

July 2024



# VOLUNTEERING STRATEGY

Early Support for Parents Inc.

Arranged by  
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF

# COUNTRY



Early Support for Parents acknowledge the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live, and pay respect to their continued care of and connection to, Country, Sea and Community.

Aboriginal people have been nurturing children here for thousands of years, and through our work we honour their endless love and wisdom.

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# INTRODUCTION

Early Support for Parents recognises that volunteers play a pivotal role in the delivery of our early intervention support services, serving as a cornerstone for fostering community engagement, providing foundational assistance to individuals in need, and promoting the overall well-being of society. Early intervention services are essential in identifying and addressing challenges faced by individuals at the onset of these issues, offering timely support to mitigate the impact of various issues such as mental health concerns, socio-economic disparities, and developmental delays. Volunteers contribute significantly to the effectiveness and sustainability of these services through their dedication, compassion, and diverse skill sets.

Early Support for Parents' Volunteering Strategy identifies and enhances volunteer's outreach efforts of early intervention programs by extending their reach into communities where formal services may face accessibility barriers. Their local knowledge, cultural sensitivity, and ability to establish trust enable them to connect with individuals who may otherwise remain underserved or marginalised. By bridging gaps in communication and understanding, volunteers facilitate the identification of at-risk individuals and ensure that support reaches those who need it most.

The Volunteering Strategy supports the broader organisational strategies, policies and procedures and feeds directly into Early Support for Parents Strategic Plan: Building a Resilient Future 2024-2026.

In 2024, it is well recognised at an organisational level, as well as a broader state and national levels that volunteering rates within the organisation, Tasmania and Australia are declining, and the type of volunteering is changing.

**Early Support for Parents is committed to a volunteering program that addresses these trends, and this strategy has been developed to ensure we are prepared to move forward with a well-recognised and effective volunteering program in the community we serve in Southern Tasmania.**



# BACKGROUND

Early intervention services play a crucial role in identifying and addressing challenges faced by individuals at the onset of various issues. Volunteers contribute significantly to the effectiveness and sustainability of these services.

Our Volunteering Strategy enhances outreach efforts by extending the reach of early intervention programs into communities facing accessibility barriers. Volunteers bridge communication gaps, establish trust, and ensure that support reaches those who need it most.

Despite the end of the COVID-era, there has been only a small recovery in volunteering rates and a reduction in overall hours volunteered. Early Support for Parents acknowledges that we are competing for volunteers at a time when competition is high. Our volunteer roles require a high level of commitment to the families we support and adherence to best practices, diversity, screening and governance requirements.

It is with these trends in mind that the Early Support for Parents Volunteering Strategy has been developed. We estimate that the number of volunteers needed will likely exceed the number of people willing to volunteer. This strategy aims to ensure that we move forward with a volunteering program that is well-recognised and serves the needs of our communities.

## POLICY CONTEXT



**Volunteering Tasmania - Safeguarding Volunteering Project**  
**Volunteering Tasmania - State of Volunteering Report Summary 2019**

**Volunteering Australia - National Strategy for Volunteering - 2023 to 2033**

## Vision for

# VOLUNTEERING

## VISION

To ensure active participation from all our volunteers, and create a positive *“Tasmanians Helping Tasmanians”* experience, enriching the lives of both volunteers and families.

## GOALS

- Empower all volunteers with a transferrable skill set.
- Create a positive and engaging experience for all volunteers.
- Develop and implement training to enhance the capabilities of volunteers.
- Build a strong volunteer network.

## FOCUS AREAS

**Demand for  
Volunteers**



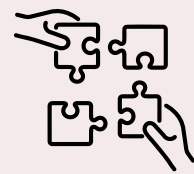
**Volunteer  
Reward and  
Recognition**



**Best Practice  
Volunteer  
Management**



**Communication  
and  
Collaboration**



# Objectives: Demand for Volunteers

Early Support for Parents covers the ten southern council municipalities of Tasmania. Volunteering Tasmania report that by 2030 there is predicted to be a 40% shortfall of volunteers volunteering for the roles available. This is on the back of research that a significant number of volunteers report a dis-satisfaction with volunteering, and burnout is frequently reported in the community services sector.

01

Create genuine roles supported by clearly defined position descriptions and policies and procedures that align volunteer roles with volunteers' skills, interests, and values to ensure they feel fulfilled and engaged in their work. By providing opportunities for volunteers to make a tangible impact and feel valued for their contributions, it enhances the prospect of volunteer satisfaction and retention.

02

Building strong relationships among volunteers and between volunteers and staff creates a supportive and inclusive environment where volunteers feel connected, safe and supported both within the organization and each other. This can be achieved through regular communication, and recognition programs that celebrate volunteers' achievements and foster camaraderie.

03

Retaining volunteers requires providing ongoing training and support to help volunteers succeed in their roles. This includes offering relevant skills development opportunities, resources, and guidance to empower volunteers to perform their duties effectively. Additionally, providing regular feedback, mentorship, and recognition for volunteers' efforts demonstrates the organisation's commitment to their growth and success, increasing their motivation to continue volunteering over the long term.

Key Actions

1. Develop a streamlined recruitment, onboarding and induction processes across the organisation that is flexible to individual volunteer needs.
2. Develop and implement volunteer feedback check in and feedback cycles to ensure volunteers are feel safe and supported, and processes to address when volunteers are not feeling safe and supported.
3. Develop and implement a best practice volunteer recognition program utilising cross function input of staff and experienced volunteers.

# Objectives: Volunteer Reward and Recognition

Volunteer reward and recognition is a critical part to effective volunteer management. A well-developed plan is an effective way to demonstrate gratitude while recognising the valuable contributions of volunteers. A reward and recognition plan is critical because it improves psychosocial and job satisfaction outcomes, improves the mood of volunteers leading to increased productivity, boosts engagement, reduces turnover and improves the organisations reputation and image as a volunteer organisation.



**01** Improve support to volunteers from both staff and members of the Board to support the delivery of timely, consistent, and quality support.

**02** Improve productivity, effectiveness and reduce turnover of volunteers by recognising volunteers in a timely and appropriate way; increasing greater engagement and commitment to the organisation with higher quality work and efficiency.

**03** Develop a reward and recognition program that volunteers engage with, is culturally safe and appropriate and that the volunteer benefits from, that is actively implemented by the governing body and management alongside staff.

## Key Actions

1. Assign resources to train and develop staff who lead and supervise volunteers.
2. Resource the development and implementation of a volunteer reward and recognition program.
3. Allocate quarantined funds to develop a reward and recognition program that includes onboarding incentives, recognition throughout the volunteering journey and group recognition programs.



# Objectives: Best Practice Volunteer Management

The National Standards for Volunteer Management provides best practice guidelines for volunteer management.

Strengthening the quality and effectiveness of Early Support for Parents volunteer management will shape the future of volunteering with Early Support for Parents and provide solid foundations to measure the effectiveness of the volunteering program.



- 01 A demonstrated improvement in the governance, leadership, and volunteer program performance.
- 02 A measured improvement in volunteer work performance and satisfaction levels within volunteer roles.
- 03 Increased opportunities to innovate.
- 04 Build the support, safety and capabilities of the volunteers.

## Key Actions

1. Establish appropriate governance structure to promote effective decision making and oversight of the volunteering strategy.
2. Develop an evaluation and reporting framework to measure the Volunteer Strategy framework.
3. Develop a streamlined training program that offers fixed training/workshops for volunteers.
4. Implement polices that address the eight National Volunteering Best Practice volunteering standards.

# Objectives:

## Communication and Collaboration

A strong and sustainable volunteer workforce relies on quality communication and collaboration.

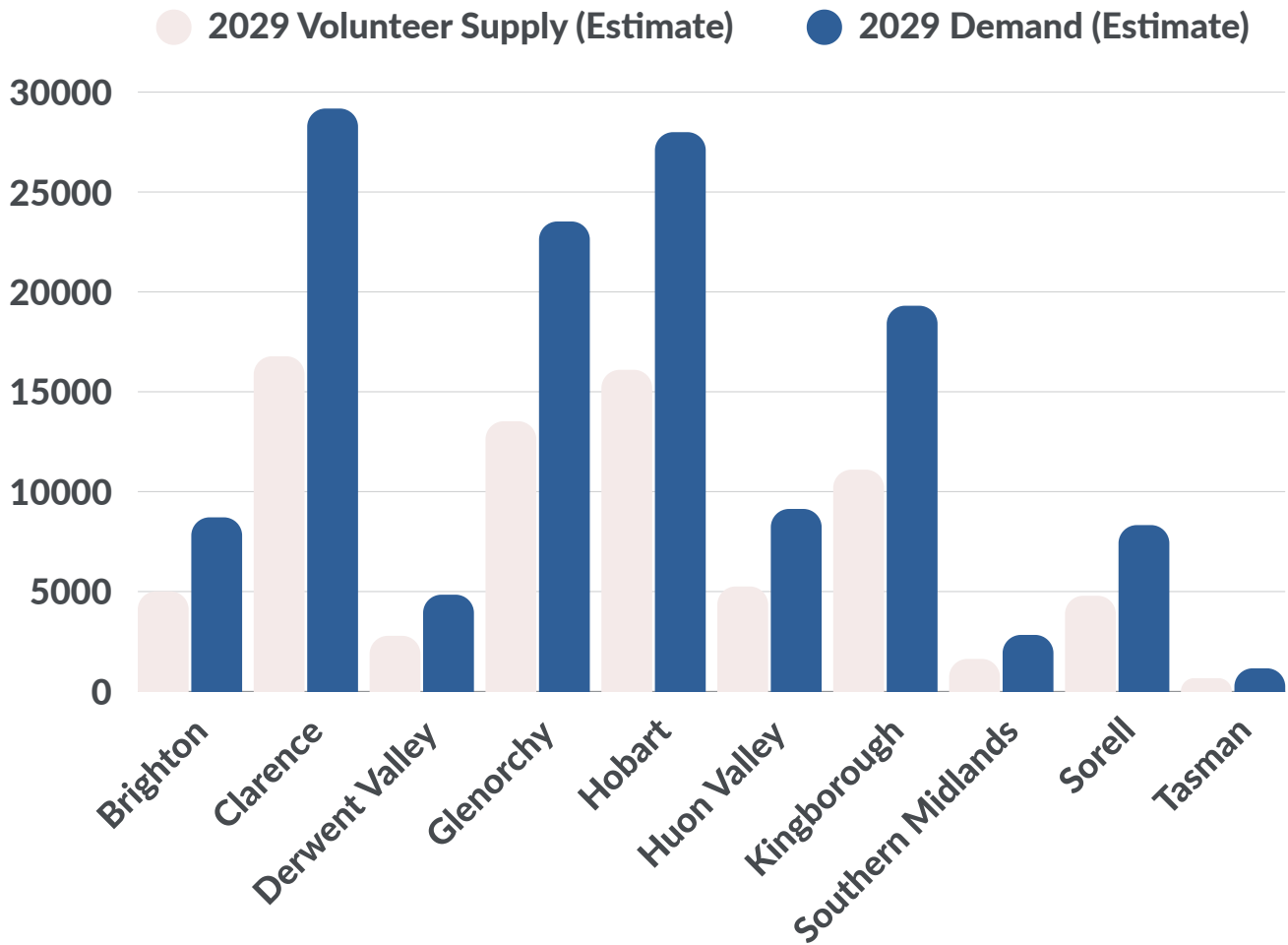
- 01** Increased access to timely and relevant information in a way which is accessible and useable to the volunteer workforce.
- 02** Automate basic and regular communications.
- 03** Stronger and more connected volunteering internal network.

### Key Actions

1. Develop and refine core volunteering information relevant to the roles within ESP.
2. Review the use of online platforms to engage with, train, inform and communicate with ESP volunteers.

# Volunteer Supply versus Demand

DATA



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