

CHIPS 2017 WRAPPER

CHRONIC
ILLNESS
PEER
SUPPORT

E M P O W E R I N G Y O U N G P E O P L E



Liz Dixon Award



Liz Dixon was an inspiring participant of the ChIPS Program. Liz's courage, positive attitude to life, joyous spirit and commitment to those she cared about will be forever remembered by the ChIPS community. To keep her memory and love of the ChIPS Wrapper and arts alive, we created The Liz Dixon Wrapper Award for Creative Arts. This is awarded to the ChIPS member with the best creative submission into the magazine.

Previous winners:

- 2017 Winner – Emily Wickham
- 2016 Winner – Jessica Curgenvin
- 2015 Winner – Tash Payne
- 2014 Winner – Beth Sleeman
- 2013 Winner – Sarah Menta
- 2012 Winner – Jemma Young
- 2010/2011 Winner – Jessica Marshall
- 2009 Winner – Geri Herd
- 2008 Winner – Scott Campbell
- 2007 Winner – Karen Lay
- 2006 Winner – Louise Pellegrino
- 2005 Winner – Elisha Mont

**ChIPS isn't just about chronic illness.
It's about being an adolescent and getting
on with life.**

ChIPS aims:

- To continue to provide ChIPS members with opportunities to interact with peers who have a similar understanding about life with a chronic illness.
- To provide ChIPS members with the opportunity to develop and utilise skills, such as leadership and peer support, and raise self confidence through opportunities provided within the program
- To provide ChIPS members with the skills and confidence to increase their ability to deal with life with a chronic illness
- To provide ChIPS members with the opportunity to actively raise awareness in our community, not just about ChIPS but about living with a chronic illness



Contact ChIPS at:

The Royal Children's Hospital
50 Flemington Road
Parkville, 3052
Ph: (03) 9345 6616
www.rch.org.au/chips

Chris Balnaves Award



Chris Balnaves (Bellsy) was an amazing ChIPS member. He joined ChIPS in 1997, and shortly after it proved impossible to find anybody who didn't know him, or at least know of him! Chris was once said to be the heart of the ChIPS community, attending all the social events and reference committee meetings he could, whilst always making the effort to introduce himself to new people and befriend as many Chippers as possible.

One of the highlights for Chris was the annual ChIPS camp, which he took delight in organizing and participating in. Chris won the first ever Walsh Perpetual Trophy and proved to be a very competitive team leader, trying his hardest at every camp to win it back. Unfortunately, we had to say goodbye to Chris as he passed away in 2003.

The Chris Balnaves Award for Most Outstanding Camper was created to honour and remember Chris for who he was, and his dedicated contribution to ChIPS and the spirit of the program. Chris was an amazing and inspiring person who will always be remembered and truly missed.

Previous winners:

- 2017 Winner – Natasha Payne
- 2016 Winner – Emily Ryan
- 2015 Winner – Laura Gysslink
- 2014 Winner – Tyrone Kelly
- 2013 Winner – Eliza Masterson
- 2012 Winner – Jemma Young
- 2011 Winner – James Williams
- 2010 Winner – Jordan Hammond
- 2009 Winner – Scott Campbell
- 2008 Winner – Stacy Cumming
- 2007 Winner – Louise Pellegrino
- 2006 Winner – Bree Regester
- 2005 Winner – Andrew Selvaggi

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WELCOME

Welcome to ChIPS

This has been a big year for ChIPS and new ChIPPERS with September camp being populated by more new ChIPPERS than senior ChIPPERS. On behalf of the Publications committee we would like to welcome all the new ChIPPERS that either attended 8-week group or an intensive. It is amazing seeing all the new faces in ChIPS and we can't wait to see what the future holds for each and every one of you.

We would also love to welcome the new volunteers, nurses and doctors! Without you our amazing camps wouldn't be able to go ahead, and we are so grateful for everything you do for all of us.

So, without further ado, welcome to ChIPS!

CHIPPERS

Aaliyah Lopez-Ceballos	Emily Cocks
Chithic Machar	Kane Harper
Shannon O'Halloran	Abanob Nosair
Meryn Kapaufs	Hayley Craggill
Jamie McKie	Mollie Mullane
Jordyn Sumner	Melissa Price
Alycia Camilleri	Bryley Towns
Katie Verde	Mya Irving
Miranda Harrison	Ricky Ellul
Sera Whatarau	Massimo Cavoli
Victor Obi	Kasey Driscoll
Gypsy-mae Munro	Cameron Bajada
Kyle Bajada	Jarryd Mudd
Riley Tatham	Adam Sleman
Acacia Beck-Carter	Caitlin Howley

VOLUNTEERS AND MEDICAL STAFF

Stacey Cummings (volunteer)	Lisa Griffiths (nurse)
Paul O'Brien (volunteer)	Ashley Alexander (doctor)

Meagan's Musings



Yet another year is coming to a close and again I am delighted to report on a year at ChIPS where we continued to run all aspects of the program with passion, dedication and excellent results. ChIPS is a success because of the tireless efforts of so many people. One of the many things that makes ChIPS so unique and special is the community aspect and collaborative approach that we adopt. There are many different people and departments that all work together that makes ChIPS work. I am going to focus these musings on thanking all the different people involved in running this amazing program.

Firstly, thank you to the ChIPPERS. You teach us and inspire us. Thank you next to the ChIPPERS parents and guardians, you bring them to all the events (until they can bring themselves!) so that they can participate and connect.

Next, I want to acknowledge all the older ChIPPERS, reference committee members and the peer leaders. You are the essence of ChIPS. It's the dedication, passion, support and inclusiveness that you display that are all strong values in the ChIPS program.

Then there is our ever-growing team of volunteers, mentors and medical staff. Some of our volunteers have been involved for over 10 years, others have just joined the crew this year. You all make an incredible contribution to the program and without you we could not offer all the experiences we do nor the support.

I want to acknowledge our departmental support, in particular our head of the Department of Adolescent Health, Associate Professor Michelle Telfer and Administrative Coordinator, Shantelle Hendy. Thank you also to our RCH Executive for the ongoing support of the ChIPS program.

ChIPS is 100% philanthropically funded and without the support and dedication of the RCH Foundation we would not be able to provide this fabulous service. Thank you to the entire team who support us financially. In addition, the ChIPS fundraising subcommittee, made up of ChIPS participants raised over \$4000 this year. And thanks to Dr Mick Creati who rode 4000km and raised over \$17000 for ChIPS camps. We are very grateful to all the ChIPS financial supporters.

And finally, I want to acknowledge and thank my two fabulous colleagues Harry and Bec. You make working in the "ChOffice" just that little bit more fun.

Thank you to the publications team for creating an amazing Wrapper this year. Under the leadership of Brooke Dance the team, Inga, Ayan, Kaitlyn, Haylee and mentor Jordan have done an amazing job.

So, here's to the next year.

Meagan

Harry's Highlights

What a great year it's been, jumping into the program as a staff member with my partner in crime MamaBec, and our fearless leader Meagan has been an absolute pleasure and joy. 2017 has been a year of firsts for me with many highlights and grateful moments. My first Jan Camp was so much fun, the competition was fierce, the lip sync battles were next level and the award and goodbye ceremony on the last day was very special. Can't wait to see what the Camp Committee have install for us in Jan 2018.

I also got along to my first 8-week groups and intensives, it has been wonderful meeting the new ChIPPERS coming into the program and I have been blown away by the courage and openness displayed during the sessions. It's been fantastic seeing the peer leaders in action as they helped me facilitate the groups, I felt really supported and the work you guys do for your fellow ChIPPERS is amazing.



My first year on Ref Comm (otherwise known as Reference Committee) has shown me how much work goes on behind the scenes to make everything happen. Thank you to all Ref Commers (mentors and ChIPPERS) for making 2017 epic.

We had the mad Doctor - Mick Creati ride his bike across the country raising money for ChIPS, 4000km in 20 days, amazing stuff!!! The Fundraising Committee supported Micks ride with a hilarious Bogan Bingo night and another awesome Bunnings sausage sizzle, way to go folks! It's been fun working with the Socials Committee, the Amazing Race and Movie Night socials had great numbers... the controversy surrounding the movie selection created some quality banter, well done to all involved.

Another definite highlight was flying to Sydney with the Advocacy crew to present at the H.E.L.P Conference. Zoe, Shaelee, Montana and Emily W were just amazing and can be very proud of how they represented the ChIPS community.

Our first ever ChIPS-Chats and 4 Week Group were another highlight, it was a pleasure to be a part of so many inspiring, open and honest conversations.

The ChIPS Holiday Vacation was another great success, great to see a bunch of first time campers getting involved and joining the ChIPS community... I had some serious belly laughs during the skits, so much fun. I'd like to mention the incredible work of the medical staff and volunteers, it was the first time I've seen a camp organised from start to finish and you all went above and beyond, thank you.

One other special mention... memes have really become a feature of the Facebook group and have made me laugh on an almost daily basis... thank you to our MemeTeam... you know who you are. With so many great things happening this year I can't wait to see what 2018 brings.

Harry

Bec's Blog

Wow, what a year! So much has happened I don't know where to start! Since Harry and I became ChIPS Facili and Tator in late 2016 it feels like life kicked into overdrive. 2017 began with another amazing Jan camp where I got to run the archery activity. It was really lovely seeing you all come through and watching everyone's archery skills grow (including mine!). I was impressed with how many bull's-eyes we saw, and although there were lots of chicken nugget points thankfully no one actually hit a chicken! Unfortunately, though, as with every Jan Camp, we had to say goodbye to some good friends who were turning 25. Jan camp is always a bit of an emotional rollercoaster but this time the goodbye's hit me a little harder than they have in the past. It's only natural that the closer I get to you all, the more I will miss you. I guess it's just something that I will have to get used to because you guys are going to be stuck with me for a long while yet!



So how do I wrap up the rest of the year? It's been jam packed full of firsts for me, in so many ways. I've met and assessed heaps of new chippers, I've organised and run Intensives and 8 Week Groups, and as a program we've introduced ChIPS ChATS and the all-new 4 Week Group, all of which I have thoroughly enjoyed being part of. And by all reports so have you guys. I'm happy to say that ChIPS ChATS and 4 Week Group will both be running again in 2018 and beyond. Some more firsts, I met Dazza and a few other Bogans and called bingo for the first time, I cooked about a billion sausages with Jano, and flew to Sydney to watch some amazingly inspirational talks at the HELP conference, you guys should be so proud, you rocked!

I'd like to give a big shout out to all the peer leaders who have helped with so many events this year too, you guys play such an important role in the program and you all do it very well. We'd never be able to run all the events that we do without your support, so thank you!

And just to finish off, I'd like to say a huge thank you to all of the fab ChIPS community, the volunteers, Meagan and Harry, but especially the ChIPPERS. You guys are all awesome, you make my job fun, interesting, sometimes challenging but always inspiring and I love coming to work. See you all next year.

Mama Bec

REFERENCE COMMITTEE

Chairperson's Report

Reference Committee is the back bone of ChIPS and is true to the philosophy of the program: By ChIPpERS (Chronic Illness Peer Support – Education, Recreation and Social) for ChIPpERS. It is a great opportunity for those who have been around in the program for a few years and are ready, willing and able; to give back to the program that has given them so much. Reference Committee meets monthly and is comprised of 5 committees: Advocacy, Camp, Fundraising, Publications and Socials.

Now why I am telling you all of this? Well this year I had the pleasure, responsibility and occasional challenge of being elected as the chair, I suggest that I became chair through my promise of bringing Haigh's chocolate frogs to meetings (which I did deliver on), however there was probably more to it than that. It was a great year for Reference Committee and I have been honoured to be chair. However, I could not and by no stretch of the imagination would have been able to lead without a wonderful team, to collaborate with.

I will dedicate the rest of my word limit to thank the people who made Reference Committee and ChIPS more broadly possible for 2017. A sincere thank you to the ChIPS staff Bec, Harry & Meagan, who are all first timers to Reference Committee in their new roles, what a wonderful job you have done, thank you for all that you do which is seen and unseen. Thanks to the mentors (the regulars and the newcomers), we are grateful for the guidance you have given us. To the subcommittee leaders, thanks for keeping your committees on track, and leading your group collaboratively. Thanks to the ChIPS members who attended and contributed to the committee. I would like to especially thank 'W' the Secretary for her dedication to efficiently and clearly record the minutes for our meetings, Inga as Deputy Chair; who did a sterling job chairing the May meeting, Tash who was Deputy Secretary and Emily R who both stepped up by helping to write minutes wherever it was needed.

I hope to continue to see Reference Committee grow, and flourish. If you are interested in joining talk to the staff, peer leaders or volunteers.

I share the view that many of you probably have; reports can be so boring, so I have tried to keep this one brief and semi interesting. In my new job, I have been trying to figure out how to make the reports informative but 'Zakish' (highly technical term) in nature, so as I do with the reports for the Church I work for I will end with an inspirational and relevant quote (hopefully). I feel this quote is relevant to those with a Chronic Illness as our health has a habit of throwing a spanner in the works. It has helped me through my health turmoils and my life more broadly: *"When plan A does not work, remember there are 25 more letters in the alphabet."*

Sincerely
Zak



REFERENCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

REF
COMM



H: = HOBBY
Q: = QUOTE



MEAGAN HUNT
**CHIPS PROGRAM
MANAGER**

H: Sewing

Q: "Follow your bliss."



HARRY BROWN
PHISLOTATOR

H: Music making

Q: "In the end, I'm a
monkey writing songs
and playing the guitar."



BEC/MAMA BEC

REBECCA POWERS
**PUBS AND CAMP
MENTOR**

H: Painting

Q: "Feel the fear, and
do it anyway."



REFERENCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

REF COMM

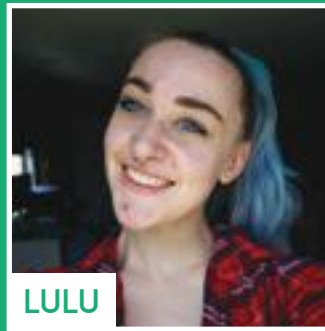


TANA

MONTANA ALBON
ADVOCACY
H: Netball
Q: "K.K"



NICOLE BATTAMS
SOCIALS
Q: "If Britney can make it through 2007, I can make it through today."



LULU

LAURA CARTLEDGE
CAMP
H: Hooping
Q: "Expect nothing, appreciate everything."

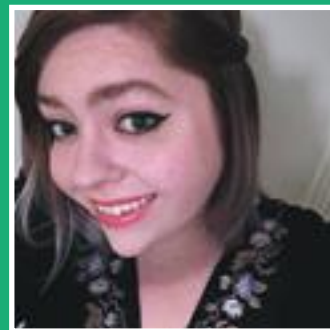


RACH

RACHAEL CLARK
FUNDRAISING
H: Watching Wentworth
Q: "Giving up is never an option."



JAKE CUNNINGHAM
CAMP
H: Playing video games, producing high quality memes
Q: "Bless the rains down on Africa." -Toto



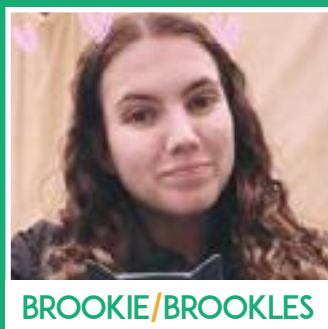
BROOKE DANCE
PUBLICATIONS
H: Hanging out with my cats
Q: "I'm just a simple man trying to make my way in the Universe."



PATRICK EDWARDS
CAMP
H: Make-up
Q: "No matter what, always remember your own beauty."



LAURA GYSSLINK
CAMP
H: Going out for brunch
Q: "A smooth sea never made a skilled sailor."



BROOKIE/BROOKLES

BROOKE HALL
SOCIALS
H: Aerobics and dancing
Q: "Laughter is the best medicine"



ZAK HANYN
ADVOCACY
H: Cooking
Q: be kind to one another ~ Ephesians 4:32



TY KELLY
CAMP
H: Guitar
Q: "In ChIPS we trust"



HAYLEE LESTER
PUBLICATIONS
H: Make-up
Q: "Good things come in small packages."



REFERENCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS



JULES

JULIA LUDBROOK
SOCIALS

H: swimming and hanging out with friends
Q: "A person's a person, no matter how small."
- Dr. Seuss



TINA NELSON
FUNDRAISING

H: Dancing



ZOE PARRY
ADVOCACY

H: Netball
Q: "Pain is temporary, but quitting lasts forever."



TASH

NATASHA PAYNE
FUNDRAISING

H: Wednesday lunch with grandma
Q: "Relax."



INGA PIENIAZEK
PUBLICATIONS

H: Drawing
Q: "Life is short, buy the Copic markers"



SHAELEE PRESTON
ADVOCACY

H: Make-up
Q: "Big things come in small packages."



EMILY RYAN
SOCIALS

H: Cooking
Q: "When you loose, don't loose the lesson."



AIMEE SCANLAN
FUNDRAISING

H: Dancing
Q: "You do you."



SCHURMATOR

KAITLYN SCHURMANN
PUBLICATIONS

H: Cycling



BREE WORDEN
SOCIALS

H: Fishing for compliments
Q: "We need to be more hyped for this."



W.EM

EMILY WIKHAM
ADVOCACY

H: Photography, Netflix
Q: "Sardonic humour is just my way to the world."



AYANIE

AYAN XUSEN
PUBLICATIONS

H: Watching 'Grey's Anatomy'
Q: "Laughing makes everything better."

2017 IN REVIEW

January Camp

Jan Camp is always a blast but this year it was particularly special to me because I was lucky enough to be able to be a part of the camp committee which was alongside Meagan and the rest of our squad in the committee to help organise and run the Camp! Seeing everyone enjoying themselves and the smiles on their faces made all the blood sweat and tears organising the camp so worth it! This year Camp was at the new and improved Cave Hill Creek with a beautiful back area we used a lot of due to the weather being amazing! We did heaps of activities such as raft building, skits, flying fox and crafts!



On the last note, thank you to all the team involved and cannot wait to see what next Jan Camp brings! Until next time!

Emily Ryan

September Camp

Another fantastic September camp happened, watching everyone's excited faces as I got on the bus and waiting for the adventures to start! It is always lovely to see so many new ChIPPERS come along and enjoy themselves, time flew by with so many memories to remember. Thanks for another great camp, I hope to see you all on Jan camp :)

Julia Ludbrook x



2017 IN REVIEW

MUMPS

In March of 2017, three of us from the advocacy subcommittee were given the opportunity to speak to the Melbourne University Medics Paediatrics Society. We spoke to around fifty pre-graduate medical students about our chronic illness “journeys”. Alongside me, I had Zak and Bec (on Zoe’s behalf) speaking from a patient’s perspective. As well as a young woman, Melissa. She suffers from Cystic Fibrosis and is now a doctor at the Austin Hospital, she spoke from both a doctor and a patient’s perspective. She was such a kind, inspirational girl and I’m so thankful I had the privilege of meeting her. To this day, I am still amazed by all of us – public speaking alone is extremely terrifying and when you add talking about a very personal subject such as your illness it can become a lot scarier. The stories I heard were exceptional and eye opening, all so different but in many ways the same. The main purpose of the presentation was to of course shed light on our personal experiences as patients from bad hospital food to my favourite nurses Emily and Riley, and of course ChIPS, don’t worry I told them how great you all are! This was an amazing experience and I’m so thankful to have been given the opportunity to speak. There is one lesson I learnt and I would like to pass it onto you, one word and one word only, BELIEVE. That’s right, believe in yourself, never in a million years did I think I would accomplish something like this, but I did and I know each of you could too, they seemed keen to have ChIPS back again someday!



Emily W

Sailing Trip

On the 3rd of April 6 chippers and 1 volunteer got the chance to go on a sailing trip with jubilee sailing trust on a boat called tenacious overnight. There was about 55 of us in total. On the first day, we met up at 8am in the morning, we boarded the boat at 8:20am and we did all the training and left at 11:00am. We learnt how to set sails and steer the boat. Every group had night watch. On night watch, we had to keep an eye on the gears, archer and temperatures. Everyone had a go at climbing up the side of the boat, I got all the way up to where we had to contact and climbed back down. It was a really good trip and I would do it again if we get the chance to do it again



Tina

2017 IN REVIEW

Run for the Kids

Yay! My first run for the kids, wait a minute... Really Melbourne? Stormy weather? Ugh. Oh well, that didn't stop us CHIPPERS or at least 7 of us. The EXTREMELY early morning (keyword: extremely), started with lots of Instagram pictures, Laura G's famous boomerangs and freezing our butts off, one things for sure us sick kids hate rain but it was totally worth it! We headed off the starting line, there was lots of uplifting music, happy, motivated people and a few sweaty ones too. ...3..2..1 GO! And we all raced off, scooting on wheelchairs, dancing, wheeling and walking in true ChIPS style. Once we reached the 1.7km domain tunnel *inserts terrified emoji*, we realised our team was all broken up. But it's okay we reunited once the run was over! I was relieved when there was a light at the end of the tunnel, and no not hypothetically, literally. We continued our little stroll in the rain, it was quite refreshing after all. It was amazing seeing the thousands of people that turned up despite the weather just to support our beloved hospital, there's no doubt that this will become a yearly tradition of mine. Especially considering we headed off to Grill'd and boost juice afterwards! I highly encourage as many of you to come next year.

Emily W



Amazing Race Social

The first social of the year was the Amazing Race held around the Royal Children's Hospital during Term One. It consisted of tasks like tearing Minty wrappers, decoding clues, counting money stacks, doing word searches and other fun challenges.

I was on Georgia's team and we ended up winning – mainly because we got off to such a flying start. We fell away a bit in the middle but made it up with the final challenge. Four teams took part, followed by refreshments and a great chat, as usual when a bunch of Chippers get together. Thank you to the social committee for organising the event. Everyone had a blast!

Laura C



2017 IN REVIEW

ChIPS ChATS

On the 19th May, a group of ChIPPERS came together to attend 'ChIPS Chats' - a space where ChIPPERS can discuss topics of interest or concern within a safe environment. ChIPS Chats was initially created to meet the needs of ChIPPERS, who wanted a laid-back discussion group, where they could discuss certain topics, eat yummy food, and meet with others they don't get to see often. Prior to the meeting, attendees were encouraged to think of some ideas or questions they would like to ask during the discussion. There was even an anonymous question space for those that wanted to ask a particular question, but didn't feel comfortable to do so! The topic of this meeting was based around relationships of all kinds. We began the session by creating a brainstorm as a group about the diverse types of relationships that can exist between ourselves and others. This even extended to relationships we have with animals, and lastly, the relationships we have with ourselves — be it negative or positive. While many ChIPPERS came along to listen, there were also many courageous ChIPPERS who brought up topics that had the potential to be controversial and scatter the room in opinion. However, in true ChIPS style, everyone was more than willing to share ideas, coping skills and mechanisms, as well as safe ideas on how to deal with the situations ChIPPERS were sharing. I have no doubt that ChIPS Chats has had a positive effect on the ChIPPERS that have attended so far, as we have all had the opportunity to get things off our shoulders in a safe environment, as well as get to know each other on another level. Thanks, Bec for starting the initiative!

Tash

Movie Night Social

In the July school holidays, the ChIPPERS had their second social for the year, the Incredibles movie night! This movie night was a huge success where existing ChIPPERS met our new 8-week group and intensive members. Leading up to the social a lot of healthy banter contributed to ensuring that High School Musical would not be played on the night and a more empowering 'teen' movie (the Incredibles) would prove worthy.



But then again there is always next year.... we've heard some intel that a preceding HMS movie might top the charts next year! But until then, how would ChIPPERS compare this social to others previous? Chip-tastically! 10/10 to the socials committee.

Bree

2017 IN REVIEW



2017 IN REVIEW



2017 IN REVIEW

Leadership Training

This year's leadership training took place on the 9th of July and it was heaps of fun. We started off with a presentation from special guest Emma Gee who gave an inspirational talk and was really empowering. The theme for this year's leadership training was resume writing and the whole process of job applications. It was extremely informative and helpful because we learnt what was important to put into our resumes/cover letters and what we absolutely shouldn't through examples of 'bad' resumes and 'good' resumes. We also did an activity where we role played a job interview so that we can have some experience in being asked any question and to also help ease any nerves we might have about interviews. Overall, it was a fun, educational day and I think we can all agree that we learnt heaps!



Ayan

Bogan Bingo

During the month of August, Dr Mick Creati rode his bike across the Nullarbor to raise money for ChIPS. To support Dr Mick and his ride, myself and the fundraising committee decided to host a Bogan Bingo night on September 8th, to help add to the \$20,000 goal that Dr Mick had. The night was a success! There was food, both regular and gluten free supplied by Emily, drinks, a raffle and even a silent auction! After everyone arrived in their bogan wear, we got straight into playing our first game of Bingo. We played the regular version with Harry and Mama Bec taking turns to call out the numbers. Then we played Bogan Bingo, one game with Bogan movies and the other with Bogan songs. After each game the winner won a prize. By far I think that Meagan (Kim) and Mama Bec's (Kath) costumes were the best, they brought comedy to an amazing night. We ended the night by drawing the raffle, with Jordo winning probably half of the prizes. What a Lucky Duck! There were some truly amazing prizes too, ranging from signed AFL footballs and posters, to lush vouchers and perfumes. In total, we raised just under \$2,000 to go towards Dr Micks ride, which for me was an amazing feat for my first fundraiser with the fundraising committee and the ChIPS program. I just want to thank everyone that attended and helped make it a fun night, especially Dr Mick who came and played some bingo even though he was missing the Richmond game. Dr Mick in total raised just over \$15,000 for ChIPS, Congratulations Dr Mick.



Aimee Scanlan

2017 IN REVIEW

ChIPS Tunes

This year has been another massive one for tunes, my final year being involved so I'm glad we went out with a bang. The structure was mostly the same this time around, starting off the year with fortnightly sessions and then term 2 building up weekly to our time in the studio.

In May, we were able to record two completely original songs working with Trevor again for the second year running. Big thanks to Hannah again and Harry for coming in each week. And of course, it goes without saying but Meagan for not only another successful year, but for getting me involved in the first place. Some great memories over the years I will miss it dearly. Hope to hear things continue next year, highly recommend it for anyone who is yet to go along to a session.

Ty

8 Week Group

Led by Zak and myself along with Harry and Meagan, our 8-week group for term 1 was an absolute blast! We painted masks, played games, and discussed issues like bullying, missing out, hospitals, and coping techniques. A shoutout to Harry for doing an awesome job running his first 8-week group, and a huge ChIPS welcome to Aaliyah, Chithic, Emily C, Kane, Shannon and Abanob! It's been fantastic to see some of you already so involved in the program, we hope to keep seeing you around in the future.

Laura G

Intensive

Intensives are designed like our 8 week groups, but rather than being over 8 weeks, it's squished into two days, for those that have to travel long distances to help expand our borders to the wider ChIPS community! On the 5th & 6th of April, ChIPS opened its arms and welcomed 7 new ChIPPERS into the program over two days during the intensive. We participated in discussions surrounding some of the biggest challenges and issues we face in our day to day lives, while also playing quirky name games to help build friendships and to keep the mood positive! The group was very passionate in discussions, and made things quite easy to talk about which took a lot of pressure off the peer leaders and staff running it. Helping to run this (being my first intensive as a peer leader) was hugely satisfying for me personally, and I feel as if along with the new ChIPPERS I learnt a huge amount over the two days we spent together! It was such a blast to spend time with spritely new ChIPPERS and it's been fantastic to see them at ChIPS events since they completed their intensive, and hopefully see them on many more!

Jake Cunningham

HELP Conference

Our journey to the HELP conference in Sydney started long before September; Lesh came to us with this crazy yet exciting idea that we could present at a national conference run by Ronald McDonald. If we wanted to present, then we needed to send in an abstract to the organizers and hopefully get selected. Then we got the good news back that Montana would be presenting by herself and that Shaelee, Montana, Emily and I would be presenting along with Harry and Bec. But we had to work out how the four of us would get to Sydney... We decided to fundraise our way there, and through the generosity of family and friends we raised enough money for flights, accommodation and anything needed while we were in Sydney.

The first day was filled with key note speakers and presenters, included in this was Montana and the ChIPS presentation. Both presentations went off without a hitch and were very informative. Montana spoke about her own experiences with a chronic illness and going through the education system at the same time. The ChIPS presentation was about how peer support helps young people with chronic illnesses, there were lots of personal stories from all four chippers to help give a greater understanding. On the second day, I got the chance to be on a panel filled with a health professional, mothers, a teacher and another young person with an illness. This panel allowed us all to have a say in how the education system and health care system work together for the young people. It was an absolute privilege to be able to take part in this and have Jenny Brockie interview us.

The feedback from all presentations was outstanding and continued over both days. Health professionals, teachers, intentional organizations and other speakers all were thrilled to hear personal anecdotes and about how ChIPS provides something for us all that we otherwise wouldn't have gotten.

On behalf of the four Chippers I would like to thank Lesh for getting us involved with this wonderful opportunity, Harry and Bec for letting us speak with you and Meagan for helping us prepare before we went.

Many thanks, Zoe Parry



SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Advocacy Committee

This year I had the privilege of being a part of advocacy again. We began with new idea to get more referrals and to get ChIPS out there. This involved doing many informational talks to different wards around the Royal Children's Hospital, giving talks to different groups of health care professionals and doing ward rounds. We also got the opportunity to talk at the national HELP conference held in Sydney. Each and every one of us gained skills through working with advocacy, whether it was excelling in public speaking, thinking outside the box or becoming more social. Thank-you to the members Zak, Montana, Shaelee and Emily for making 2017 an enjoyable year in advocacy.

Many thanks, Zoe Parry.

MENTOR THANK YOU

I think it's safe to say we have had a very successful year with a total of 15 presentations! And none of this would have been possible without our dedicated mentors Lesh and Juzzy. You guys are absolutely amazing people and have definitely made our time on the reference committee memorable, we've had many good times. We are so thankful for all of the time you have put in helping us with getting ChIPS out into the world. Thank you for all the valuable life lessons we have been taught. Hopefully we can work together again sometime soon.

From, the advocacy crew (Emily W, Montana, Shaelee, Zoe and Zak)

Publications Committee

This year, the Publications committee was once again tasked with organising the ChIPS wrapper! The committee this year was Ayan, Haylee, Inga, Kaitlyn and myself and we had heaps of fun! Initially, we examined last year's wrapper and thought about what we could do. We choose a cover photo (from all the amazing submissions!), decide on a colour scheme, choose the 2017 winner for the Liz Dixon award, chased up and edited articles and finally made sure we submitted everything on time. I think it's safe to say that we did well and we had a great time throughout!

Brooke!

MENTOR THANK YOU

This year we had the pleasure of having Jordy and Bec as our mentors! Thank you for all your input and support this year and for allowing all of us to be comfortable in sharing our ideas and providing a fun and happy environment for us to grow in. You have always been open to lending us a hand when needed and answering any questions - big or small that we had and we are eternally grateful. We have had an absolute blast this year and it is no doubt because of you. Many thanks and lots of love,

Ayan, Brooke, Haylee, Inga and Kaitlyn.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Camp Committee

What a fun and productive year we've had on camp committee! Ty, Laura, Pat, Jake and myself have been working all year to plan January camp. Some of the roles of camp committee have included: booking a camp site, choosing a theme for the camp, organising the party, designing the t-shirts, making the timetables, activity sheets and certificates/awards, deciding how the scoring will work and much more. We've had a blast working together with the help of our mentors Jess and Bec, and we are so excited about camp coming up!

Laura G!

MENTOR THANK YOU

Dear Jess,

It has been an absolute pleasure working with you on camp committee! You have guided us with your experience and wisdom to help us plan the best camp possible. Thank you for allowing us to explore our own ideas while still supporting us when needed. I am so thankful to have had you as a mentor for two years in a row, and I have learned so much from you. We've all had a blast this year and enjoyed all the laughs and fun times at ref, and on the road trips to camp sites. Can't wait for camp, it's going to be awesome!

Love from Laura G, Laura C, Ty, Jake and Patty.

Dear Bec,

Your creative mind and ability to think outside of the box has been an invaluable addition to our camp committee team. You often offer a different perspective which has allowed us to develop more interesting and practical ideas. Knowing you're there if we need help has taken so much stress off the whole camp preparation, thank you for your support. Thanks also for all the fun times and jokes, camp meetings are always enjoyable with you there!

Love from Laura G, Laura C, Ty, Jake and Patty.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Fundraising Committee

For the Fundraising committee, 2017 was filled with a combination of both new and familiar ventures, allowing the committee to not only support ChIPS financially, but also offer unique and exciting events that ChIPPERS could attend.

One particular highlight of the year was working with Dr Mick Creati, who is a Paediatrician at the Royal Children's Hospital. Mick rode his recumbent bicycle from Perth to Sydney in the hopes of raising \$20,000 for ChIPS. Alone, Mick was able to raise close to \$18,000. As Mick's ride was so significant, in not only the man power it took him to ride such a long distance, but also that anyone would be willing to do that for our program, the fundraising committee decided that the rest of our events for the year would be added to Mick's tally.

Bogan Bingo went off without a hitch, and saw over 50 ChIPPERS, their family and friends, as well as hospital employees dress in their best bogan outfit and enjoy a night of fun. While the stress and chaos leading up to the event made us question what we were doing, raising close to \$2,000 made it all worth it. After much success in 2015, our final fundraising venture of 2017 was a Bunnings Warehouse BBQ. The day started off slow with Dr Ed cycling straight from night shift to help out before heading off to bed. However, as the sun started rising, so too did the orders! We had a fabulously warm day and were able to hit the \$2,000 mark!

The fundraising committee would like to thank Elle, Em and all our generous donors for their advice and help throughout the year!

Tash

MENTOR THANK YOU

This year the fundraising team had the pleasure of being mentored by Elle, a familiar face within the committee. It has been a busy year for the committee, and as a team we have aimed high to achieve new goals and put on fun fundraising events for the ChIPS community. Elle has continually supported the team to achieve these goals, and has gone above and beyond to make these events happen alongside us. Fundraising would have gotten nowhere without Elle. Thank you!

This year, the fundraising committee was pleased to add a second mentor, nurse Em! Em came along to every meeting, even in her breaks, and gave her all for our committee. We have loved having you along at all our events, and your help, dedication and hard work at the events has not gone unnoticed. You are truly an asset to any team you work with, thank you for all your help this year!

Tash

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Socials Committee

This year the Socials committee had the chance to bring forward one of our awesome ideas. The ChIPS Amazing Race Social turned out to be a great success, with approximately 25 people turning up which was amazing. Watching all our hard and planning pay off and watching everyone enjoy themselves competing in the activities was so great. Thanks to everyone who came it was so far, the best social.

The Movie night social was another successful ChIPS social. Despite all the hard work the social committee put in, we pulled together another great social. There was a huge debate over which movie to watch and The Incredibles won! Everyone who attended had a fun time chilling and enjoying the night with fellow ChIPPERS!

Julia Ludbrook

MENTOR THANK YOU

The socials committee had a very grateful and successful year, we wouldn't have been able to get through this year without our mentors Harry and Jano. We would like to extend a big thank to Jano and Harry for being our mentor this year! Thank you so much for all your help and encouragement through all the hard times and ideas! We have been so grateful to have you guys apart of our committee this year as you are always cheering on our ideas always being there even when things are not going our way or we're giving you a hard time. It has truly been a pleasure to work with our mentors this year and we hope we all work with you again next year and many more to come :) Thank you,

Emily R, Bree, Brooke, Nicole and Julia.



PERSONAL STORIES

Ayan Xusen



My name's Ayan and I have been in CHIPS for a little over a year. I am 18 years of age (19 when you're reading this because Jan baby!) and I just finished my first year of university studying Bachelor of Biomedical Sciences at ACU. I have always wanted to become a doctor (as if I haven't had enough of hospitals haha) so that's the path I am hoping to go after finishing my degree. I love sunsets, reading books (anything Jodi Picoult!!) and re-watching Grey's Anatomy for the 56th time (& no, I don't want to be a doctor because of GA haha). I was diagnosed with Crohn's disease in April of 2009 after about 1 year of being misdiagnosed with a whole range of different conditions. I had extremely bad perianal disease and had lost a lot of weight because I had stopped eating due to pain. After a colonoscopy to confirm the diagnosis, I was admitted for 2 weeks to be treated with antibiotics. I was well up until 2013 when I was hospitalised 7

times for multiple flare ups, a kidney and a blood infection. I would constantly get sick around exam times and the start of new school year. The reason why I kept getting sick was because I never took my medications. I would take them for the short period of time after I was discharged from hospital, but once I felt better I would stop taking my medications (as if I had a cold haha). My parents and doctors later found out and because of not taking my meds, I had to have surgery so I could be able to regular things.

In 2014, I had surgery for a temporary ileostomy and the plan initially was to have the stoma for about six months so that my bowels can have a rest. However, the disease in my bottom ended up flaring constantly so I still have the stoma now. The surgery helped me a lot, I was able to gain weight again and avoid getting admitted for about a year and despite the surgery and how serious my condition got, I still wasn't taking my meds. I know it seems ridiculous and that I should've learnt my lesson after getting sick so many times but I think I did it because I had never processed and accepted the reality of having a chronic illness and that I would need to take medications for what was going to be the rest of my life. I also did it because I wanted some sense of being 'normal' – not taking my daily medications allowed me to actually forget that I had an illness for the short times I was well. This kind of went down the drain when on Christmas of 2015, I was admitted once again for something I had thought was no big deal, but I kept getting multiple infections and antibiotics weren't helping. I spent my 17th birthday in hospital but the nurses were amazingggg and got me gifts (because I made a big deal about turning 17 haha). So after about 4 weeks, I was transferred to St Vincent's because a doctor mate of my doctor had access to a larger range of meds that could help. I hated St V's when I first went there – like cried non-stop for a few days hated it (tbh, might've been a whole lotta other stuff I was crying about but let's blame that). I was discharged about a day before I started year 12 (which was so much fun!!) and was eventually put on a drug called Thalidomide which has been really good for me (because I learnt my lesson and actually take it) but is also really controlled because of dangerous side effects it has. I have been able to gain heaps of weight again (hence looking like a potato haha) and finish year 12 without any major flare ups or admissions. Anyways, there you have my super technical and like awkward personal story. Thank you for getting this far! If you have any questions about like my illness or want to fangirl about something (like Grey's!!) or anything, feel free to message me or ask me!!

Emily Wickham

Hey hey hey! Okay good we got past that awkward intro, moving on. I am one of the MANY Emily's here, people mainly remember me by my massive hair and totally creative nickname (W), thanks for that Zak. Like most 16 year olds I love photography, music, memes, Netflix, sleeping and roasting my friends. Oddly enough I want to get into paediatric nursing, this has been a dream of mine for as long as I can remember. If you know me at all you'll know that I'm extremely indecisive, so trying to decide which department I would like to work in is proving difficult, here are a few of my options: NICU, PICU, oncology, ED or maybe even theatre. HELP ME!!

I'll admit that I was a very strange and extremely gullible child, one of my first childhood memories is from when I was around three years old. I had this pet rabbit that somehow escaped his cage during the night, so I woke up the next morning to overfeed him and smother him with cuddles and he wasn't there. I was beyond devastated. From a very young age I have loved Kmart so what did my parents do? They told me he must be at Kmart buying me toys and of course I believed it, I believed everything they told me. So later that day my devastated, but hopeful little self went to Kmart yelling out the unknown name of this rabbit, but he never turned up, weird right? I actually recently found out that he was run over by my grumpy old neighbours lawnmower, #heartbroken. The rest of my childhood revolved around High school musical. I was completely in love with Troy Bolton, I tried to take up basketball (110% regret), I named my pet bird after him, most of my clothes had his face on them and I even had a cardboard cutout of him next to my bed. The whole process repeated itself when one direction came around. Yes, even the cardboard cutout... *face palms*. Enough of my cringe worthy childhood and onto the more serious stuff. I have been a RCH patient since I was 8 weeks old, I don't want to go into too much detail with my illnesses because I like to think my illnesses have shaped me, not defined me. But being sick meant that I always felt like the odd one out at school. Thankfully my best friend in primary school was blind so I felt 'normal' around her. When we were younger we used to run around the playground whacking the people we hated with her cane, she always had the excuse "oops, sorry I didn't see you there" which meant we got away with it. The thought of starting high school was really exciting, I imagined the stereotypical American high school movie. Ahh I wish that was true. I was born with a birth defect called Craniosynostosis, this caused severe facial asymmetry and a large dent in my forehead and of course it drew attention. People poked the dent and I was known as the girl with a missing piece of face. Eventually, my surgeon recommended fat grafting which basically meant he would take fat from my thighs, (bonus) and then inject it into my dent and cheeks. After my surgery I remember



PERSONAL STORIES

walking into the bathroom and bawling my eyes out, I was so relieved to see the results. At 14 I became quite ill, which caused a lot of anxiety, I completely isolated myself and lost all my friends purely because I was and still am embarrassed of my newly diagnosed condition. After months of isolation my stomal nurse suggested ChIPS, at first I had no interest at all, I just pictured a super depressing support group like the one on the fault in our stars, even worse! It's Ansel Elgortless. A few ChIPPERS came to convince me it wasn't all that bad. At first I was terrified of talking to new people and started thinking ChIPS wasn't for me. But I lightened up. This year I'd like to say I've blossomed in a way. I've been given so many amazing opportunities, I spoke to 100 medical students at the University of Melbourne, I'm the secretary of our reference committee and most importantly I've come out of my shell as well as so much more. Within my year here I have gained so many amazing friendships, I am so so thankful, you know who you are (no, not you Shannon). To any ChIPPERS that may feel like giving up on trying here, it does take a while, but once you gain that extra confidence it makes a world of difference. It really breaks my heart to know that there are still young people feeling the same way as I was a few years ago. I want to just kidnap them all and bring them to ChIPS.

Thank you all for reading this essay like piece, I really hope you enjoyed it.

Tina Nelson

My name is Tina,

I was born a little smaller than they expected. I was born with scoliosis and at the age of five, I was told that I had O.T.C (Ornithine transcarbamylase). I was on medication for 10 years and had to watch what I ate. The doctors were not convinced that I had O.T.C while I was treated for it. At the age of nine, the Scoliosis was noticed. With the scoliosis, school was hard as it stopped me from doing things with the rest of the class like swimming, sport, sport days. Once I went back to school, things were hard at first but slowly got better and I could finish school and I have had that many surgeries that I have lost count as to how many I have had. The rod that I have in my back came from France and was a new type of rod to try and they were only going to do 5 people with Scoliosis but they saw how well it went with mine so they did more.

I had to redo a whole year of primary school as I missed so much due to surgeries, appointments, admissions, not wanting to go due to being in pain and I had to wear a brace for at least 6 years maybe longer. The multi-mini core myopathy was not picked up until 2012.

The multi-mini core myopathy affects my muscles due to having many pin size holes in my muscles and I have sleep studies once a year just keep an eye on things. My shortest hospital stay was a Friday-Monday and my longest hospital stay was 3 months. I finished at the Royal Children's Hospital 2 years ago and I am now being treated at the Royal Melbourne Hospital, Austin Health and St Vincent's hospital.



PERSONAL STORIES

Tailor Nguyen



Hi all, to introduce myself I am Tailor I have just attended my first September camp and I really enjoyed myself and cannot wait until January camp comes around as I hear that it's a lot more competitive. I got diagnosed with my chronic illness when I was 16 and from then on, my whole world flipped upside down but I am super proud of how far I've come.

I had major life changing surgery (which I call my gift of life) 2 weeks after my 16th birthday which was yes celebrated in hospital but at least I got to hang out with the starlight captains. Pre-diagnoses I had never needed to go to the hospital, to be honest I didn't know the RCH existed and was shook when I found out a) I had to go there because my local hospital didn't know what to do with me and b) this was the new hospital and that the old one had been turned into a park. So far, I have met many amazing ChIPPERS and I have been fortunate to hear their chronic illness

story and I haven't been shy to share mine because in my situation I think and believe that the more people know about organ donation the better.

School was a really nerve-racking thing because I was physically and mentally in a different place. I was returning to year 11, in the middle of my VCE studies thinking that I had bitten way more off than I could chew with my subject selection. Which was Math Methods, English, Chemistry, Physical Education and Biology. I was on so many medications and had so many things I had to do in a day to make sure my body was okay. All of this was different to my life pre-transplant. I used to be the fittest out of my friends and ran 3-5 kilometres for fun and now I could barely make the 10-minute walk to school without getting all puffy and red. To make things harder I had to wear a mask for the first month or so and it was not a fun experience due to it being the middle of summer. My transplant left me with a large L shaped scar on my tummy along with 3 small scars which were home to a T-tube and 2 drains. To be honest I love my scar, it represents how far I've come and where I've been. I would never want to not have it.

Being the first chronically ill person at my school was weird because the teachers didn't really know how to handle my situation, a lot of absences, which would lead to missing content, which then would lead to not passing sacs, which then would lead to having to re-do sacs but then also missing the sac that was coming up. I was stuck in a pit of sacs which made year 11 and 12 really tough on me and I really hated going to school. In the end, I did conquer VCE and got accepted into university.

University made me enjoy studying again, I was no longer behind, catching up was easy because everything is online, there was no mystery of whether or not I was passing because everything has set dates which meant I could plan a head or do work at home if I wasn't feeling well. I am currently studying a bachelor of science but I hope to transfer to a bachelor of occupational therapy. Health-wise right now I would have to say I am very well. My bloods are perfect and I feel better than ever, I'm working on my fitness and hope to be running 3-5 kilometres a day in the near future.

Chronic Illness Peer Support (ChIPS)

Adolescent Medicine
The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne
50 Flemington Road
Parkville Victoria 3052 Australia
TELEPHONE +61 3 9345 6616
FACSIMILE +61 3 9345 5034
www.rch.org.au/chips



Chronic Illness Peer Support (ChIPS) Referral information

The Chronic Illness Peer Support program (ChIPS) is a vibrant adolescent peer support program that has operated for over 20 years providing critical psychosocial and peer support for 12–25 year-olds living with a chronic illness.

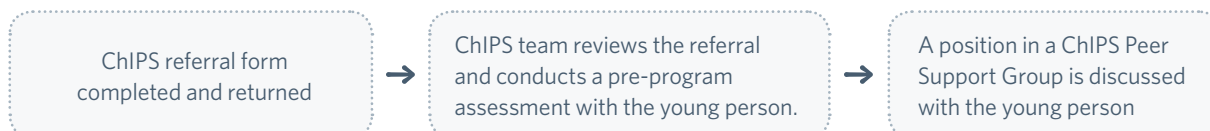
The entry point for the ChIPS program is via the 'Eight Week Group' or the 'ChIPS Intensive' where new participants share experiences of living with chronic illness and learn from each other in a facilitated, semi-formal and safe environment. Once program participants have completed their Eight Week Group or ChIPS Intensive they can take advantage of year-round recreational, social and leadership activities.

Qualifying criteria

ChIPS is available to young people who are:

- 12–25 years of age with a primary diagnosis of chronic illness
- living with a chronic illness or condition that affects their daily life
- able to attend an eight-week peer support group or a two-day intensive group
- ready and able to participate/function well in a group setting

Referral process



FAQs

Q. Who can refer a young person?

A. ChIPS takes referrals from health professionals including, but not limited to: doctors, nurses, psychologists, school counsellors, social workers, youth workers. Parents/guardians and individuals may fill out the referral form and have it endorsed by their healthcare professional.

Q. When does ChIPS accept referrals?

A. ChIPS is accepting referrals year round on a rolling basis and will do its best to place those who are referred in a peer support group as soon as possible.

Q. Does the young person need to be a patient of The Royal Children's Hospital?

A. No. ChIPS is run at The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne but it engages young people from throughout Victoria.

Q. Is there anyone the young person can talk to if they are not sure about ChIPS?

A. Yes. ChIPS staff are available to speak with the young person or referring health professional, or if the young person would prefer, they can talk with a current ChIPS participant from the ChIPS Reference Committee. Telephone (03) 9345 6916.

Chronic Illness Peer Support (ChIPS) Referral

This form is to be endorsed by a relevant healthcare professional.

Mail to: ChIPS program, Adolescent Medicine, The Royal Children's Hospital, 50 Flemington Road, Parkville Victoria 3052 Facsimile: (03) 9345 5034 Email: meagan.hunt@rch.org.au Telephone: (03) 9345 6616

Young person's details

Date of referral: / /	RCH UR (if applicable):	
First name:	Surname:	
Age:	Date of birth: / /	
Address:		
Email:		
Home telephone:	Mobile:	
School:	School year level:	
Parent/guardian name:	Telephone:	
Parent/guardian name:	Telephone:	

Nature of illness

Current medical condition/s:

Symptoms and how the young person is affected (incl. phys/psych/socially/family/school):

Hospital/Health Care system linked with:

Other information:

Referring healthcare professional's details

First name:

Surname:

Occupation:

Organisation/ department name:

Organisation/ department address:

Telephone: Email:

Other healthcare professional (if applicable): Telephone:

a) Please initial if you give consent to be contacted prior to, during and/or post this young person's involvement in the ChIPS program if the program staff should need your assistance, guidance or support.	Initials:
b) Please initial if the young person and their parent/guardian are aware that you are referring the young person to the ChIPS program.	Initials:
c) Please initial if you believe the young person you are referring wants to be involved in and would benefit from the ChIPS program.	Initials:

ChIPS would like to acknowledge and extend our heartfelt thanks to the Royal Children's Hospital Foundation for their ongoing support.

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ChIP-In Auxiliary
Allan and Judy Dixon
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CBD Local Matters Jar – Grill'd
Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc – Knox branch
Karl Kutner – Ambassador
Shield Sisters Cabaret Night – Barry Nolan
Jar of Hope Raffle – Sam Pucci
ChIPS Fundraising Subcommittee –
Cadbury fundraising boxes
ChIPS Movie fundraiser
ChIPS Bunnings Sausage Sizzle
ChIPS Bogan Bingo night.
Thank you to all who donated prizes to Bogan Bingo

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