

ChIPS

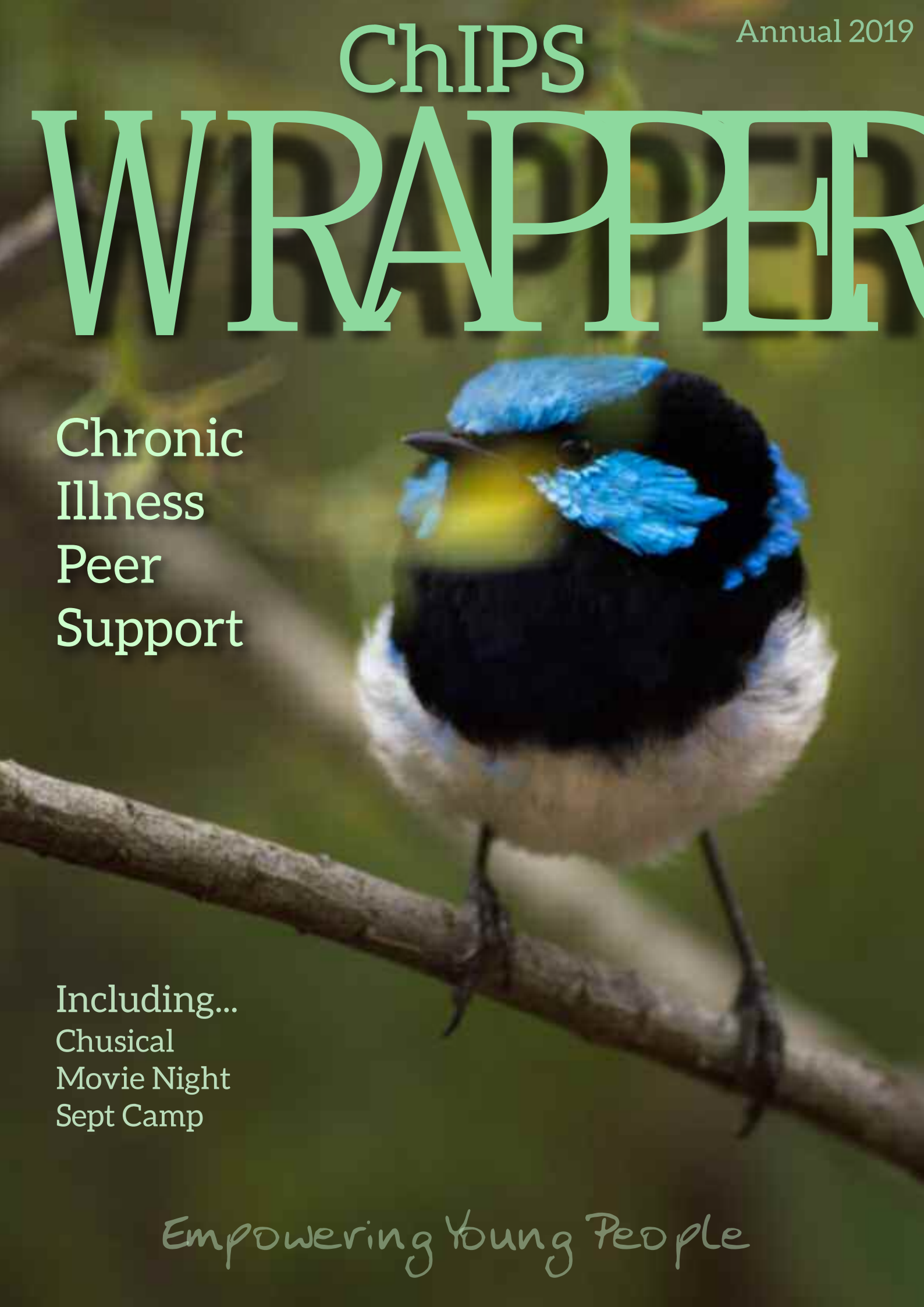
Annual 2019

WRAPPER

Chronic
Illness
Peer
Support

Including...
Chusical
Movie Night
Sept Camp

Empowering Young People



Awards



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 or the wider ChIPS community.

Winners:

2019 – Curtis Reeder
2018 – Jade Driscoll
2017 – Emily Wickham
2016 – Jessica Curgenven
2015 – Tash Payne
2014 – Beth Sleeman
2013 – Sarah Menta
2012 – Jemma Young
2010/2011 – Jessica Marshall
2009 – Geri Herd
2008 – Scott Campbell
2007 – Karen Lay
2006 – Louise Pellegrino
2005 – Elisha Mont



The cover photo for this years Wrapper was taken by Hugh Blunt who completed his ChIPS 8 week group in term 1 2019. Sadly, Hugh passed away in July.

To honour his memory, the Publications Committee reached out to Hugh's family for a selection of his amazing photographs. Hugh had a warm and open personality, great sense of humour and a love for cricket.



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.

Winners:

2019 – Jake Cunningham
2018 – Zoe Parry
2017 – Natasha Payne
2016 – Emily Ryan
2015 – Laura Gysslink
2014 – Tyrone Kelly
2013 – Eliza Masterson
2012 – Jemma Young
2011 – James Williams
2010 – Jordan Hammond
2009 – Scott Campbell
2008 – Stacy Cumming
2007 – Louise Pellegrino
2006 – Bree Regester
2005 – Andrew Selvaggi

Content

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WELCOME!

2019 will be one for the ChIPS records. Between amazing fundraising efforts to a 90 minute presentation at the AAAH Youth Health Conference, Reference Committee has made amazing strides towards making ChIPS the best organisation it can be. The Publications Committee is immensely proud to present this year's Wrapper to the wider ChIPS community.

Whilst not without its challenges, this year played out a lot smoother for the Pubs team. Incorporating the feedback from last year, we (hope!) we've created a far more entertaining Wrapper for you to enjoy. And maybe, we can inspire a future Pubs team member! I'd like to think I can speak for all of us when I say that the skills learned in RefCom (ChIPS speak for reference committee) are invaluable to our personal lives and future careers.

Sharon Domingue



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

- 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 skills and confidence to increase their ability to deal with 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 opportunity to actively raise awareness in our community, not just about ChIPS but about living with a chronic illness

The Pubs Team would like to extend a warm welcome to our new ChIPPERS:

Alexandra Gibson
Caleb O'Brien
Ebony Layley
Georgia Rose
Harvey Thulborn-McCorkell
Jazmine Bordieri
Kayla Edwards
Lauren Bruges-Cannon
Olivia Quarrell
Patrick Baker
Ruby McMath
Alex Gatt
Freya Lewington
Kiahna Willan
Matthew Brown
Molly Ward
Niki Mitchell
Riley Pittard
Sammi Merritt
Shiloh Singh
Willow McLennan
Yuli Mori
Zane Vahrmeyer
Emina Hasimbegovic
Evangelina Vincombe
Leah Boileau-Evans
Olivia Campbell
Phung Dong
Sarah Dhedhi
Aleisha Grenfell
Adam Al Hakkani
Jarrod Hunter
Siti Nurayeshia
Zoe Todd

We hope you find the family you were looking for in ChIPS ♥

CHAIRPERSON'S report

Reference committee is a stepping stone to deliver an innovative program. A community built on a foundation of mutual respect, support and commitment – RefComm encourages personal development, upholds ChIPS values and through shared values brings ChIPPERS together. It is comprised of 5 subcommittees: Advocacy, Camp, Fundraising, Publications and Socials and throughout the year, members volunteer their time to organise activities such as socials, camps and fundraisers. They also advocate for young people and create the Wrapper – the magazine you're reading right now.

This year I had the absolute pleasure and privilege of being nominated (by Stacey, thank you!) and then elected by so many to be the chairperson of reference committee – and truth be told, despite it exciting me a tiny bit because everyone before me made it look so easy and interesting, it scared me a whole lot more.

Nothing I or anyone did this year could have been done without the help and extreme support of so many. Firstly, the ChIPS staff: Harry, Bec & Meagan – thank you for encouraging us in all that we wanted to do, both during and outside of reference committee. To our mentors, thank you for guiding us and allowing us to flourish immensely this year, we appreciate you so much. To all the subcommittee co-leaders, thank you for collaborating so well together, keeping on top of things throughout the year and for joining me on the super awkward, somewhat funny monthly FB lives we did – I'm extremely proud of you all. Lastly but definitely not least, to the members – the centre of reference committee, thank you for making this year an enormous joy, for continually showing up and doing all the work despite having heaps going on both within your lives and with your health. Thank you thank you thank you, for giving me the space to grow into myself & find MORE of my voice (let's be honest) – it means more to me than you'll ever know.

To those of you reading this who are on the fence about whether to join reference committee or not, try it out! If anything, you will grow heaps, maybe learn a thing or two about yourself and in that process, be surrounded by heaps of support to navigate it all. And if you have the inkling that you want to be the next chairperson, nominate yourself and when you become the next chairperson, if you're still nervous + questioning where to begin (which is absolutely normal, because I was for a REALLY long time), ask for help because everyone is willing to give you a hand – you'll be amazing, I have absolutely no doubt!!

Finally, I genuinely hope that this new year is filled with the utmost joy, happiness and that you're surrounded by immense support. I hope to see Reference Committee continue to grow and the new set of members thrive immensely, learn so much about themselves and become strong advocates both for themselves and what they see the program representing.

I wish you all the absolute best of luck in 2020,

Ayan Xuser



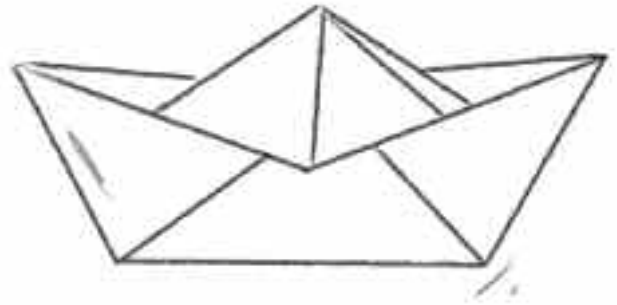
MEAGAN'S Musings

What a year it has been here at ChIPS, yet again. I arrived back to the ChOffice in May this year after a year off. Thank you to my colleagues Harry and Bec for looking after the program and all the ChIPPERS so well while I was away getting used to life as a new Mumma. Also to Anna who stepped into the staff team for the year. We were sorry to see Anna have to move on as a staff member but delighted that she is staying on as a volunteer. It shows the impression all the ChIPPERS made on her she just couldn't leave.

I have to admit it was a slightly odd experience to go on Camp in October this year realising that I didn't know about a third of the ChIPPERS!! There have been so many new ChIPPERS come into the program over the past year that I was meeting them all for the first time. What a delight to come back to that. It was wonderful to meet you all and there are still more of you to meet.

Many amazing things were achieved in the year I was away however I would have to say a HUGE highlight on my return to was to attend the premier performance of the ChIPS Musical, ACE. This was a very moving and inspiring experience and I really want to say congratulations to everyone who was involved in that. Thank you to Harry for leading this amazing project and to volunteer Hannah Riley for her work. Also thank you to Kerry Goldsmith, CHIPPER Mum for all her support to.

As every year we thank our Volunteers and Medical staff. There are too many to mention in my musings so we have given them a whole page here in the Wrapper, check it out. Thank you to the Department of Adolescent Medicine and Department Head Michelle Telfer for the ongoing support of our team and program. And I must make a special mention to our admin team Shantelle and Corrine for your help always! Thank you.



A huge thank you to the ongoing support of the RCH Foundation for the commitment to support the funding of the ChIPS program. Finally thanks to all the ChIPPERS for making our jobs fulfilling and inspiring. How lucky we are to work with you. We will continue to work with all the ChIPPERS to make the ChIPS program an inclusive and supportive place for everyone with exciting opportunities along the way.

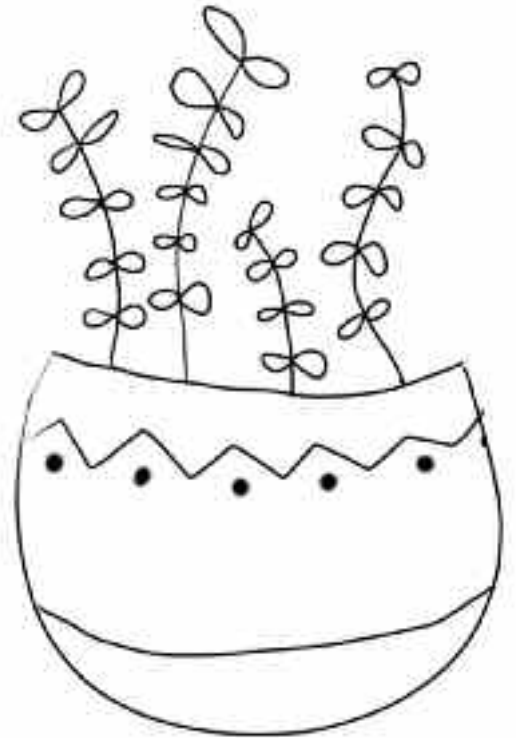
Meagan

BEC'S Blog

Another amazing year has almost passed, I can't believe it's almost 2020 (although by the time you're reading this it will be 2020!!). It's great to have Meags back on board but also nice to know that Harry and I managed to keep the program running in her absence, with a lot of help from Anna of course. Harry did a great job of Program Manager, and Anna deserves a massive round of applause for helping us over the year, her organisational skills put mine to shame, I'm so glad she's decided to stay on as a volunteer.

As usual, the year started with Jan camp however this time it was my first experience being head honcho of camp, which really confirmed for me how much of a team effort camp is. While I was the staff member on Camp Committee and supposedly the one in charge, I certainly can't take any of the credit for how awesome the camp was. Once again, camp committee did an amazing job, and our Med team and Volunteers are hands down THE best! I can't thank you all enough for everything you do for the program.

Unfortunately, Jan Camp 2019 saw us farewell Laura G and Tash, but over the year we welcomed a huge intake of new ChIPPERS, with 34 young people completing their intake groups and becoming actively involved in the program. There were so many new faces at the Holiday Vacation in October, it was fantastic to see all the new friendships being formed, welcome to you all!!



And another new arrival, and a huge welcome to Harry's little man Flinn, congratulations Harry and Sina!

I'd also like to congratulate Reference Committee on a fantastic year. You guys put in so much effort behind the scenes and do an amazing job of organising the program, you should be proud. And lastly I'd like to say a huge thank you to all the peer leaders. You guys are always there when we need you and you help with so many events over the year, thank you.

So thanks everyone for a great 2019 and bring on 2020!

Mama Bec



HARRY'S Highlights

What a year we've had, so much has happened it's hard to pack it into a highlights reel. The ChIPS Olympics Jan camp was amazing fun. Victoria turned on some hot summer weather and the second day of activities turned into chill out time in the lake, and the ensuing impromptu classic catches cricket game was a highlight of camp for me. Camp Comm 2018 can be amazingly proud of the quality they produced and their ability to be flexible and work with weather conditions.

In April we welcomed our fearless leader Meagan back into the ChOFFICE from her year maternity leave. So great to have you back Meags! This also meant we said goodbye and thank you to Anna who had been our replacement ChIPS staff member for that period. Anna did an amazing job over her short time with us for which we are very grateful. Luckily she loves ChIPS so much that she stayed on as a mentor for the Socials Committee on Ref Comm, nice one Anna!

The highlight of highlights for me in 2019 was the ChIPS musical debut public performance on July 14th to an audience of 150 people. Our performers were just amazing, not a dry eye in the house, and as a bonus the funds they raised went directly to the ChIPS Auxiliary. If you missed it you can see the whole performance on our youtube channel. You guys blew us away, well done! I have to mention a few individual ChIPPERS who gave everything for this event to happen; Bek Goldsmith; Amy Fransen; Caleb O'Brien; Caitlin Rohr, Curtis Reeder and Emmi C, thanks for going above and beyond!



A personal highlight for me has been becoming a dad. Our little poop-machine Flinn arrived in October and it's been a whirlwind since then. Thanks to all the ChIPPERS and ChIPS community who have been so generous with gifts and kind words, our little family is extremely grateful!

Looking forward to an eventful 2020 ChIPS calendar.



Harry

Introducing FLINN!

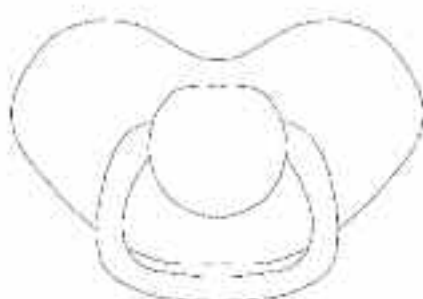
We are so excited and delighted to welcome little Flinn Lior Lengelsen-Brown into the world.

Flinn was born on October 3 2019.

So far Flinn is growing beautifully and delighting his Mum and Dad with his little facial expressions and loads of cuddles!



Congratulations to Sina and Harry!



2019ⁱⁿ REVIEW

January CAMP

On the 21st of January a group of ChIPPERS went to Cave Hill Creek for 3 days. We all had to meet at the hospital on the first day at 7:30am and we packed up the bus as a group and left at 8:00am. There were 4 teams, their names were gymnastics, swimming, equestrian, basketball and it was a great camp and food was great. We had a party night and it was Aussie themed.





We also said farewell Laura.G and Tash as it was their last time ever at ChIPS as their time to move on now. Jade got the Liz Dickson award and Jake got the Chris Balnaves Award. Great job to the camp leaders for planning a great camp.

Tina Nelson



MOVIE Social

On Saturday the 13th of April, the social team put on an awesome social to start off the year. We all gathered in the Ella Latham Theatre and watched Coco, along with all the popcorn, fairy floss and chocolate we could eat. We started the social off all having a go at the fairy floss machine. Bec ended up becoming the master of fairly floss. (it's a lot harder than it looks). After attacking the snacks we played a Disney themed Kahoot in teams the winners of the Kahoot were "the A team" including Haylee L, Stella H and Adam H.



The movie was a hit, Coco is a fun and funny film that everyone enjoyed. By the end of the film, the social team got together and decided the winner of the costume contest which was Jessica W, dressed as Boo from Monsters Inc. with Adam H coming in a close 2nd dressed as Eric from The Little Mermaid. Overall, the day was a lot of fun and a big success; we all can't wait till the next social.

Emily Cocks



DUMPLING Social

The 2nd ChIPS social of the year went off without a hitch. We all grabbed our chef hats and aprons and learned the art of dumpling making which is a lot harder than it looks. But they were awesome; after we finished cooking we ate as much dumplings as we could I personally think the pork dumplings were the best.



After we were stuffed with dumplings and read our fortune cookies, we gave a huge thankyou to Ha from Otao Kitchen especially since he was able to cater to everyone's dietary requirements. We were all so full that we just played celebrity heads to finish off. An amazing day overall, everyone!

Emily Cocks



RUN for the KIDS

This year's annual run for the kids was one of our best yet!

We were privileged with a beautiful sunny day and a massive turnout of CHIPPERS, staff and volunteers. We were also joined by 'Team Rachael' and wore purple in memory of her. The course track had a bit of an 'upgrade' this year, instead of walking through the Domain Tunnel we walked the Bolte Bridge, despite the fact that it was a little bit of a hike and our group were the last to reach the finish line the view was incredible!



For the second year in a row we were generously supported by B. R. Wellington and Aintree Group who helped to raise a significant amount of money for the program. We are so immensely thankful!

Overall, it was a great day and I highly encourage everyone to join us next year.

Emily Wickham



ACE the MUSICAL

This year, CHIPPERS performed in our very own musical! At the beginning of 2018 we started writing a 30 minute musical about 3 young people living with chronic illness. We did a rough performance at October camp, and from there continued working on the script and songs, to make it the best it could be.

We got together every Thursday to rehearse, and tweak scenes, and just have a great time. Fast forward to 14th of July - our debut show in front of family and friends! The Fundraising Committee had organised a fun day planned around our show, with popcorn, fairy floss, and a raffle. The cast backstage we're getting nervous, but everyone was being so encouraging towards each other. The first scene was set, the programs were being sold, people were in costume, the cameras were turned on, we could hear the chatter of the audience.. everything was ready to go.



We stepped on stage, and instantly had the audience in our hands! They laughed at the jokes, cried when characters felt alone, and cheered so loudly any chance they got, including a standing ovation. By the end of the performance, the whole cast were bubbling with excitement. We even got to sign a few autographs. A wonderful time was had by everyone in that room, the atmosphere was incredible.



ACE, sold 150 tickets, and raised \$2400. Such an amazing achievement for all involved. Maybe it will go down in the history books...

Bek Goldsmith



October CAMP

The time had finally arrived, another October camp had approached us, as we all waited patiently to board the bus waiting for the exciting adventures to begin.





It was great to see camp being a bit different seeing lots of fresh faces as lots new ChIPPERS, Volunteers and staff all come along and enjoy themselves, making the time we spent together enjoyable with so many memories to cherish.



I would like to say a big thank you to the ChIPS staff for making camp possible and for our wonderful merch we received on this camp.

I hope I see you all at Jan camp :)



Julia Ludbrook

BunningsBBQ

On the 10th of June, on a very crisp Queens Birthday morning, the fundraising team fired up the BBQ at Bunnings to once again raise money for ChIPS. The day was long, tiring hard, and by the end of the day personally my arms didn't work anymore from all the flipping of the snags, but it was hugely successful once again! We raised just over \$2000 which was just insane between the snags, drinks and chocolates on sale that day which blew us away!!

A huge thank you to those who came out of their way to help out on the day, without your help we never would've been able to do it!



Jake Cunningham

Leadership TRAINING

This year for leadership training we talked about advocating for ourselves. Not only did we discuss advocating in doctor's appointments and chronic illness related matters but also in everyday life such as friendships and work. We had the great pleasure of having our very own Curtis Reeder and Ayan Xusen running the session with help from Mama Bec. We all participated in a number of activities and everyone participated in the discussion with people bringing their own experiences to the table. After a few activities and lunch we had the great pleasure of having an RCH staff member come in and talk about her own life experiences which was a very compelling speech and very inspiring. Overall it was a great day and I'm sure everyone had learned a little about self-advocating and speaking up, especially as we're youths who are getting to that age of independence. Some of us are also transitioning to the adult healthcare system and having this session really helped with advocating for ourselves and learning to do things with our parents.

Emily Cocks

SUB-COMMITTEE Reports

Advocacy

The Advocacy subcommittee had an extremely successful year. We managed to do 13 presentations this year with some being completely different than what we've done before which was awesome and resulted in heaps of referrals which is always a great outcome!

One major thing that we worked on towards the end of the year was presenting at the AAAH Youth Health Conference in November with the Sydney ChIPS program. This involved writing up an abstract, making our own panel questions and deciding what we wanted to do for the 90 minutes we had. A lot of work went into it, but it was such a privilege to be invited to present.

Thank you to our mentors this year - Vicki, Laura, Harry and Bec who were so helpful and an absolute joy to be around.

*Shannon, Curtis,
James, Patty, Olivia,
and Ayan*

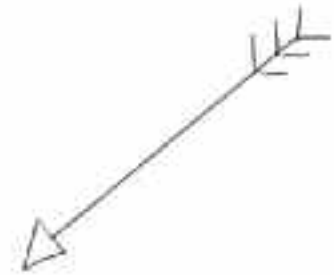
Camp

The Camp committee had an amazing year, smashing out goals as fast as we could. We tried our best to add some new elements into camp this year and hope everyone had an amazing time.

We would like to say a big thank you to our camp mentors this year; Bec, Jess (Chop) and Stacey. These three amazing women were such a vital role in the camp committee this year, they spent a lot of time working on camp, including working with us in their spare time which we are so grateful for. Camp would not be possible without them! So, thank you again!

As the leaders of Camp committee this year, Brooke and Aimee, we would also like to say a huge thank you to our fellow committee members, it's been a pleasure to work alongside you guys to make such a memorable camp come together.

*Brooke D. Aimee,
Haylee, Bek and Mitchell*



Fundraising

2019 has been a very successful year for the Fundraising Committee. With our new and creative ideas, this year we raised an amazing total of \$4000. Our first fundraiser was the Bunnings BBQ in Maribryngong. Run by the Fundraising Committee, volunteers, and fellow ChIPERS, we raised over \$1,800. We also helped raise over \$1,965 with the Chipper run "Chusical", the A.C.E. the musical by assisting in creating and sharing their production. For our final fundraiser for the calendar year, we've decided to host a Christmas wrapping station and selling donated goods at the hospital. We hope to see amazing results!

Thank you to the CHIPXILLARY for helping us bring our creative ideas to life and all the help and support over this year.

We couldn't have done any of this without our Mentors, Michelle and Sim. We would like to say a HUGE THANK YOU to them for all the support and guidance.

*Shaelle, Tina, Mo,
Jake, and Julia*

Publications

This year's ChIPS Wrapper was proudly brought to you by your Publications Committee for 2019! – Michael, Claudia, Sharon and Kalysha. The publications team had a fantastic time this year. Many hours were spent finding members to write articles about all the amazing adventures we went on and finding awesome photos to fill the pages. We also enjoyed designing the front cover. This year's photo was taken by Hugh Blunt, who sadly passed away not long after joining the family. In addition to the Wrapper this year, the Pubs committee also got the opportunity to re-design the ChIPS A-frame – which will now appear at ChIPS events to advertise our fantastic program.

As a team we really pulled through, supporting each other through it all. Of course, we couldn't have done it without the help of our amazing mentors Meagan and Hannah; with extra help from Harry and Bec. Thank you all so much for assisting us in being the best publications committee we could be!

*Michael, Claudia,
Kalysha, and Sharon*

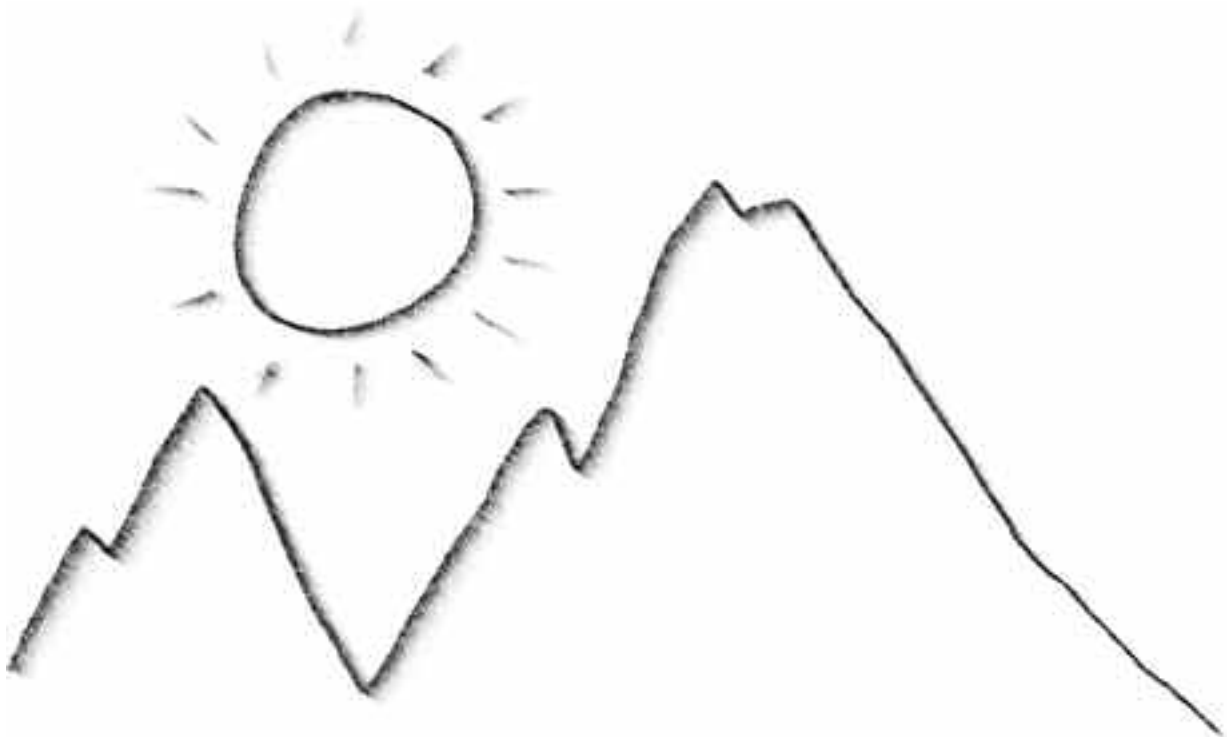
Socials

It has been an absolute pleasure co-leading the socials committee with Zak this year. Emily C, Caitlin, Fady, Zak and myself brainstormed some incredible ideas throughout the year, bringing some of those ideas to reality has been a really cool experience. I feel that we worked really well together and have come so far as a team.

I think it's fair to say our dumplings workshop was a huge success, we had a great turnout of ChIPPERS and everyone contributed in one way or another. As of right now we're in the final stages of planning for our Christmas social, we're all super excited to see it all come together on the day. Each member of our sub committee has shown great dedication and commitment. 2019 was a great year for socials! - Emily W.

Of course this wouldn't have been possible without our mentors, we would love to give a special thank you to Anna, Felipe and Jano. All of your help is what made our 3 socials possible. Thank you for your time and for sharing your knowledge and talent with us, as well as your dedication and continued support. Your input and enthusiasm was the most helpful, we couldn't have done it without you guys.

*Emily C, Zak, Caitlin,
Fady, and Emily W*



ChIPS Volunteers

We are very grateful for the ongoing support and passion of our ChIPS Volunteers. We would not be able to achieve half of the things we do together in the ChIPS community without the constant support of our ChIPS volunteers.

Thank you to the Volunteer Mentors who support the Reference Committee to achieve all the amazing things they do. These volunteers also do much more in addition to being a Reference Committee mentor:

Camp Committee Mentors: Jessica O'Dowd and Stacey Cummings

Publications Committee Mentor: Hannah Riley

Social Committee Mentors: Jane Franklin, Felipe Salas and Anna Gilkison

Fundraising Committee Mentors: Sim Huntington and Michelle Powell

Advocacy Committee Mentors: Vicky Young and Laura Hunt

Welcome and thank you to new volunteers who came on board this year:

Laura Hunt, New Reference committee mentor .

Anna Gilkison finished her role as staff member but has stayed on as a Volunteer. Thanks Anna!

Clare McInnerney, Andy Clough and Amelia Berwick all jumped into the deep end coming along to the ChIPS Holiday Vacation in October.

Thank you to our ever faithful and ongoing volunteers who are not mentioned above:

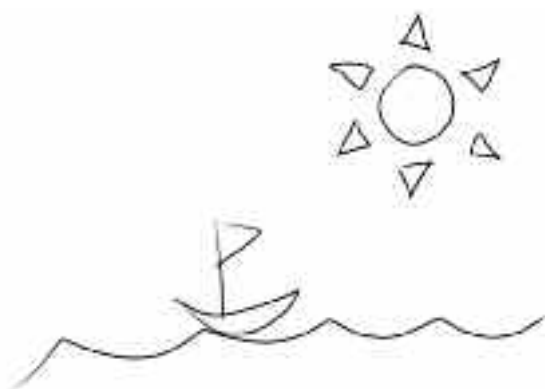
Paul O'Brien, Vicky Young, Alesha Fecondo, Justin Hunter,
Jordan Hammond, Rob McVey

Thank you also to Michelle Powell, President of the ChIPSXiliary (that's ChIPS speak for the ChIPS Auxiliary).

Medical Staff

A huge thankyou to the ChIPS Medical Staff for 2019. Your talent, passion, dedication and professionalism allow the ChIPPERS to have a safe and amazing time on camps. Thank you to:

Jessica O'Dowd, Elle Goss, Charlie Bowes, Pete Sloman, Emily O'Brien,
Dr Ed Sixsmith, Dr Patricia Bimboese, Andy Cantlay, Lisa Griffiths,
Karina Cashmore, Emily Dashwood.



A Tribute to Rachael Clarke



This year the ChIPS family were heartbroken at the loss of a very much loved family member, Rachael Farrelly. Rachael joined ChIPS when she was 17 years old in 2013. The ChIPS community got to spend an awesome 6 years with her. Rachael was a beautiful, understanding, selfless and overall amazing person! Her presence at any and all ChIPS events always put a smile on the faces of people around her. She was an extremely welcoming person and always made people feel like they weren't alone.

Personally, Rach was the first friend I made in the ChIPS program. She welcomed me with open arms into the group and we connected automatically. We could talk about anything and everything and for the first time in my life, I felt like someone truly understood what I was going through, even though our conditions were completely different. Rachael and I were inseparable. Whenever we were together we were always having an amazing time. Neither one of us ever needed to pretend we weren't feeling well. We both understood that we do need to rest and that was okay.

Rachael always made sure everyone else around her was fine before herself. There were multiple occasions when Rachael would come visit me in the hospital even though she wasn't well and needed to rest. She was such a caring person that it didn't matter if she felt sick, as long as she got to come visit her friends in hospital everything would work out. Whenever Rachael came on camp, she was always offering help to those around her, making sure they could get their food, get back to their cabin, and even going out of her way to take her fellow Chipper to their next activity so they wouldn't miss out. She made an effort with everyone, to make sure they had the best time they could and always made it known that there was help available. I am sure that everyone in the ChIPS program who had the pleasure of knowing Rachael would agree when I say it was an honour to know such an incredible person.

Rachael, I honestly cannot stress enough how much you are going to be missed by not only myself but every Chipper, volunteer, and leader. Your smile and laugh was infectious to everyone around you and your company was always enjoyed. We love and miss you Rach. The ChIPS community will never be the same without you. Rest easy honey, you deserve it x

Montana Albon

Haylee Lester

“ChIPS welcomes everyone!”

Hey guys, I'm Haylee (aka H). My nickname, given to me by my nurses, started as H-bomb then slowly got reduced to H. You'll be able to tell who I am by my blonde hair and short height.

Due to having a chronic illness, I can't work, but I spend my time catching up with friends and looking after my nephews, as well as playing with my two cats, who I adore. My hobbies include gaming, watching TV shows (especially 'Charmed'), photography and reading. Many people are surprised that I also love monster trucks and wrestling.

My main passion is makeup and I am hoping to start up a business this year. I love to party, even though I get exhausted quickly and I'm always up for a chat or a shopping trip!

I was born with Gastroschisis. This means that at birth my bowel was outside of my stomach. Only 20% of my bowel remains, which makes my condition called Short Gut Bowel Syndrome.

For my whole life, I haven't eaten anything. Despite a few attempts, my bowel simply fails to absorb food. Eating in front of me or forgetting and offering me food is completely fine with me. In fact, even at my own 18th birthday, I got given chocolate as a present from three separate people.

I am TPN dependent, which means I must be on a pole for 12 Hours every night. A pump gives me all my nutrients and food to live. If you see me at camp at night time with a huge backpack on, which is practically bigger than me, that's what it is.

With a central line, there is always risk and complications such as sepsis. I've had this repeatedly. For the first 12 years of my life, I was in and out of hospital non-stop. My longest hospital stay was 8 months and I've had over 100 surgeries.

When I was 7, all my veins were blocked, which reduced my blood flow. Because of this I was on permanent oxygen and wasn't supposed to make it to the age of 8. This was until a surgeon thought of a stent to put in my main vein. A stent opens the vein up more to allow blood flow. It is also my last vein for my central line to be placed. It saved my life and it is the reason why I'm still here today at nearly age 20.



Because of all this going on through my Primary School years, I couldn't build any real friendships. I had friends, but with so much time away I would come back and realise they had moved on.

Being in hospital wasn't all that bad though! I took full advantage of all the perks, such as the Good Friday Appeals. I made sure the media crew knew that every single 'Home and Away' character had to visit me (I'm a 'Home and Away' addict, I don't care what anyone says).

Through my Starlight Wish, I met Hi-5 (aged 7). My Make a Wish in 2011 was to meet Miley Cyrus and on that same year, I met the Queen. It was the most exciting and terrifying experience. There were a ton of rules to read up on before I met her. One was that if I didn't curtsy in greeting, I would get fined! For an 11-year-old that warning was scary. So, you betcha I practised that curtsy every waking moment before meeting her. If you google my name, there are images of me meeting her and a few other celebrities over the years.

My teen years were a major change for me. I was healthy!! (As much as a chronically ill person can be). I barely missed any school, started to build real friendships (which I still have today) and became 10x better at my school work. Of course, there were still limitations such as being stuck on my pole every night. Because of this, I convinced myself I couldn't do anything like travel or have sleepovers. Little did I know I was wrong, and this is where ChIPS comes in.

I've been a member of Chips for 5 years. I first heard about it from a nurse while I was in Emergency. My first thought was, "How could a support group be fun?" In my head, I was picturing 'The Fault in our Stars' or some other chronic illness movie. But, being a social butterfly, I found the idea of meeting new people exciting, especially people who could understand what I was going through.

As I started reading more about Chips and their camps, my mind instantly went NO WAY!! For as long as I could remember if I had my lines on, I was either home with my mum or in hospital. I would never let anyone else touch my line because I was worried that they wouldn't know what they were doing.

I thought Camp would be a terrible idea, but I decided I would try my 2-day intensive first and see how it went. Straight away I made my first friend. Everyone was so welcoming and understanding, so I decided to push myself and go to Camp.

Even though I was freaking out, it was comforting to know one of the med staff, Jess (aka Chops), needed TPN too! This was such a relief and since then I haven't looked back.

I never thought in my life I would go on a Flying Fox or Giant Swing. Neither did my parents. I had to give them photos to prove it!

Since starting out, my Chips friends have been a great support. In 2017, I had a major health scare on my 18th birthday and was stuck in the hospital for 6 weeks. During that time, I always had my Chips family visiting me and was given the most gorgeous bunch of balloons.

I have gained so much confidence being in Chips, from pushing myself to do all the activities to finding the best of friends. This year I'm also apart of Ref Comm and Camp Committee, so watch out for January Camp 2020!

I'm very thankful for Chops who taught me how to do my own lines and to Chips for showing me it was possible to live proudly and freely with a chronic illness. I now go on holidays with my friends, have sleepovers and independently take care of myself wherever I go.

My point is, to new ChIPPERS and to the ones that have stuck around: Always keep taking risks, never think you're stuck in a certain situation because of your illness, and always try new things.

Chips welcomes everyone!

Thank you all for reading :)



Emily Cocks

My name is Emily but most people call me Emmi. I am 19 years old, at birth I was diagnosed with Neurofibromatosis type 1 (NF1). NF is a condition that causes tumours to grow on nerves and under the skin. It affects everyone differently. For me everything was pretty fine; I had 6 month check-ups and everything was stable until I hit was going through puberty. I wasn't developing right and I wasn't walking right. I went to one of my check-ups, by this time I was I would have been about 11, and after having a few tests I was diagnosed with astrocytoma which is a form of brain tumour. Mine grew where the skull and spine meet and it damaged all my nerves which affected my walking. After a 6 hour surgery and 12 months of chemo I was stale. I now needed MRI's every 3 months to keep an eye on things and everything was good; I had a bit of a limp and wasn't able to walk like everyone else. All I needed to do was physio to maintain my leg strength. Everything was fine until just after I turned 16 when I had 2 seizures and after tests doctors found I had had some mini strokes. This was when things started going downhill. From then on I have been regularly tested and have been doing on-going physio but by the I was 17 I was permanently in a wheelchair and have been ever since. I am not bothered by it because towards the end walking was so painful and difficult. Surprisingly walking actually took away my independence, being in a wheelchair made getting around easier without having to rest every 100 metres. Just after my 18th birthday I had an operation on my foot to stretch the muscles and tendons to make it easier for me to stand a little.

Neurofibromatosis is a genetic condition which my mum has so the chances of me getting it were fifty-fifty. When I was 11, and diagnosed with astrocytoma, it was a bit of a shock. At the time I didn't fully understand and was confused at first but things started making sense, we finally had an answer to why I wasn't walking right and why I always had a sore neck and migraines. Everything felt so full-on but I was reassured by the doctors at the Children's Hospital that everything would be fine.

Being in a wheelchair doesn't really affect my day to day life too much. Now it just feels normal, obviously through other eyes it's different but to me my physical disability feels normal. I still have yearly MRIs and get check-ups all the time. There is no cure to what I have, it can only be maintained and controlled so it can but problem won't get worse this will be my life for the foreseeable future.

It's been very hard having a disability but I think having my parents around really helped, being a teenager is hard enough as it is. Sometimes I feel like a pin cushion, it can be very scary having tests and trials and having to put trust in doctors and nurses but it gets easier over time. Being a teenager can help because you're not alone. I was lucky enough to have both parents behind me and even though I am a teenager I am not ashamed to say I needed a hand to hold. It's difficult to be strong all the time but having a chronic sickness teaches you how to be.



For the past 3 to 4 years I have been using art to express my feelings or who I am as a person. I have found art to be an escape, something that lets me forget about my illness and focus on something else, which is my main motive to become an art therapist.

From experience, I know that having a disability can cause issues with mental health so stay strong and don't be scared to ask for help. I know it sounds cliché, and it is, but I would also say that it's ok to not be strong. Being sick or having issues is difficult and being strong all the time is hard so I'd say it's ok to cry. I think it's humanly impossible to stay strong all the time, it's ok to cry, it's ok to need to hold your parents' hands, it's ok to show weakness. We're only human.

HOROSCOPES

aries

Independent, spontaneous,
confident, courageous
Comfort food: grilled cheese
TV Show: Bob's Burgers
Ideal fruit: mango
Lucky Numbers: 7, 17, 21

taurus

Real, great taste, loves to have
fun, passionate
Comfort food: pasta
TV Show: That 70's Show
Ideal fruit: cherries
Lucky Numbers: 2, 36, 43

gemini

Talented, cheeky, dynamic,
curious
Comfort food: tacos
TV Show: Pretty Little Liars
Ideal fruit: pomegranate
Lucky Numbers: 4, 16, 19

cancer

loyal to friends, practical,
generous, hilarious
Comfort food: potato gems
TV Show: Scrubs
Ideal fruit: grapes
Lucky Numbers: 5, 24, 37

leo

Innovative, loyal, assertive,
widely loved,
Comfort food: mashed potatoes
TV Show: Grey's Anatomy
Ideal fruit: pineapple
Lucky Numbers: 3, 14, 40

virgo

Smart, successful, creative,
modest
Comfort food: soup
TV Show: The Office
Ideal fruit: blueberries
Lucky Numbers: 4, 9, 27

libra

Alluring, diplomatic, funny,
easy-going
Comfort food: cheeseburgers
TV Show: Gossip Girl
Ideal fruit: kiwi
Lucky Numbers: 9, 17, 46

scorpio

Wise, self-reliant, focus,
adventurous
Comfort food: Chinese takeout
TV Show: Criminal Minds
Ideal fruit: strawberries
Lucky Numbers: 15, 21, 33

sagittarius

Optimistic, loving, honest, deep
thinker
Comfort food: pie
TV Show: Brooklyn Nine-Nine
Ideal fruit: pear
Lucky Numbers: 10, 26, 41

capricorn

Driven, opinionated, loyal,
empathetic,
Comfort food: ramen
TV Show: Parks & Recreation
Ideal fruit: watermelon
Lucky Numbers: 5, 26, 35

aquarius

Trendy, outgoing, great
problem solver, friendly
Comfort food: donuts
TV Show: How To Get Away
With Murder
Ideal fruit: apple
Lucky Numbers: 4, 12, 34

pisces

Free spirited, sensitive,
compassionate, calm
Comfort food: hot chocolate
TV Show: Friends
Ideal fruit: clementines
Lucky Numbers: 8, 20, 42

INSPIRATIONAL Information

Although living with a chronic illness isn't the best but you can always find a good outcome out of bad situations! So here's a few tips & tricks to get you through the bad days :)



Tips & Tricks #1

Spending time with family & friends either via the phone or face to face contact this will therefore increase your mood & attitude! You can talk about absolutely anything & everything! Being around friends & family gives people a sense of belonging, strong support & can help keep you stay calm!

Tips & Tricks #2

It's okay not to be okay, showing weakness is a very strong and appropriate approach to life & everyone within their lifetime has their fair share of ups & downs. Admitting that you're not okay is a positive step in the right direction in order to get the help in which you require to get you through the hard times. Always ask your friends & family if they are okay & help & support each other.



Tips & Tricks #3

Laughter is the best medicine!! (Better than any medication we're on!) laughter is linked to boosting your mood & happiness! Plus a smile looks amazing on you!



Tips & Tricks #4

Creating mini goals can have a big impact on your mood, when you set mini goals the night before or early in the morning when it comes to the end of the day & you have achieved all of your goals you set yourself you will be very proud of yourself in which will leave you very happy & an increased mood!

Some mini goals may include ;

- Waking up at a certain time
- Going for a walk
- Give yourself a compliment
- Go outside & get some fresh air



Just remember how special you really are & how many people love & care about you! You've come so far & you're so strong! Keep smiling

Kalysha Danvers



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.

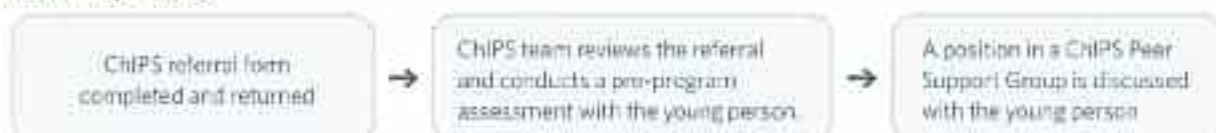
The entry point for the ChIPS program is via the 'Eight Week Group' or the 'ChIPS Intensive' where new participants share experiences of living with chronic illness and learn from each other in a facilitated, semi-formal and safe environment. Once program participants have completed their Eight Week 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 (onc., 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:

Thank you!

A special thanks to all those who supported us this year.

Our incredible (and fun!) opportunities wouldn't be possible without you.

Donors who supported ChIPS in 2019:

Mick Creati

ChIPShiliary

Allan and Judy Dixon

New Trend Party Hire

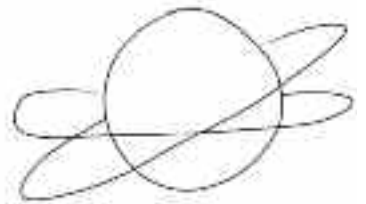
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Thank you for the in-kind support of:

Victoria Police Transport Branch

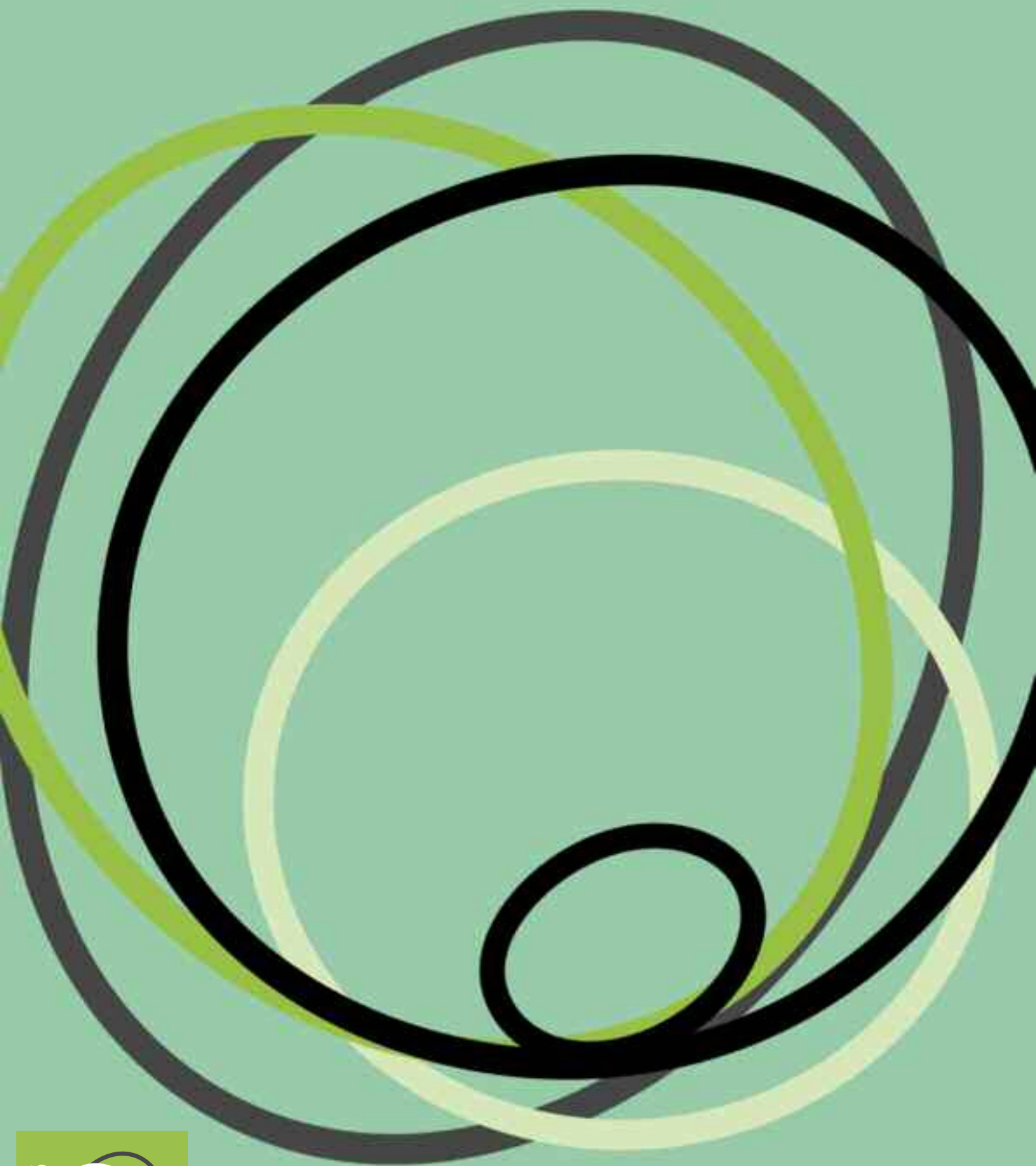
Southern Cross Trophies

A very special thank you for the generous (and delicious!)
Reference Committee Break-up Dinner at District Mot:

Harry and Sina

Thanks to the RCH Foundation for their ongoing support of the ChIPS program.





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