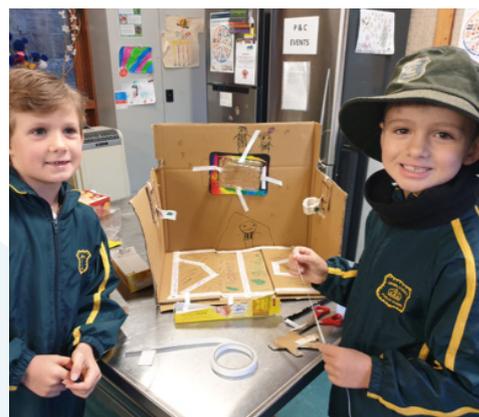


Outside School Hours Care

This year has been challenging for the school community. At the OSHC Service we are proud of the commitment and dedication of the school staff, the team and the parents and families for helping us see the worst of the pandemic through in a supportive and positive way. This year has one other change, our Coordinator Casandra Tilbrook left SHNC to take a new position with NDIS. This is a fantastic opportunity for Cassandra and we wish her well. We have continued to provide an excellent service in the safe hands of the leadership team, Celia, Mahad, Rebecca and India. They have all really taken to their new roles and are very happy with the way everything is flowing. We have been given great feedback from staff about how they now feel really supported and have more clarity around their roles.

The numbers at afterschool care have started increasing, following the down turn due to COVID -19. It has been fantastic to welcome back students who we haven't seen for a while. We are seeing a significant increase in numbers of children per day over August and September as life slowly starts to return to normal with parents returning to work. Due to the increase in numbers we had to then reassess our program for the week to cater to more children. Staff have been encouraged to produce an activity they would like to do to promote child engagement and child participation offering a range of activities that cater to all children with different interests.

We aim to continue to create a safe welcoming and supported environment for all that attend our service.



Long Day Care & Pre-School

The strength of the LDC and Preschool is in the excellent team of Child Educators, with Spring Lai at the head. Spring works tirelessly to provide an outstanding service to families. We aim to provide a safe, healthy and caring environment for children at an affordable price. We accept and value every child inclusive of all races, cultural backgrounds, religion, gender and abilities.

Individual interests are encouraged and we foster independence. We believe it is important to maintain on-going positive communication and relationships between staff, children, families, and community. Our ever popular and valued Long Day Care remains at the heart of our service. Many children who attend LDC go on to attend Out of School Hours Care at Crown St Public School. The continuity of care and the deep connection with the community is a source of great pride to Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre.



Surry Hills Market

The Surry Hills Market has been operating for over 30 years and has become an institution that most locals and visitors of Sydney know about. However, over the years there seems to be a new crowd of shoppers visiting the markets, which has revitalised the overall vibe at the markets.

The Markets has always been great for the whole community, with stalls full of treasure for all ages and plenty of sunny lawn and play equipment. Many people don't realize just how deep the community connection goes. Not only are the markets run by a close family team, this month the mother daughter element was stronger than ever – with at least six stalls run through mother daughter collaboration and half a dozen others where mum/daughters stopped by throughout the day to offer support. There is also a number of stalls run by siblings, partners, best friends and fur baby parents – because families of all shapes are always welcome in Surry Hills.

Connecting with community isn't the only important social aspect of coming here for stall holders. Asako reflected on how important the social element of the markets is, particularly after a year of isolation and separation. "If you're home all the time it's really depressing – with covid I hardly go out or see friends and family so this is really special, I meet so many different people."

"It's the community that keeps us coming back for years and years." Said Jemima "We just love spending time with the people, the other stall holders and the people who come every month to see us – it's our social time."

The effect of all the family influence on Surry Hills Markets is clear – whether it's chosen families or blood families, these connections have created a community that's so much more than the sum of its parts. We feel enriched by the love and laughter that's flowing between the stalls – it's filling a need that's especially vital during these isolating times – a sense of caring and connection much deeper than the euphoria of finding a bargain (though we do love that bit as well). Coupled with the abundance of friendly dogs and beautiful park, The Surry Hills Markets can feel like an oasis in the hurly burly of city life.



Surry Hills Festival 2020



Media Statement - 17 May, 2019

Surry Hills Festival takes a break in 2020!

The iconic and much loved inner city community festival, the Surry Hills Festival today announces it is taking a break for 2020.

A fantastic spring celebration of all there is to love about Surry Hills, last year's 2018 Surry Hills Festival was an enormous success, attended by an estimated 50,000 people, showcasing talents of over 200 musicians, hundreds of visual installations and performance artists and over 50 participating local venues, eateries, creative studios and businesses. An important program on Sydney's live music and creative industries calendar, the festival celebrates the vibrant culture, innovation and diversity of spirit for which Surry Hills is famous.

Produced for over 20 years by Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre (SHNC), funds raised through the festivals programs go towards important creative and community programs delivered by SHNC. The festival is important to the SHNC role in connecting communities, fostering well-being and opportunities for locals and creatives to flourish.

"Being produced and managed by a not-for-profit community centre, means the Festival is reliant on financial support and commitment from the community, be that government, businesses or individuals" said centre manager Gillian Elliott.

"With rising costs, and unexpected changes to key operational partners, Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre's board and management have made the difficult decision to postpone this year's Festival. The decision ensures no financial loss to the community and provides time to work with our team and partners towards future planning, negotiations and securing corporate, government and community partners..."

We're excited by the opportunities to partner with existing and new stakeholders and sponsors to deliver another fabulous Festival in 2020. This is a community event that highlights the diversity and creativity in and around Surry Hills ... an amazing creative Surry Hills Festival program that is renowned for showcasing fantastic live music, creativity and local business innovation in the heart of Surry Hills...

The board of SHNC would especially like to thank our long term partners for their ongoing support of Surry Hills Festival their support has been fundamental to ongoing success of the Festival to date." said spokesperson for the Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre, Gillian Elliott."

For further information please contact: Gillian Elliott, SHNC Centre Manager 02 9356 4977.



405 Crown St, Surry Hills NSW 2010
(02) 9356 4977
shnc.org

Our partners:

