Cover art
The Australian School-based Apprenticeship flyers in the bottom right-hand corner feature artwork by Caleb Nichols-Mansell.

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Interim Director’s report 2022

This report creates an opportunity to reflect on the work of the Centre over the past 12 months as we continued to navigate a challenging post-COVID time for our children and young people. There is so much to be proud of, and the information outlined in this report demonstrates the extensive reach of our programs, partnerships and research.

As schools opened up for visitors in Term 2, our activities for students and research in schools were re-activated. We are very aware of the continuing pressures on school staff and have focused on ways in which our work adds value for learners. This has included our activities in schools – such as Children’s University Tasmania, uniHUBs, University Connections Program (UCP) and High Achiever Program (HAP) – as well as our research.

Mid 2022 the Centre was well represented at ‘Doing School Differently’ (DSD), the biennial national conference for programs that change the way they ‘do’ school to better work for young people from marginalised backgrounds. Melody West and I both presented, as well as our Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) colleague Jodee Wilson. DSD2022 is an example of the research-practice connection that is central to the way the Peter Underwood Centre works to enhance impact for supporting children and young people.

This year we have worked in partnership with our Advisory Committee as well as colleagues from the University’s strategic communications, marketing and school engagement teams to extend opportunities for sharing the story of the Centre’s work and achievements. We look forward to harvesting the fruit from these collaborations in 2023.

Towards the end of 2022 we received the wonderful news that we were successful in securing two major grants. First, the Tasmanian Community Fund has provided a grant from 2023-2027 for the Limitless Learning project. This will focus on the Public Learning Destinations that collaborate with Children’s University Tasmania. Second, a grant through the Federal Government’s Emerging Priorities Program will enable the Centre to extend the uniHUB model in the North-West, North and North-East of the state during 2023. We will develop evidence for a proof of concept of how the model can work in different communities.

The University introduced a staff engagement survey in 2022. Over a series of get-togethers, the Centre’s team explored our survey results, celebrated what we do well, discussed priorities for change, and developed some actions we can undertake ourselves. Perhaps the greatest benefit was that these meetings provided us with time to come together away from the immediate pressures of tasks and deadlines. 2022 has again confirmed that the outstanding achievements of the Centre are due to the outstanding team we have.

On that note, I take this opportunity to thank Professor Natalie Brown for her exceptional contributions during her five years as Director of the Peter Underwood Centre from mid-2017 to mid-2022. In that time Natalie has made a huge contribution to the Centre and built an excellent and secure foundation for us to continue to flourish. Natalie remains at the University as Chair of Academic Senate as well as in a role supporting the University’s focus on educational attainment. We are delighted that she therefore will continue to be a member of the Underwood Centre community.

You will find much interesting detail about our work in and for schools, the community and academia in the brief annual report below.

Professor Kitty te Riele,
Interim Director, Peter Underwood Centre
Communications

Wonder Weekly
In 2022 editions of the Wonder Weekly have ranged from how lighthouses work, DIY science for National Science Week to GPS tracking of Wedge-tailed Eagles and the secrets of the deep blue sea.

If you would like to access any back issues, they are all on the Peter Underwood Centre website here.

UCTV Alive for Kids
Throughout 2022 the UCTV technology and expertise was harnessed to support a variety of projects with video production. These included a video for the Learning in Families Together (LIFT) program through DECYP called ‘Reading to your child’; and several short videos showcasing Learning Destinations (LDs) for Children’s University Tasmania, for example about the Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden.

Tess Crellin (Research and Digital Projects Officer) also introduced an innovative change to UCTV’s standard programming by replacing PowerPoint presentations with pre-recorded videos to enhance the engagement of students during the webinar.

Topics in 2022 included the Aurora Australis and glassmaking, which was aligned with the school theme for National Science Week ‘Glass: more than meets the eye’. 1,176 people watched the glassmaking broadcast live and sent in 198 questions during the Q&A.

Closed captions were added to 14 past UCTV episodes and packaged up in to a 10-hour video which is playing on repeat on a monitor in the Centre’s window in Hobart.

The City of Hobart’s Digital LED Screen The Loop screened three previous UCTV episodes as part of their initiative to feature child-friendly content during the school holidays. The screen is located in the courtyard in front of the Centre’s Hobart office.

Media
The work of the Peter Underwood Centre continued to attract broad media interest in 2022, with extensive coverage of the Children’s University Tasmania graduations in the three regions a major highlight.

Towards the end of 2022, the Centre resumed its monthly segment on ABC Hobart Local Radio Drive with Lucy Breaden, with our UniHUBs program and Tassie Researchers featured on the program.
Sharing our knowledge widely

Doing School Differently conference

Doing School Differently is the biennial national conference for programs that change the way they ‘do’ school to better work for young people from marginalised backgrounds. DSD22 was held in Adelaide mid-2022, and was attended by more than 400 delegates from all over Australia, including teachers, youth workers, First Nations support workers, policy makers and researchers.

The DSD conference is organised by the Australian Association for Flexible and Inclusive Education, AAFIE is the peak body for the flexible and inclusive education sector and supports ‘flexi’ programs which in turn support young people to learn and succeed. Both AAFIE and the DSD conferences were developed based on research by the Centre’s Professor Kitty te Riele. She is also the inaugural co-chair of AAFIE, together with Dale Murray, National Education Director for Life Without Barriers.

Melody West (Research and Engagement Fellow in the Peter Underwood Centre) presented on the Underwood Centre evaluation of the Launceston Big Picture School.

She explained how ‘entanglement’ in the best sense of the word enables researchers to do justice to the staff and students in a school while also being independent and rigorous.

Professor Kitty te Riele and colleagues (Anna Sullivan, UniSA; Simon Vaughan, principal Canberra College; Ivan Mahoney, Principal, EREA Youth+) ran a workshop on improving educational experiences for children and young people in Out of Home Care.
Peter Underwood Centre researchers Dr Emily Rudling, Dr Megan Lang and PhD candidate Md Azmain Muhtasim Mir presented papers at the University of Tasmania (UTAS) conference Celebrating the Impact of Regional Research and Education Conference held in Devonport in November 2022.

The Peter Underwood Centre was well represented, with presentations by staff members Dr Emily Rudling, Dr Megan Lang, Dr Becky Shelley and Dr Jess Woodroffe as well as PhD candidate Md Azmain Muhtasim Mir.

Megan presented on child-centred methods for evaluating education programs. Emily co-presented with Associate Professor Clair Andersen (pictured) on collaborative work supporting the success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the Catholic education system. Becky was part of a team presenting on young people’s perceptions of being a self-directed learner in a small rural Tasmanian town. Jess was part of a team presenting on a Community Culture Framework to understand key community influences on post-school and higher education pathways.

Peter Underwood Centre PhD candidate Md Azmain Muhtasim Mir presented on researchers’ positionality and reflexivity, lessons learnt undertaking ethnographic fieldwork on the West Coast of Tasmania.

These conferences exemplify how The Peter Underwood Centre uses communication and dissemination of insights from research, practice and policy to support children and young people to flourish through the transformative power of learning.
Partner programs

uniHUBs

With over 230 individual visits and 80 emails from students in 2022, the Newstead College and Claremont College uniHUBs have continued to embed themselves in their respective Colleges as a support for students considering university pathways by having conversations, providing information and experiences, as well as advice about applications.

The Newstead and Claremont uniHUBs in 2022 have strived to reach more students and to continue to demystify university as a post-college pathway to support their aspirations for the future. Each uniHUB ran information sessions on the UTAS Schools Recommendation Program (SRP), scholarships and applications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2022 Contacts (Claremont and Newstead uniHUBs combined)</th>
<th>Current Students</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Teachers/Staff</th>
<th>Former students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visits to uniHUB (including repeat visits)</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Highlights from Claremont College 2022**

The Claremont uniHUB organised for 30 students to visit the Sandy Bay Campus to take part in activities and sessions designed to expose them to university learning. Additionally, Dr Jo Ingram (Claremont uniHUB Coordinator) also ran a transition to university session and a Health and Medicine Q&A session and is looking to implement study skills sessions in 2023.

**Highlights from Newstead College 2022**

At Newstead College, uniHUB small group sessions about university pathways were well attended. In addition, students accessed UTAS campuses through the Masterclass Day (81 students attended Newnham Campus), Extension support Group Hobart Trip (18 students attended the Sandy Bay and City Campuses), and a visit to the UTAS Launceston Clinical School (12 students). Like Claremont’s visit, getting onto campuses enabled students to experience first-hand what university learning can look like, and build their confidence in considering higher education. The Newstead uniHUB has also organised for academics from a variety of disciplines (International Relations, Law, Agricultural Science, Life Science and Environmental Science) to talk with students.

**Emerging Priorities Project**

Late in 2022 the Peter Underwood Centre was awarded a grant through the Federal Government’s Emerging Priorities Project (EPP). Our EPP project commenced in November 2022 and will run for 12 months. We work in collaboration with DECYP, Year 11 and 12 partner Colleges and their feeder schools, and with UTAS Colleges and Divisions to provide information about post-school opportunities and targeted activity.

The aim is to inspire, inform and support the successful transition of students to higher education. The project will use aspects of the proven place-based uniHUB model from Newstead and Claremont Colleges and focus on school collectives in the North-East, North-West and North of Tasmania, where COVID-19 exacerbated traditionally low participation rates in post-school education.

In addition to the existing uniHUB at Newstead College, the EPP project involves Don College and Hellyer College and their feeder High Schools, and the North East Collective (St Helens District High School, St Mary’s District High School, Scottsdale High School and Winnaleah District High School).
High Achiever Program
The High Achiever Program (HAP) enriches the educational opportunities for high-achieving students and develops links with the UTAS. The units count towards Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE) credits and an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

In 2022 we had a strong field of applicants (n=48) with 43 students admitted to the Program across 19 schools. The Program continued to be accessible to students from all educational sectors in Tasmania. Student results for students were outstanding: 8 out of the top 10 Tasmanian students by Tertiary Entry Score were High Achiever Program students from across school sectors. They studied a wide range of subjects including Physics, Chinese, German, Maths, International Relations and Public Policy, Chemistry, and across regions.

We continue to receive messages from past students with their reflections of the Program, including these two quotes from 2022 students.

This courtesy email expresses my gratitude for your assistance and the Peter Underwood Centre, as I think this is only right. Without this [HAP] opportunity, I would not have achieved my academic aspirations for 2022.

I wish to thank you for your support, assistance, and encouragement throughout the year. I enjoyed my HAP experience, and it would not have been possible without you.

University Connections Program
The University Connections Program (UCP) allows Year 11 and 12 students to study special university-designed units at the same time or in addition to their TCE studies. The Program provides opportunities to extend and expose students to new disciplinary areas and learning opportunities while studying in their school or college. The Program is offered in partnership with schools and senior secondary colleges and is accredited for TCE/ATAR with the Office of Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification (TASC).

At Census, 2022, we had approximately 860 students enrolled in 14 units across 24 Tasmanian partner schools, which includes enrolments from extension schools including Taroona and Ulverstone. We have seen a pleasing uptake of new units in the UCP, including ‘Songwriting’ and ‘Entrepreneurship’. 95% of UCP students successfully completed their units, with most of these eligible for TCE and inclusion in the ATAR.

In 2022, 82 teachers were recognised for delivering UCP from 24 partner schools- as formal teaching Associates of the UTAS.

We have continued to work closely with the Years 9-12 team in DECYP to identify possible future learning areas for the UCP, aligned with the Years 9-12 curriculum framework.

Work Based Learning Project
Working with DECYP, this project involved a comprehensive evaluation and review of DECYP’s Work Based Learning (WBL) policy and procedures including the development of a quality practice guide; the evaluation and implementation of recommendations for intermediaries coordinating vocational placement and WBL opportunities and investigated and recommended options for supporting the development of and implementing a client management platform for WBL.
Aspiration and attainment

Children’s University Tasmania

There are 46 schools and community hubs now actively participating in Children’s University Tasmania (CUT) across the state:

- 13 in the North-West
- 8 in the North
- 4 on the West Coast
- 21 in the South

Increasing opportunity and reach into these schools has been successful as evidenced by membership growth in schools such as Brighton Primary School (increase from 17 members to 78), Dover District School (increase from 6 members to 21), and Austins Ferry Primary School (increase from 14 members to 47).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>No. of Graduates</th>
<th>Combined No. of Learning Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North-West</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>10,701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Coast</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>5,787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>1,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>555</strong></td>
<td><strong>18,810</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CUT members have engaged in UTAS extracurricular learning activities with the Young Tassie Scientists, the Launceston Clinical School and the Marine Science Adrift Lab, and have participated in tennis coaching at the Domain Tennis Centre, art workshops in Devonport and ocean pressure activities with scientists on the RV Investigator.

School Holiday activities have been popular, including with the Tamar Estuary Catchment Discovery Centre, the Emu Valley Rhododendron Gardens, the Burnie Regional Museum, the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens, the Windward Bound Brigantine and the Grote Reber Museum & Mt. Pleasant Observatory.

We have built on the popularity of the Wonder Weekly with the creation of 10 Hour Challenge booklets. These contain activities suitable for a range of ages and abilities, that can be completed individually or in groups.

The first booklet focused on cartooning and was co-created with political cartoonist, John ‘Polly’ Farmer. John also ran on-site workshops for CUT members based on the challenge booklets.
Effects of Extracurricular Learning on Educational Aspirations and Attainment

Recruitment for our longitudinal research on influences of Children’s University on school engagement has remained strong in 2022. We now have 489 research participants, up from 248 at the end of 2021. We now have sufficient numbers for statistically significant, robust analysis.

Next steps include linking our data with data from DECYP to support analysis of factors such as:
- Number of hours spent in informal learning
- Sense of belonging and engagement in school
- Self-concept as a learner
- NAPLAN results in literacy and numeracy
- School attendance

In the meantime, we have been analysing feedback from student surveys and parent/carer feedback. Our findings include that both parents and children value the learning that Children’s University offers and that most Children’s University members aspire to careers that involve higher education.

### Student Survey: What I like most about Children's University - 2022 (n=123)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting hours</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of achievement</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to new places</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning new things</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trying new things</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spending time with my family</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spending time at school outside class</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spending time with my friends</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting new people</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Aspirations - 2022

- **Training**: 16%
- **University pathway**: 4%
- **TAFE/trades**: 2%
- **Other**: 14%
- **I don’t know what job I want**: 65%
Limitless Learning

Late in 2022 the Peter Underwood Centre was awarded a grant from the Tasmanian Community Fund as well as funding from the Jetty Foundation and the Cuthill Foundation to build community capacity to support children’s informal learning.

We are working together with children, families, and CUT Public Learning Destinations (PLDs) to co-design and co-create high quality learning experiences for children and young people.

The initiative aims to:

- Increase the quality of learning experiences by removing barriers to learning, along with stimulating higher order thinking that sparks curiosity and prompts children to make decisions, problem solve and communicate;
- Increase visitation to PLDs by children and families through the co-design of more experiential learning experiences; and
- Increase the capacity of PLDs to engage with learning, children and families to support the continued co-design of learning experiences beyond the completion of this project.

Informal learning opportunities will be developed with design groups composed of children from Year 3 to Year 6 from nearby CUT schools and community hubs. A series of design sessions will involve exploration, idea generation, design, feedback, re-design and a launch of the new experiences.

We have the support of Public Learning Destinations across the North, North-West and West Coast of Tasmania.
Research

We conduct research that provides robust and practical evidence to support policy and practice for learning and engagement to benefit children, young people and communities. We both learn from and inform national and international research; and collaborate widely with diverse agencies. Schools and communities from all around Tasmania take part in our research.

In 2022 our research work included a Tassie Researcher project. The project focused on designing an evaluation of impact method for ‘Kids to Farms’, a food and fibre focused intervention of the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association (TFGA).

The research is an example of the benefits that accrue to organisations, policy makers, and service designers, and industry bodies in engaging children and young people as co-researchers. The work was well received by the funder.

New and ongoing research projects

Brave Foundation Program Research

Supporting Post-School Education and Pathways in Regional Tasmanian School Collectives Evaluation

Limitless Learning Evaluation

Work Based Learning Project

Independent Impact Evaluation of Outcomes for Students from the Collective Education Project

Understanding Tasmanian School Students’ Post-School Pathway Intentions

Effects of Extracurricular Learning on Educational Aspiration and Attainment
Initiated by Peter Underwood Centre, 2019-ongoing. Becky Shelley, Megan Lang, Noleine Fitzallen.

Success factors for University Study (incl Schools Recommendation Program since 2021)
Initiated by the Underwood Centre, 2018-ongoing, Natalie Brown, Emily Rudling.
Research projects completed in 2022

**Improving the Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students Within Catholic Education Tasmania**

Funded by Catholic Education Tasmania, collaboration with Deakin University, 2020-21. Kitty te Riele, Natalie Brown, Clair Andersen, David Hicks, Emily Rudling, Tess Crellin, with colleagues from Deakin University.

**Tassie Researchers Child-Led Research**

Funded by the Tasmanian Farmers & Graziers Association, 2021-22. Becky Shelley, Megan Lang, with Noleine Fitzallen.

**Children's Experiences and Conceptions of Learning at Home Through COVID-19**

Initiated by the Underwood Centre, 2020-22. Melody West, Becky Shelley, Megan Lang, with Roseanna Bourke (Massey University) and Noleine Fitzallen.

Publications

**Book chapters**


**Journal articles**


Te Riele, K., Stewart, S., & Stratford, E. (2022). Whole school change for literacy teaching and...


**Reports**


**Presentations**


Rudling, E., & Andersen, C. (2022). Partnerships to support the success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students within Catholic Education Tasmania. Celebrating the impact of regional research and education, 11 November 2022, University of Tasmania.

Schmidt, M., Ooi, C.S., & Shelley, B. (2022). 'School is not for me': young people's perceptions of being a self-directed learner in a small rural Tasmanian town. Celebrating the impact of regional research and education, 11 November 2022, University of Tasmania.


Who we are

Peter Underwood Centre Team in 2022
Natalie Brown (Director, until mid-2022)
Kitty te Riele (Deputy Director, Research; and Interim Director, from mid-2022)
Becky Shelley (Deputy Director, Aspirations and Attainment)
Jessica Woodroffe (Coordinator Partner Programs)
Jesse Brennan
Gemma Burns
Tess Crellin
Megan Dean
Helen Eastley
Sherridan Emery
Jo Ingram
Paula Johnson
Subhash Koirala
Megan Lang
Emily Rudling
Rebecca Shaw
Sean Stevenson
Stuart Thorn
Melody West

Peter Underwood Centre Advisory Committee in 2022

Chair:
Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC

Patron:
Frances Underwood

Members:
Tim Bullard
Kathy Cameron
Dr Patsy Cameron
Lisa Chung
Jenny Gale
Professor Jane Long
Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington
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