

# What are community hubs?

Community hubs build social cohesion in Australia. They are welcoming places where families from diverse backgrounds, particularly mothers with pre-school aged children, come to connect, share and learn.

The community hub model is a proven place-based and people-centred way of building connections and social and economic capital within culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Hubs are embedded in primary schools and help bridge the gap between families and the wider community. They connect families with each other, with their school, and with local services and support.

Families take part in a variety of activities in the hubs, ranging from playgroups and social 'coffee and chat' sessions to learning conversational English and vocational skills. Attending a local hub helps improve participants' confidence, social connection, educational outcomes and employment potential.

## The National Community Hubs Program

The program is funded through a partnership between philanthropy (Scanlon Foundation), all tiers of government, and the education and community sectors.

Locating hubs in primary schools makes them safe and easily accessible places for women to visit with their young children.

The primary goal of the program is to improve the social and economic outcomes of culturally diverse families and individuals.

The hubs focus on:

- **Engagement** – helping families connect and engage with their community.
- **Early childhood** – running playgroups and connecting families to local early years activities, to support the learning and development of preschool children, improve children's social skills, build relationships between families and prepare children for school.
- **English** – providing opportunities to learn and practise English through both formal and informal programs.
- **Vocational pathways** – building pathways to employment by encouraging volunteering and providing adults with access to formal and informal training opportunities.

Each hub is managed by the school in which it is based. Decisions about the way the hub operates and the programs it offers are made at the local level. This flexibility enables each hub leader to develop the space and the program offering to address the needs of their host school and the local community.

Hubs are clustered within local government areas (LGAs). Within each LGA, a local organisation serves as the support agency, providing coordination and connection.

Community Hubs Australia (CHA), a non-profit organisation committed to helping improve social cohesion in Australia, is responsible for overseeing the delivery, reporting and continual improvement of the program at the national level.

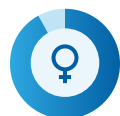


*Photo: Hub participant Luda and her children as part of Fleetwood Primary School community hub's playgroup, Casey (Victoria).*

# Who comes to community hubs?

Community hubs are critical for connection. In 2025, adult hub participants completed a national census, providing a picture of the people coming to hubs, the programs they attend and the impact of the hub on individuals and their host school. Over 3,500 responses were received providing a snapshot of who comes to hubs and why.

In 2025:



**93%** of hub participants were women and **75%** were aged under 45.



**78%** of hub participants were born overseas, **40%** arrived more than 7 years ago, and **60%** are Australian citizens.

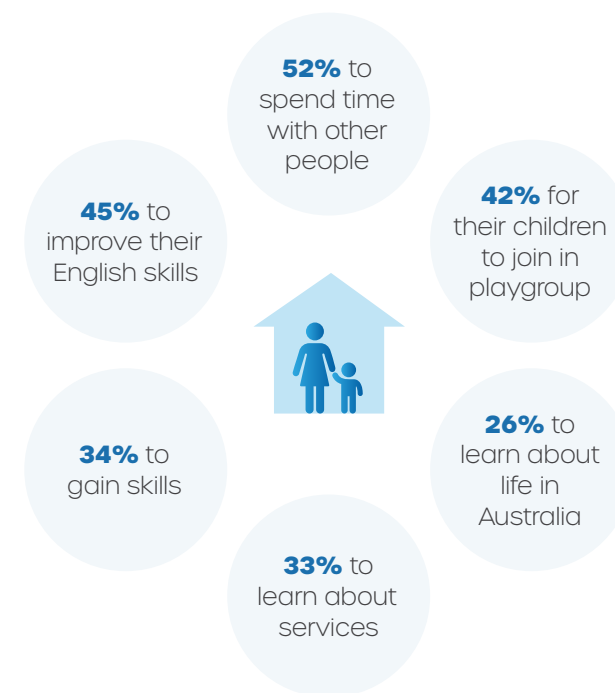


**78%** speak a language other than English at home, although this varies widely across the network. Just under one-third of participants rate their ability to speak or read English as not very or not at all well.



Most (**87%**) have at least one dependent child at home, and **40%** have pre-school aged children; of those with pre-school aged children, **85%** are bringing them to the hub, and half of these don't take their children anywhere else.

The main reason people come to hubs\*:



\*Respondents were able to choose more than one reason for spending time in a community hub.

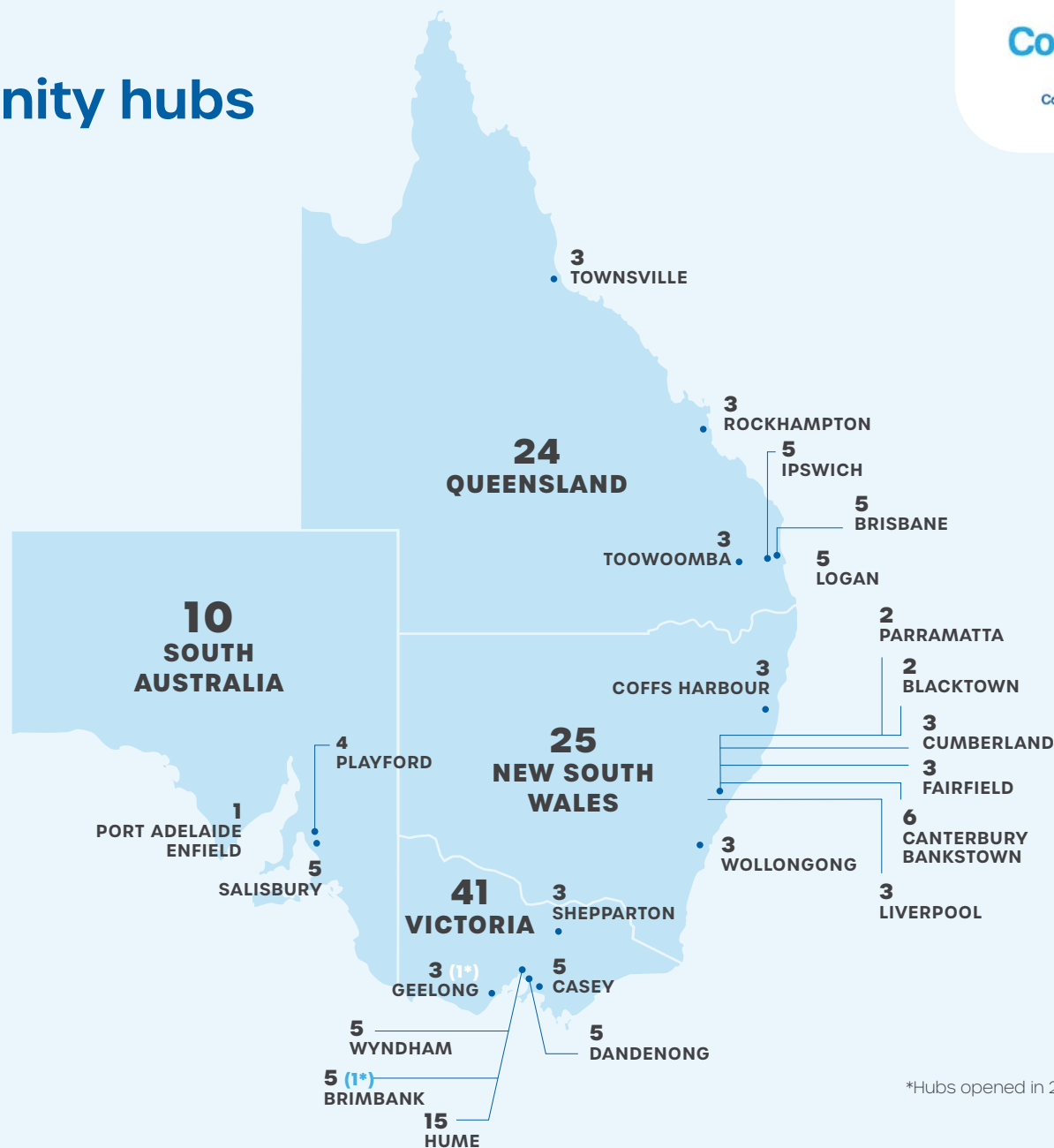
# Where to find community hubs

Our network of **100** active community hubs are located across New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria.

In 2025, **two** schools opened their hub doors for the first time.



Find a community hub in your local region - [communityhubs.org.au/hubs](https://communityhubs.org.au/hubs)



\*Hubs opened in 2025.

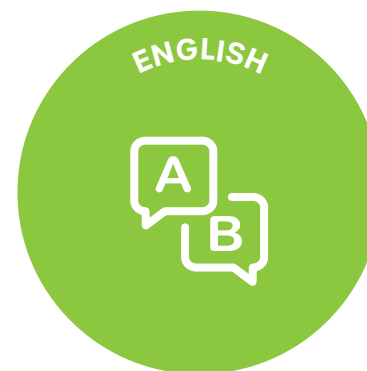
# Summary of hub activity 2025



- **13,775 families** engaged with hubs
- **10,961 referrals** to external support services such as family support, education and training, preschool, community health services, and emergency aid
- **589 local organisations** partnered with hubs across the country



- **99 hubs** delivered early years programs
- **1,883 referrals** to early childhood services including maternal child health and preschool services
- **68 hubs** ran targeted school-readiness programs
- **161 partners** worked with hubs to deliver early childhood activities and programs



- **85 hubs** offered English classes
- **1,437 participants** regularly attended English classes and activities\*
- **57 hubs** referred participants to the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)
- **124 partners** worked with hubs to deliver conversational and formal English classes



- **375 jobs** were secured by hub participants
- **2,189 people** volunteered in a hub
- **1,231 referrals** were made to training and educational services
- **2,498 formal and informal training sessions** were delivered
- **142 partners** worked with hubs to deliver work-ready skills

\* Based on the unique number of attendees who completed a progress evaluation in 2025.

## Our social impact

In 2023, Deloitte Access Economics undertook a comprehensive social return on investment (SROI) evaluation of the community hubs network, concluding that it generated approximately \$65.7 million in social benefits to Australian society in 2023. This represents an SROI of 3.5 – a return of \$3.50 for every dollar invested.



Deloitte’s evaluation demonstrates the significant benefits and positive long-term impacts for participants across all four pillars of the program – engagement, early childhood, English, and vocational pathways. Major findings of the evaluation included:

- A 1.1% improvement in participants’ quality of life, valued at \$40.9 million
- improved English skills and confidence of participants to engage in society
- improvements in educational outcomes for children, valued at \$7.3 million, and
- economic contribution of hub participants who gained employment (through community hub involvement) of \$17 million.

The evaluation followed the SROI framework developed by Deloitte and CHA in 2021 and was undertaken using quantitative and qualitative evidence to identify the net social benefit of the National Community Hubs Program.

The full report is available on our website: [communityhubs.org.au/impact-evidence](https://communityhubs.org.au/impact-evidence).

*Photo: Kindy Connections run at Marsden State School’s community hub in Logan (Queensland).*

**“From playgroups to English classes, toy libraries to bush picnics, our hubs are full of warmth, welcome and connection. Their success rests on the teamwork between coordinators, hub leaders and school leadership.”**

**John Fullbrook,**  
State Member for Playford (South Australia).



# Summary of findings - Deloitte SROI evaluation 2023

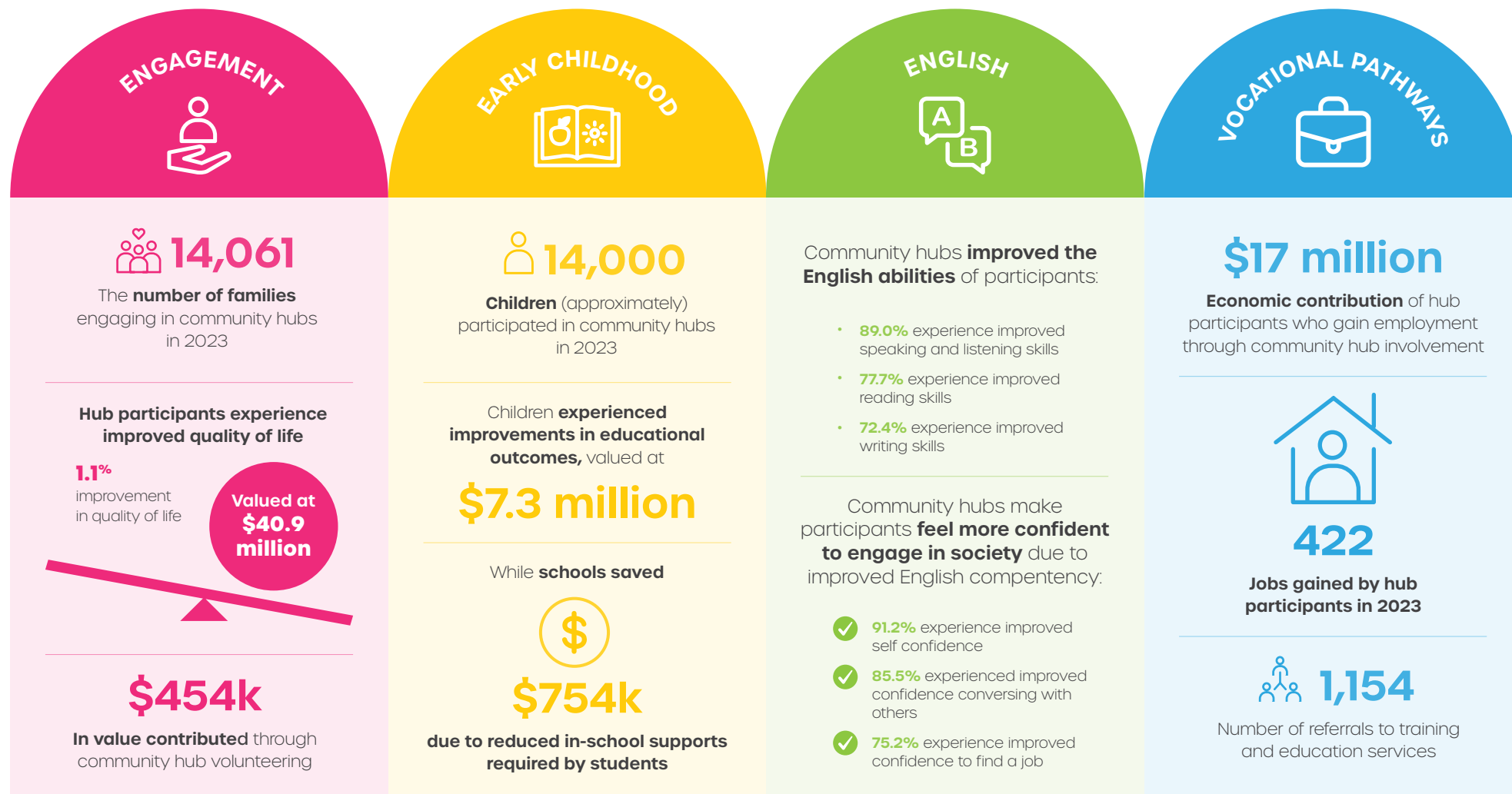


Figure 1: National Community Hubs Program SROI evaluation - summary findings



## What the network tells us about the program

“The hub operates as a bridge between families, the school and the wider community, promoting belonging, early support and meaningful engagement.”

**Hannah Patson**, former hub leader  
Mount Archer State School, Rockhampton  
(Queensland).

“The true purpose and potential of community hubs: is to provide a welcoming, inclusive space that empowers families, strengthens community connections and supports lifelong learning. The community hub connects with and uplifts members of the wider community beyond the school.”

**Nilukshi Cooray**, hub leader, Para Vista Primary School, Salisbury (South Australia).

“The hub is a welcoming space and continues to support families to connect with the school and other community members.”

**Liz Balharrie**, Principal, Deer Park North Primary School, Brimbank (Victoria).

*Photo: Playgroup at St Mary Magdalene's School community hub with volunteer Mina to the right, Playford, (South Australia)*

“Sometimes people just need a safe space and a familiar face who's ready to listen. Our hub is not only a safe space, it's also a relationship builder, where families feel heard, supported and connected.”

**Shandella Sango**, former hub leader, William Bayldon Public School, Coffs Harbour (New South Wales).

*Photo: Participants spending time learning and practising English together in a community hub*



Within each local government area (LGA), specialist support agencies play an important role in ensuring community hubs meet the specific needs of their local communities.



We wish to acknowledge the ongoing support and contributions of our major program funders:



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