



# Pre-Budget Submission 2020-21

## Starlight's Healthier Futures Initiative



Healthier  
Futures  
Initiative



**Starlight**  
children's foundation



*"Meeting Captain Starlight in community eases the anxiety and discomfort associated with clinic attendance and can help to develop a better relationship between the child and the healthcare services.*

*The Captain Starlight program also assists in building the capacity of mobile health professional teams by increasing reach and providing support by entertaining the children."*

—Physician, NT

## Pre-Budget Submission 2019 -20

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## OVERVIEW

A significant gap still exists between the health outcomes of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. The greatest opportunity to close this gap is to improve child health and well-being. What happens in childhood lasts a lifetime.

Starlight's vision is a world where everyone can experience a happy childhood, even young people who are seriously ill. **Why? Because happiness matters.** A happy childhood is associated with greater social connectedness, an enhanced sense of self and healthy life behaviours.

Aboriginal children have some of the highest levels of preventable chronic disease in the world and the development of such chronic health conditions can have significant and life-long impact on health, education and employment. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are dying from an avoidable health condition at more than 3 times the rate of non-Indigenous children<sup>1</sup>.

**Closing the health gap will take innovative collaborations that support and empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to positively engage with health care.**

**Starlight's Healthier Futures Initiative** is an innovative partnership with clinical teams that focuses on the detection and early treatment of chronic health conditions. It improves health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children through increasing participation in health care, improving clinic efficiency and creating a lasting, positive patient treatment experience.

This assists in reframing the health care experience which will engage children and kinship groups with clinics and ongoing treatments.

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## Collaborating to Improve the Health of Children

**Every year Starlight invests over \$20M into the Paediatric Public Health System.**

In 2019, Starlight's Healthier Futures Initiative received its first Federal Government funding of \$816,000 for program expansion into Queensland and South Australia for one year only (see Appendix A).

Starlight is requesting a funding contribution of \$6.85M from the Federal Government over the next three years to continue the investment in this proven model and support the expansion of Starlight's Healthier Futures Initiative into more areas of significant need.

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<sup>1</sup> AIHW (2018), *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework (HPF) 2017 Report*

## THE NEED



Australia's Indigenous populations experience a burden of disease at 2.3 times that of the non-Indigenous population<sup>2</sup> with children having some of the highest levels of preventable chronic diseases in the world. Indigenous children are dying from an avoidable health condition at more than 3 times the rate of non-Indigenous children<sup>3</sup>.

Further complicating the issue is that for some Indigenous communities, there remains an intergenerational lack of trust in the health system, resulting in poor healthcare engagement, low clinic attendance, and overall negative healthcare experiences.

Early detection and treatment can help avoid the development of chronic health conditions that have a significant and life-long impact on health, education and employment. Access to healthcare plays a vital role in improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Access, however, is more than just holding clinics. To be effective, access needs to ensure children attend clinics and have a positive healthcare experience when they are there. Without a positive experience, children may leave prematurely, not able to receive the full range of appointments, screens or treatments they require.

## PARTNERING TO ENHANCE THE HEALTHCARE EXPERIENCE

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*"The Captain Starlight program not only brings joy to the children attending the paediatric visits but assists the visits to run more efficiently."*

*"The presence of the Captains maintains children waiting for their visit and decreases the temptation to leave as they are entertained."*

– Community Physician

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Starlight's Healthier Futures Initiative is an innovative partnership with clinical health teams who together visit rural and remote Indigenous communities focusing on detection and early treatment of chronic health conditions. Starlight's vital role involves 'Captain Starlight' (professional performers trained to positively engage children in health care settings through music, art, dance, games and storytelling) accompanying clinical teams and creating child-friendly, positive health care experiences.

The partnership not only increases participation in health care and improves clinic efficiency, but also helps create lasting, positive patient treatment experiences that are critical for early detection and lifelong participation.

Starlight's Healthier Futures Initiative is in Community every week. In 2019 alone we reached 32,305 children across 138 communities in need.

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<sup>2</sup> AIHW (2016) *Australian Burden of Disease Study Impact and causes of illness and death in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 2011*, page viii

<sup>3</sup> AIHW (n 1)

## PROVEN OUTCOMES



Research undertaken by both Starlight<sup>4</sup> and an independent study<sup>5</sup> found that health professionals and partners we work with in remote communities rate the impact of Captain Starlight on children as significant. Evidence-based outcomes of Starlight's Healthier Futures Initiative on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children include:

- Improved attendance at clinics
- Parents and children staying longer at clinics
- Easier management of clinics / clinic efficiency
- The creation of a more welcoming environment which is less institutional and more family-centered
- Support of existing health promotion programs
- Opportunities to engage in play, which is critical for healthy child development and wellbeing
- Positive experience with Captain Starlight in community creates a sense of familiarity for children who later visit hospitals where Starlight is present
- Positively changed attitudes and beliefs about health care

Existing health services



Captain Starlight

Partnerships with clinical teams include:

**Community health centres, clinics and regional hospitals** supporting health promotion, prevention and early intervention for chronic conditions.

**Health programs for prevention and early treatment of disease and chronic health conditions** such as hearing loss, rheumatic heart disease, trachoma and malnutrition.

**Remote community 'fly in' paediatric clinics** .



= Increased participation in health care & Improvement in the treatment experience

<sup>4</sup> Treadgold C, Dann J, Bowden A. (2018), *Starlight's Healthier Futures Initiative: A partnership model supporting health care delivery to Indigenous children and adolescents*. International Journal of Integrated Care

<sup>5</sup> Harrison N, Walker D. (2008) *Evaluation of the Starlight Children's Foundation's activities in regional and remote communities of the Northern Territory*. Darwin: Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health (now Lowitja Institute)

## FUNDING REQUEST



To meet growing national demand for Starlight's Healthier Futures Initiative, \$12M needs to be invested over the next three years. **Starlight would like to partner with the Federal Government** to invest in sustainable expansion, ensuring this proven model not only continues, but can expand to meet demand in areas of significant need.

Starlight requests Federal Government investment of \$6.85m million over 3 years, which will deliver in excess of \$39M of value to the community <sup>6</sup>. The Government funding proportion has been intentionally tapered over time, as Starlight builds program sustainability.

The 3-year plan for Starlight's Healthier Futures Initiative includes:

1. Queensland and South Australia: continuation of the 2019 expansion as well as meeting demand by increasing the number of clinics we are involved in with existing partners.
2. Northern Territory: continuation of the comprehensive program reach across the entire Territory as well as program expansion through a new health partnership in Central Australia in 2021.
3. Western Australia: continuation of the existing State-wide program to accompany ear health clinic teams as well as the establishment of a new health partnership in 2021 to support an addition health priority area (e.g. rheumatic heart disease, skin health etc.)
4. New South Wales: launching the program in NSW in 2020 with phased expansion in 2021 and 2022.

Over 2020-2022, Starlight's Healthier Futures Initiative is expected to support a minimum of **60,198 children** in communities of significant need (see Appendix B for existing and planned locations).

### Program Funding Required

Region	2020	2021	2022	TOTAL 3 YR Funding
Queensland	\$661,663	\$635,838	\$799,563	\$2,097,064
Northern Territory	\$1,755,295	\$1,952,255	\$2,013,853	\$5,721,403
Western Australia	\$268,086	\$394,184	\$406,891	\$1,069,161
New South Wales	\$410,956	\$964,152	\$1,183,026	\$2,558,134
South Australia	\$185,040	\$163,375	\$181,919	\$530,334
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Employment Initiative	\$46,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$86,000
Indigenous led program evaluation	\$0	\$60,000	\$0	\$60,000
<b>TOTAL PROGRAM COST</b>	<b>\$3,327,040</b>	<b>\$4,189,805</b>	<b>\$4,605,251</b>	<b>\$12,122,097</b>

Government Funding % requested	75%	60%	40%	
<b>TOTAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING REQUESTED</b>	<b>\$2,495,280</b>	<b>\$2,513,883</b>	<b>\$1,842,100</b>	<b>\$6,851,264</b>

<sup>6</sup> Based on the 2018 SROI undertaken by PWC which found Starlight programs created \$5.70 in community value for every \$1 invested

# Appendix A: Queensland Expansion Update



## Collaborating with Health

Federal Government funding through the Indigenous Australians' Health Programme has enabled Starlight's Healthier Futures Initiative to be established in Queensland. **Starlight is on track to exceed all targets set and has established strong & respectful partnerships with organisations including:**

- Apunipima (Paediatric Charter and School Clinic)
- Indigenous Respiratory Outreach Care (IROC)
- Children's Health QLD Rehab Outreach Service
- Hearing Australia
- Trachoma Screening QLD
- Rheumatic Heart Disease
- Cherbourg Community Health
- Deadly Ears
- CHQ Good Start Program
- Yarrabilba Community Health

### CASE STUDY | Captain Starlight Visits Cherbourg

The visit to Cherbourg in June 2019 was a huge success with the clinical team at **Cherbourg Hospital** and the visiting **Deadly Ears** team reporting a noticeable decrease in the stress levels of children and families when Captain Starlight was present.

For those children waiting for surgery their pre-operative anxiety levels were reported as being lower and the usually long wait times went relatively unnoticed by the children and families as they were happy to engage with the Captains while waiting to see the health team.

Additionally, the Starlight team will be meeting with the **Cherbourg Health Action Group** to create a community birthday party for 3yr olds, which aims to engage children while they undergo vital health checks birth certificate applications and other allied health introductions. The party is scheduled for April 2020.

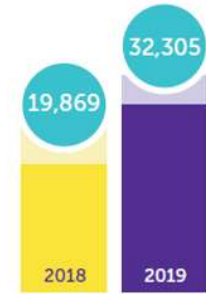
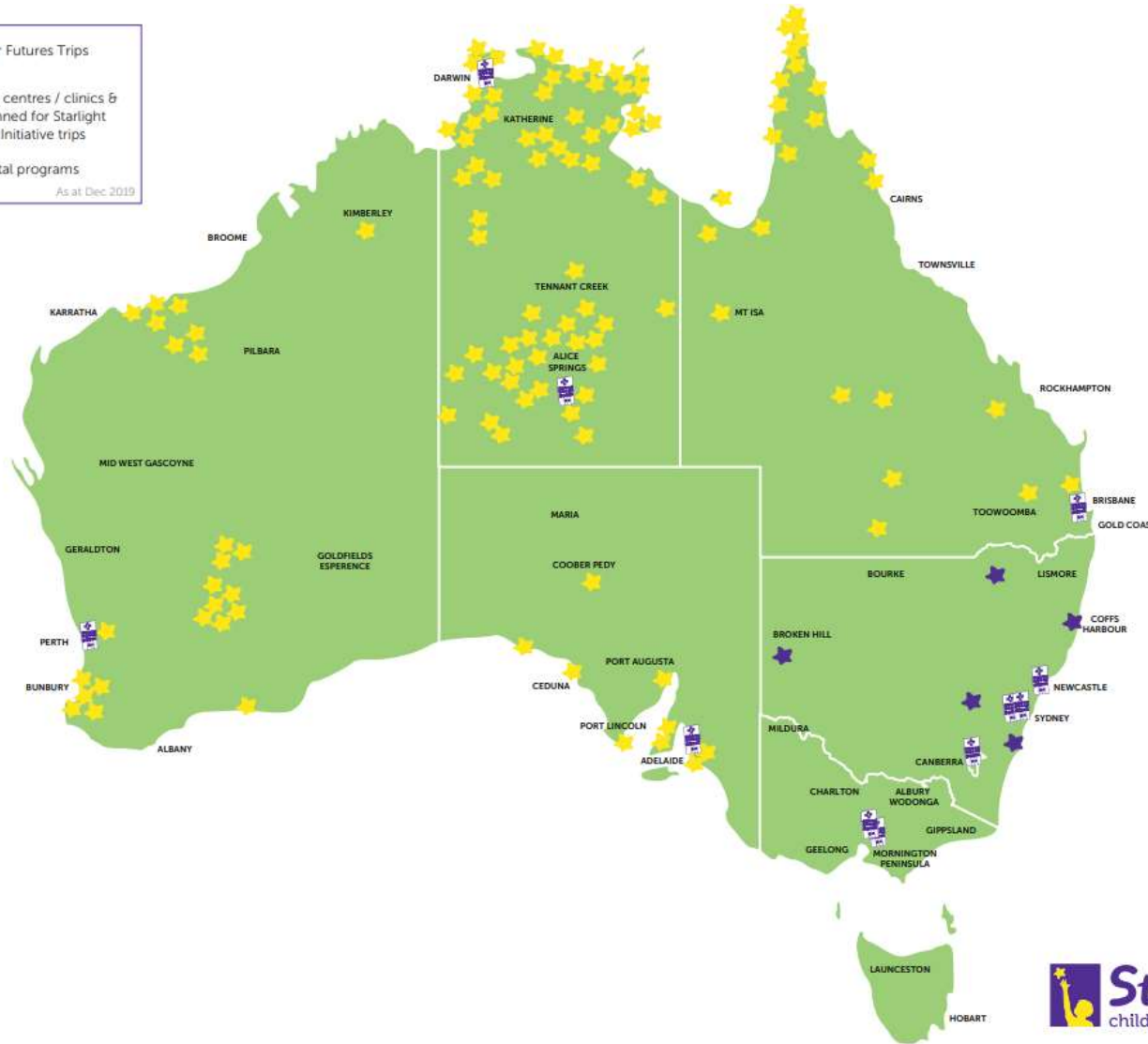


*It is wonderful to be able to report that this was a big success. The Starlight team added a great deal of value to our work, and we are very grateful for their help.*

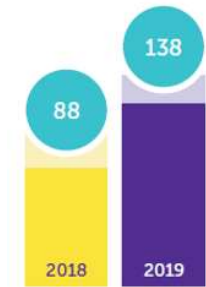
**Matthew Brown, Director Deadly Ears Program**

# Appendix B: Healthier Futures Initiative Program Reach (existing and planned)

-  Starlight Healthier Futures Trips (existing)
  -  Hospitals / health centres / clinics & communities planned for Starlight Healthier Futures Initiative trips
  -  Starlight In-hospital programs
- As at Dec 2019



Kids



Locations







## Appendix C: About Starlight Children's Foundation

Starlight's mission is to brighten the lives of seriously ill & hospitalised children and young people.

**Every year Starlight invests \$20M into the Paediatric Public Health System through its programs.** Starlight's hospital and community programs are founded on the principles of positive psychology, where factors such as social connection, play, fun and resilience have been shown to play a vital role in wellbeing, both in childhood and for life. Established in 1988 and recognised as an integral part of the Australian paediatric healthcare system, Starlight works in partnership with health professionals as part of the 'total care' of seriously ill children & young people. **In 2013, Starlight commenced the Healthier Futures Initiative, an innovative partnership with clinical teams to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.**

Starlight is the 5th most reputable brand in Australia<sup>7</sup> and Australia's broadest reaching children's charity. Starlight has a physical presence in every Australian children's hospital and is on track to deliver more than 610,000 positive Starlight experiences in 2019.

**610,527**  
STARLIGHT EXPERIENCES  
Created in 2019

**The 5th  
MOST  
REPUTABLE  
BRAND IN AUSTRALIA**  
Annual Australian Reputation Index  
(RepTrak®)

With every invested  
**DOLLAR**  
STARLIGHT RETURNS OVER  
**\$5.70**  
in value to the community

\*the SROI was updated in 2018 by Starlight and reviewed by PWC

**WE MADE THE AFR BOSS  
MOST INNOVATIVE COMPANIES LIST!**  
**2019**  
FINANCIAL REVIEW 2019  
MOST INNOVATIVE  
COMPANIES

<sup>7</sup> Reputation Institute (2019), *Annual Australian Reputation Index*, RepTrak