

Creative Transitions:

SUPPORTING QUEENSLAND
WOMEN EXPERIENCING
HOMELESSNESS TO
REBUILD THEIR LIVES
THROUGH MUSIC

PILOT PROGRAM REPORT

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AUTHOR ATTRIBUTIONS

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Cover image

Cover image created by Creative Transitions participant Kateryna at Peggy's Place (name used with permission).

Liveworm Credit

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Participant privacy

Due to the sensitive nature of this work, the images, names, and identifying details of all participants have not been included to preserve anonymity and protect their privacy.

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Figure 1. Team members (Left to right: Karen, Sarah, Ali, Brydie, and Libby) with the donation of guitars at Peggy's Place.

Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of a 12-month cross-sector pilot initiative designed to support women transitioning out of homelessness. Delivered across four sites in Brisbane and Logan, including transitional housing and community-based settings, the program integrated trauma-informed, strengths-based music practices within existing service environments.

The program responded to a critical gap in the homelessness service system: the transitional period between crisis accommodation and long-term housing. While this stage is essential for recovery, it is often characterised by social isolation, instability, and limited opportunities for meaningful engagement. *Creative Transitions* addressed this gap by embedding participatory music-making within housing and community services, providing safe, inclusive spaces for creative expression, connection, and personal development.

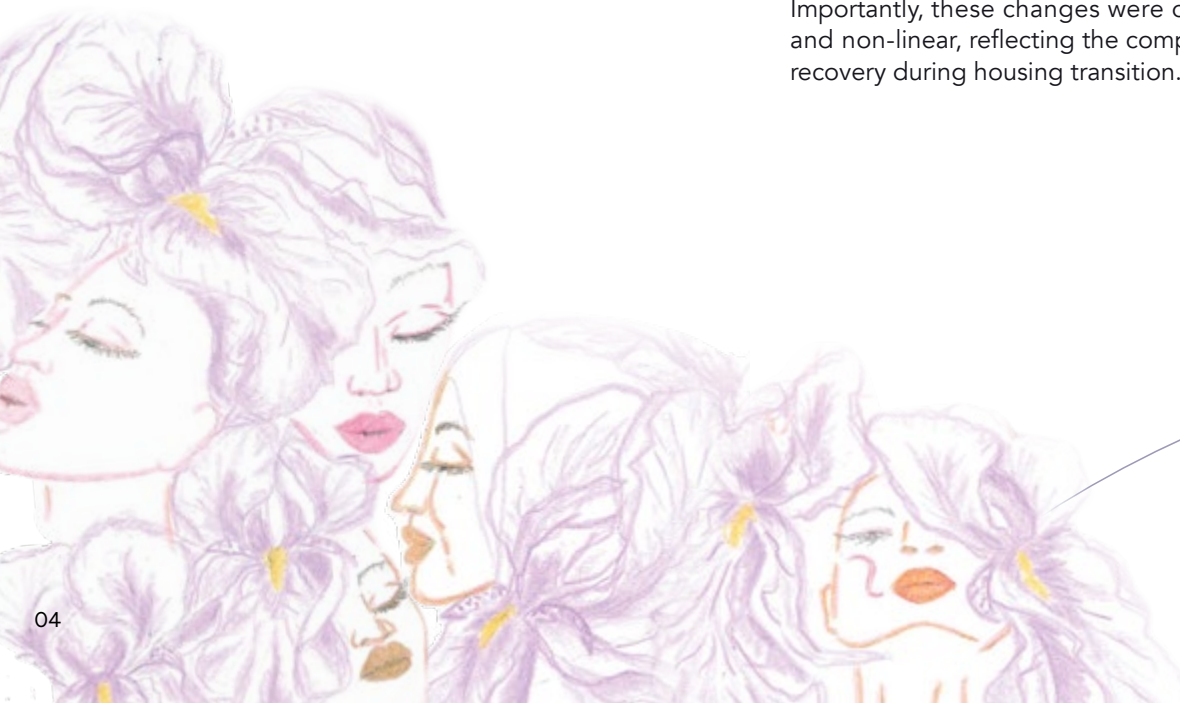
Across 21 workshops, the program engaged 32 women, 20 children, and 7 support workers. Activities including songwriting, singing, drumming, guitar, ukelele-playing, and listening, and were co-designed with participants and delivered by a trauma-informed music therapist in collaboration with service staff. The program generated tangible creative outputs, including three original songs released on streaming platforms, while also building staff capacity to sustain music-based approaches within their services.

Findings demonstrate that music programs supported significant outcomes across four interconnected domains of social and emotional wellbeing. First, music functioned as a powerful regulatory resource, enabling participants to experience calm, reduce stress, and develop accessible self-care strategies. These benefits extended to intergenerational contexts, with music supporting co-regulation and connection between mothers and children.

Second, creative processes fostered agency, voice, and identity reformation. Through songwriting and participatory music-making, women were able to express their experiences, reclaim authorship, and reconstruct identities beyond crisis. Increased confidence, creative risk-taking, and pride in personal achievements were widely observed.

Third, the program strengthened social connection, belonging, and collective care. Music created shared, non-verbal opportunities for connection, reducing isolation and enabling participants to build supportive peer relationships. The inclusive nature of music-making supported engagement across diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and strengthened parent-child relationships.

Finally, participation supported hope, capability-building, and life re-engagement. Women developed new skills, articulated future aspirations, and re-engaged with daily life during a period of uncertainty. Importantly, these changes were often incremental and non-linear, reflecting the complex realities of recovery during housing transition.



The page features a decorative graphic consisting of several thin, curved lines in shades of purple and orange. Three yellow dots are positioned along a horizontal line near the top center. On the right side, there are several concentric, semi-circular arcs in orange and purple. At the bottom, three orange dots are placed along a curved line.

The research also identified key enablers and barriers to implementation. Successful delivery relied on trauma-informed facilitation, strong partnerships between facilitators and service staff, and flexible, participant-led program design. At the same time, structural challenges, including competing priorities, inconsistent attendance, cultural considerations, and resource constraints, shaped the extent to which programs could be sustained and embedded in wider service delivery.

Overall, *Creative Transitions* demonstrates that music and creative practice are not supplementary but central to recovery for women transitioning out of homelessness. By supporting emotional regulation, identity rebuilding, social connection, and future orientation, arts-based programs offer a powerful, evidence-informed approach to complement housing and support services.

The findings highlight the need for greater investment, cross-sector collaboration and integration of creative, trauma-informed approaches within homelessness, health, and community service systems. Through such efforts, programs like *Creative Transitions* have the potential to strengthen pathways out of homelessness and support women and their children to rebuild their lives with dignity, connection, and hope.

The Design and Delivery of Creative Transitions AT A GLANCE

SCALE AND REACH



12-month pilot project



4 locations
(2 transitional housing,
2 community sites)



21 workshops delivered



32 women
+ 20 children engaged



7 support workers
involved

CO-DESIGNED, RESEARCH-LED APPROACH



4 co-design workshops
with partners and
participants



Reflective talking circles
in every session



Debrief yarns at
each program's end



Support worker debriefs
+ project team mid-point
check-ins



Observations of all
sessions + systematic
literature review

CREATIVE OUTPUTS AND IMPACT



3 original songs created,
recorded, and released
on streaming platforms



Embedded broader
creative outputs (lyrics,
artworks, dancing)



Sector resources, academic
publications, and conference
presentations

SUSTAINABLE SERVICE INTEGRATION



Capacity building for staff to
integrate music into programs



Integration of music into
ongoing service delivery
(e.g. counselling spaces)



Strengthened staff
capability to continue
music-based approaches



Evidence for future
program implementation

Measurable Outcomes of Creative Transitions AT A GLANCE



EMOTIONAL REGULATION AND WELLBEING

- » Reported calm, relaxation, and reduced stress ("feel calmer, more positive, and energised")
- » Positive mood shifts within sessions (entry → exit improvements)
- » Use of music as a self-regulation tool in daily life
- » Observable co-regulation between mothers and children



AGENCY, VOICE, AND IDENTITY

- » Confidence in self-expression and creative risk-taking
- » Participation in songwriting, improvisation, and creative tasks
- » Self-reported identity shifts (from crisis-focused → strengths-based)
- » Demonstrated authorship (creating and sharing original work)



SOCIAL CONNECTION AND BELONGING

- » Peer connection and mutual support observed in sessions
- » Group cohesion (participants described feeling "like a band")
- » Engagement in shared group activities (collective music-making)
- » Parent-child interaction and shared play experiences



HOPE, CAPABILITY, AND RE-ENGAGEMENT

- » Skill development (e.g. rhythm, songwriting, instrumental skills)
- » Confidence to pursue creative and life goals
- » Future-oriented thinking (housing, stability, aspirations)
- » Re-engagement in daily life (consistent attendance despite challenges)

Introduction

Creative Transitions was established as an innovative cross-sector pilot initiative designed to support Queensland women transitioning out of homelessness following experiences of domestic and family violence (DFV). Over 12 months, the program was delivered across four sites, including two transitional to medium-term accommodation facilities and two community centres in Meanjin/Brisbane and Logan. The completed program has demonstrated how strengths-based, trauma-informed music-making can play a vital role in supporting recovery, reconnection, and long-term social and emotional wellbeing.

The program responded to a critical service gap: the fragile transition period between crisis accommodation and more stable housing. Although this stage is essential to long-term recovery, it is often under-resourced, with limited opportunities for women to rebuild identity, confidence, and social connection. *Creative Transitions* sought to address this gap by embedding a structured yet flexible music program within housing and community services, offering participants opportunities for creative expression, personal development, and community building.

The program was co-designed with partner organisations and participants and delivered by an accredited music therapist with expertise in trauma-informed practice, alongside songwriting co-facilitators and the assistance of community support workers. The program engaged women in a series of workshops tailored to their needs and musical preferences. Activities such as collaborative songwriting, group singing, drumming, and participatory music-making created safe and inclusive environments in which women could explore self-expression, strengthen their voices, and build supportive peer relationships.

The initiative was grounded in a strong evidence base demonstrating the role of music and creative practice in supporting recovery from trauma, enhancing mental health, and fostering social connection. By prioritising self-determination, inclusivity, and empowerment, *Creative Transitions* aligned closely with Queensland policy priorities, including the Queensland Women and Girls' Health Improvement Program's focus on supporting priority communities including First Nations women, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse women, young women, older women, and women experiencing homelessness.

The program was delivered through a partnership between Griffith University, the Queensland Women and Girls Health Promotion Program Queensland Prevention Strategic Framework), and key organisations including Peggy's Place, YFS, and the Lady Musgrave Trust, with additional input from an Advisory Group and a broader network of service providers and stakeholders. This collaboration ensured that the program was both grounded in lived experience and supported by sector expertise, enabling high-quality delivery and rigorous research.

This *Creative Transitions* report provides important insights into the role of arts-based programming within homelessness and DFV service systems. The program has supported participating women to reconnect with themselves and others and contributed to a growing evidence base for integrating creative strengths-based approaches into holistic service delivery. As such, it offers a model for future initiatives seeking to embed healing, empowerment, and creative expression within both prevention and pathways out of homelessness.



Setting the Context

WOMEN, DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE, AND HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTRALIA

DFV is a primary driver of homelessness among women in Australia and remains a central policy concern. National data indicate that between 2023 and 2024 approximately 109,000 clients accessing specialist homelessness services (SHS) had experienced family, domestic, or sexual violence, representing 39% of all SHS clients (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare [AIHW], 2024a). Women and children account for the overwhelming majority of this cohort, comprising around 90% of DFV-related clients (AIHW, 2024a). DFV is therefore widely recognised as the leading cause of homelessness for women in Australia (Homelessness Australia, 2024).

The relationship between DFV and homelessness is complex and cyclical. Women leaving violent relationships often face significant financial insecurity, limited access to affordable housing, and ongoing safety concerns, all of which contribute to housing instability (AIHW, 2024c; Homelessness Australia, 2024). While many women are successfully rehoused through support services, housing outcomes remain uneven. For example, only around 38% of clients experiencing homelessness at the beginning of support are in stable housing at its conclusion (AIHW, 2024c). Furthermore, a significant number of women return to homelessness, reflecting the ongoing structural and personal challenges associated with recovery (AIHW, 2024d).

Importantly, DFV does not operate in isolation but intersects with broader structural and gendered socio-economic inequalities that heighten women's vulnerability to housing insecurity. Gendered norms and expectations continue to position women as primary caregivers and homemakers, which can limit labour force participation, earning capacity, and long-term financial security. Women in Australia undertake significantly more unpaid care work than men—over 9 additional hours per week on average—and comprise the majority of primary carers (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2025; Commonwealth of Australia, 2024). These caregiving responsibilities contribute to high rates of part-time employment among women (43.3% compared with 19.5% for men), often constraining income, career progression, and superannuation accumulation (Commonwealth of Australia, 2024).

In turn, women's concentration in part-time, casual, and lower-paid sectors, particularly industries such as care and service work, reinforces economic inequity. As of 2025, Australia's gender pay gap remains significant at approximately 11.5% (Workplace Gender Equality Agency, 2026a). Structural drivers of this gap include occupational segregation, unequal distribution of unpaid care, and gendered social norms influencing workforce participation (KPMG, 2023). Women are also more likely to experience insecure forms of employment, including casual roles without guaranteed hours, further contributing to financial precarity (Workplace Gender Equality Agency, 2026b).

These intersecting dynamics have direct implications for housing stability. Interrupted employment histories, reduced lifetime earnings, and lower superannuation leave many women, particularly those exiting long-term relationships, without the financial resources required to secure or sustain housing. Research highlights that relationship breakdown, economic insecurity, and caregiving responsibilities are key pathways into homelessness for women, especially in mid- to later life (Wenzel, 2025). Consequently, when a marriage or partnership ends, particularly in the context of violence, women are disproportionately exposed to poverty and housing instability because of limited independent financial capacity.

In Queensland, these challenges have intensified, with reports indicating a sharp increase in women and children resorting to rough sleeping after fleeing violence in recent years (Homelessness Australia, 2024). These trends highlight the urgent need for integrated and holistic support responses that extend beyond immediate crisis accommodation, addressing not only safety but also the structural gender inequalities that underpin women's pathways into homelessness.

THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD: GAPS IN SERVICE PROVISION

The transition from crisis accommodation to longer-term housing is increasingly recognised as a critical yet under-supported phase in the homelessness trajectory. Research suggests that this “liminal” period is characterised by uncertainty, social isolation, and limited opportunities for meaningful engagement (Chamberlain & Johnson, 2018). Given crisis services are designed to address immediate safety needs, longer-term recovery—including rebuilding identity, confidence, and social networks—is often insufficiently addressed (Wozniak & Allen, 2012).

Evidence from housing research underscores that the needs of women exiting homelessness cannot be met by housing provision alone. Instead, they require integrated wrap-around support that addresses safety, wellbeing, and social participation (Box et al., 2022; Cheng, 2025). Without such support, women may experience persistent loneliness, boredom, and disconnection, which can undermine wellbeing and increase the risk of returning to homelessness (Marshall et al., 2024a).

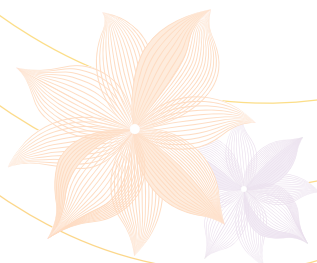
Recent studies emphasise the importance of meaningful activities during this transition period. Marshall et al. (2024a) argue that engagement in purposeful and community-oriented activities plays a vital role in improving psychosocial wellbeing after homelessness. However, there remains a “serious gap” in services that facilitate such engagement, particularly those that incorporate creative or strengths-based approaches (Marshall et al., 2024a).

SOCIAL ISOLATION, CONNECTION, AND WELLBEING

Social isolation is a significant and often overlooked consequence of both DFV and homelessness. Experiences of violence frequently involve coercive control and social exclusion, leading to the erosion of support networks and a diminished sense of belonging (Pokharel et al., 2020). Following transition into housing, these patterns can persist, with women reporting limited opportunities to rebuild relationships and community connections (Marshall et al., 2024b).

A growing body of literature identifies social connection as a key determinant of recovery and wellbeing. Participation in shared, meaningful activities can foster belonging, mutual support, and improved mental health outcomes (Heard & Bartleet, 2024). Arts-based programs have been shown to provide inclusive environments in which individuals can form relationships and develop a sense of community (Heard et al., 2020).

Importantly, creating safe spaces for connection requires careful attention to trauma-informed practice. Given past experiences of harm, survivors of DFV may experience ambivalence or fear around forming new relationships (Hernandez-Ruiz, 2020). As such, programs must prioritise safety, trust, and participant autonomy.



CREATIVE PRACTICE, TRAUMA, AND RECOVERY

Creative and arts-based programs are increasingly recognised as valuable approaches to trauma recovery and health promotion (Bartleet & Heard, 2024; Corbin et al., 2021; Heard et al., 2020). Music has been identified as an underutilised resource for supporting wellbeing across diverse populations (Dingle et al., 2021; Heard & Bartleet, 2024). Engagement in music-making can facilitate emotional expression, regulate physiological responses, and support coping and resilience (Garrido et al., 2015).

For survivors of DFV, creative practices offer unique opportunities to reclaim voice and agency. Violence often involves silencing and control; therefore, creative expression, particularly in collaborative and participatory forms, can counteract these dynamics by enabling self-expression and empowerment (Pokharel et al., 2020). Music therapy research highlights benefits such as improved self-esteem, emotional processing, and the development of coping strategies (Curtis, 2016; Hoggie et al., 2024).

Importantly, embodied and sensory aspects of music-making also play a role in trauma recovery. Practices such as drumming and singing can support bodily awareness, regulation, and grounding, which are critical for individuals recovering from trauma (Bensimon, 2020; Perkins et al., 2016). These approaches align with emerging understandings of trauma as both psychological and embodied (Rajah & Osborn, 2022).

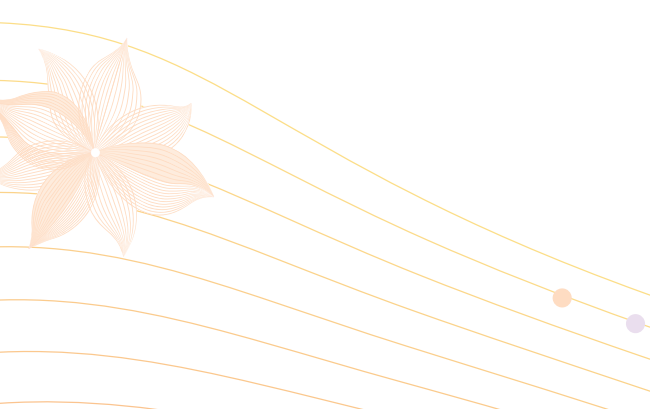
MUSIC AND ARTS PROGRAMS IN HOMELESSNESS AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE CONTEXTS

Evidence from both music therapy and community music literature demonstrates the effectiveness of arts-based programs in supporting individuals experiencing homelessness and DFV. A range of international studies highlight consistent benefits across diverse settings.

Music therapy interventions, such as those implemented through the US-based Angel Band Project, have been shown to enhance self-concept, emotional wellbeing, and coping capacities among survivors of sexual and domestic violence (Ebeling & Michaelis, 2022; Hesser & Bartleet, 2020). Similarly, community music initiatives in women's refuges have demonstrated outcomes including increased confidence, identity reconstruction, and strengthened social connections (Donnelly, 2023).

Programs working with people experiencing homelessness also report improvements in social networks, self-esteem, and overall wellbeing. For example, participation in group music-making has been linked to reduced social isolation and smoother transitions out of homelessness (Coyne, 2019; Knapp & Silva, 2019). Similarly, a study conducted by Cournoyer Lemaire et al. (2026) shows that homeless young adults with problematic substance use actively use music as a self-directed resource to support their emotional regulation, identity, and social connection, demonstrating resilience and agency despite significant life challenges. Cournoyer Lemaire et al. (2026) highlight that music plays a meaningful role in promoting wellbeing by helping individuals manage psychological stressors and maintain a sense of cohesion in their lives. These initiatives often create spaces that are distinct from the stigma and challenges of homelessness, enabling participants to explore new identities and possibilities (Coyne, 2019).

Despite these promising findings, recent reviews highlight a significant gap in research focused specifically on music interventions for survivors of intimate partner violence and sexual assault (Beer & Kwoun, 2024). This gap underscores the need for further evaluation and evidence-building within this field.



TRAUMA-INFORMED AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE APPROACHES

The successful implementation of creative programs in this context depends on trauma-informed and culturally responsive practice. Scholars caution that while community music can offer therapeutic benefits, it may also pose risks if not delivered with an appropriate understanding of trauma (Birch, 2021). Facilitators must therefore be equipped to create safe, flexible, and participant-led environments.

Cultural considerations are also critical, particularly given the diversity of women accessing homelessness services. Women from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds may face additional barriers, including language differences and limited access to culturally appropriate services (AIHW, 2024b). Research with migrant and refugee communities demonstrates that music can support communication, belonging, and cultural expression, even in the absence of shared language (Lenette & Sunderland, 2016; Marsh, 2012; Rinde & Kenny, 2021).

ENABLERS AND BARRIERS TO PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

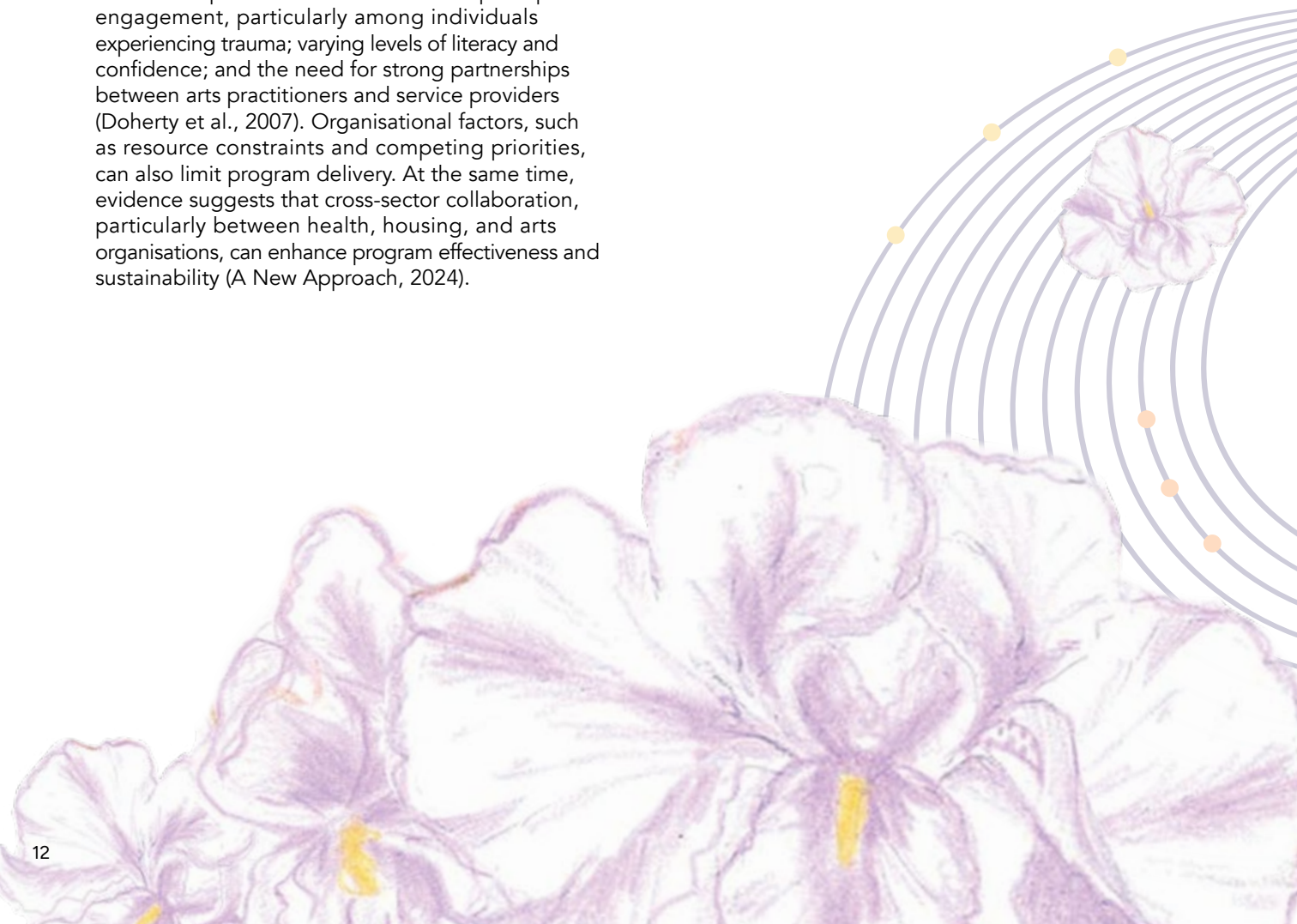
While the benefits of creative programs are increasingly recognised, there are several challenges associated with their implementation. These include participant engagement, particularly among individuals experiencing trauma; varying levels of literacy and confidence; and the need for strong partnerships between arts practitioners and service providers (Doherty et al., 2007). Organisational factors, such as resource constraints and competing priorities, can also limit program delivery. At the same time, evidence suggests that cross-sector collaboration, particularly between health, housing, and arts organisations, can enhance program effectiveness and sustainability (A New Approach, 2024).

IMPLICATIONS

Overall, the literature demonstrates that women transitioning out of homelessness due to DFV face complex, intersecting challenges that extend beyond housing. Social isolation, trauma, and limited opportunities for meaningful engagement can undermine recovery and wellbeing during this critical period.

Creative strengths-based initiatives, particularly those grounded in music and participatory arts, offer a promising approach to addressing these challenges. By fostering self-expression, connection, and agency, such programs can support women to rebuild their identities and re-engage with their communities. However, there remains a clear need for further research, particularly in relation to program effectiveness, scalability, and culturally responsive practice.

The evidence base also highlights the importance of integrated, trauma-informed, and co-designed approaches that centre the voices and experiences of women themselves. In doing so, creative programs have the potential both to support individual recovery and to inform broader sectoral innovation in responses to DFV and homelessness.





Research Design

An integrated program of research underpinned the *Creative Transitions* program. This research employed a qualitative approach designed to understand how participation in the music program contributed to the social and emotional wellbeing, connectedness, and future orientation of women transitioning out of homelessness following experiences of DFV. The methodological approach was grounded in trauma-informed, feminist, and strengths-based principles, reflecting both the values of the program and the complex realities of women's lives during periods of housing transition.

Rather than treating wellbeing as a fixed or linear outcome, the underpinning research approached wellbeing as a relational and contextual process that unfolds over time. Creative practice was understood not only as a program activity but also as a meaningful site through which participants made sense of their experiences, expressed identity, and imagined possible futures. This approach aligned with the program's emphasis on safety, agency, creativity, and depth, and shaped both data collection and analysis.



Figure 2. Setup of djembe drums for one of the workshops at Peggy's Place.

DATA GENERATION

Qualitative data were generated from multiple sources to capture individual, relational, and program-level experiences of *Creative Transitions*. These sources included observations of music workshops, participant reflections, focus groups and interviews with women involved in the program, and interviews with facilitators and service staff. Observations focused on participation, engagement, emotional responses, group dynamics, and moments of creativity, connection, and regulation during sessions. Where appropriate and consented to, these observations included both verbal and non-verbal expressions to account for the fact that not all forms of meaning-making were articulated through words.

Participant reflections were collected throughout the program through informal talking circles, check-ins at the beginning of each session, and post-program yarns that invited women to reflect on their experiences of music-making, connection, and wellbeing. Post-program focus groups and interviews provided opportunities for deeper reflection, including discussion of perceived changes over time, the role of creative expression in participants' lives, and their sense of future orientation as they navigated transitions in housing and support.

Interviews with facilitators and staff focused on perceptions of program impact, observations of participant engagement and change, and reflections on organisational enablers and barriers to delivering creative programs within homelessness support contexts. Additionally, creative artefacts produced through the program, including co-written songs, lyrics, recordings, lyric videos, drawings, and other creative outputs, were treated as data, offering insight into processes of authorship, voice, confidence, and identity reconstruction.

All data were generated in accordance with an approved ethics protocol from the Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee (GU Ref No: 2025/663).

DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS

All qualitative data were managed using NVivo qualitative data analysis software, which supported the systematic organisation, coding, and comparison of data across different sources and perspectives. Focus group transcripts, observation notes, facilitator reflections, and text-based creative materials were uploaded into NVivo and analysed collectively. Creative artefacts were coded alongside interviews and observations, allowing the research team to examine what participants said about creative practice, along with what was expressed through the creative work itself.

Analysis followed a combined inductive and deductive approach. In the first stage, the research team undertook inductive coding, developing codes directly from the data. This process prioritised participants' own language, descriptions, and ways of interpreting their experiences, and allowed patterns related to emotional regulation, safety, connection, agency, creativity, and everyday life to emerge organically. Coding was iterative, with the codebook refined through repeated engagement with the data and regular discussions among the research team.

In the second stage, a deductive analytic framework was applied. This involved drawing on key concepts identified through a scoping review of relevant literature on women's experiences of homelessness and DFV, social and emotional wellbeing, trauma-informed practice, community music, and arts-based approaches to recovery and transition. These concepts provided a lens through which inductively derived codes could be grouped, interpreted, and connected to broader theoretical and practice-based understandings.

The *Creative Transitions* program logic model (see Appendix 1) also informed this stage of analysis, supporting alignment between coded data and the program's intended immediate, intermediate, and longer-term outcomes. Through iterative cycles between data, literature, and program logic, the research team developed an integrated analytical framework comprising four interconnected domains: emotional regulation and inner wellbeing; agency, voice, and identity re-formation; social connection, belonging, and collective care; and hope, capability, and life re-engagement.

INTERPRETING ENABLERS AND BARRIERS

Alongside these outcome domains, the analysis attended closely to contextual factors shaping participants' experiences and the delivery of the program. Codes relating to barriers, challenges, housing conditions, parenting responsibilities, financial pressures, and service environments were analysed across all domains. These contextual factors were not treated as failures or deficits but as structural and environmental conditions that influenced how women engaged with the program and how creative initiatives could be integrated into homelessness support services. This approach enabled the underpinning research to identify both the enablers and the constraints associated with delivering trauma-informed creative programs in transitional housing contexts, and to situate observed outcomes within the realities of women's lived circumstances.

RIGOUR AND REFLEXIVITY

Analytical rigour was supported by multiple data sources; cross-checking of patterns across participant, facilitator, and staff perspectives; and ongoing reflexive discussion within the research team. Attention was given to issues of power, safety, and representation, particularly in interpreting women's narratives and creative outputs. Rather than seeking generalisable claims, the analysis aimed to generate practice-relevant insights that could inform future creative programming, policy, and service design within homelessness and DFV support contexts.

This process was informed by the team's diverse positionalities. Together, we represent a wide range of lived experiences and professional backgrounds. Project Leader Professor Brydie-Leigh Bartleet brings over 25 years of experience leading projects that explore how participation in community music and the arts can create pathways towards social justice, equity, inclusion, and wellbeing, particularly within communities affected by entrenched disadvantage, displacement, and social division. She is a first-generation migrant who grew up in apartheid South Africa, where her commitment to the arts and social justice was first shaped. Her doctoral research, completed over 20 years ago, focused on music and women's studies, laying the foundation for her sustained engagement with issues of gender equity and justice. Brydie is also the parent of teenage twin daughters, a perspective that continues to inform her understanding of intergenerational experience, care, and community.

Lead Music Facilitator Sarah Dunston is a trauma-informed registered music therapist, teacher, and HDR student whose work is grounded in a commitment to healing, connection, and self-determination for people affected by adversity. Across more than a decade of practice, she has worked across the lifespan in diverse contexts with children impacted by abuse and neglect, people living with disability, families navigating DFV, and communities experiencing displacement and disadvantage. As Lead Music Facilitator on *Creative Transitions*, Sarah brings a strengths-based, person-centred approach and a belief in creative expression as a pathway to wellbeing, resilience, and agency. Born, raised, and living in Meanjin/Brisbane, Sarah is a non-Indigenous Australian of European heritage. While she does not share the lived experience of the women with whom she has worked in this project, she strives to ensure all participants feel valued, seen, and heard through a focus on culturally responsive and joy-based approaches and the development of social cohesion, attunement, trust, and connection as key to practice.

Senior Research Assistant Dr Libby Myers is a guitarist, composer, and researcher whose work centres on artistic research methodologies, musical identities, and contemporary performance. Her doctoral research explored how artists perform their identities through a commissioning and recording project, proposing a methodology of musical narrative inquiry. She has collaborated on research projects that examine music in community settings with marginalised groups, including young people in contact with the justice system. As a performer, composer, and improviser, Libby has contributed to musical projects that bring awareness to ecological, social justice, and equity causes. She is an experienced music educator and has worked with students from all walks of life in private, public, individual, and classroom settings. Born and raised in Meanjin/Brisbane, Libby is a non-Indigenous Australian of Irish heritage.

Queensland Women and Girls' Health Promotion Program researcher Dr Emma Heard is a qualitative researcher and health promotion practitioner whose work is informed by a strong commitment to social justice and equity. Her doctoral research explored arts-based approaches to intimate partner violence prevention with young people in Samoa, where she has family connections through her children. Born, raised, and now living in inner-city Meanjin/Brisbane, Emma is of European heritage. Working across community, tertiary education, and government sectors, Emma's work has centred on gender equity, health equity, and social connection, always looking to embed participatory approaches and promote health and wellbeing.

Queensland Women and Girls' Health Promotion Program researcher Anikka Way is an emerging First Nations qualitative researcher of Kamilaroi descent who is currently undertaking Honours research evaluating a health promotion initiative in a youth detention setting. She is passionate about First Nations-led, culturally grounded health promotion. Her placement in India deepened her understanding of international health systems and the importance of co-design, cultural relevance, and strengths-based approaches. She grew up in Gurambilbarra/Thul Garrie Waja/Townsville and moved to Meanjin/Brisbane for tertiary study, where she still lives and works in a health promotion role focused on gender and health equity.



Creative Transitions Sites

The program was delivered across two transitional housing sites and two community sites. The transitional housing settings are specifically focused on supporting women, and often their children, who have experienced housing insecurity and homelessness (in the case of Peggy's Place, because of DFV). The two community sites support women and children experiencing disadvantage, including housing insecurity, DFV, risk of homelessness, and other complex challenges.

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING SITES

Program Site #1: Peggy's Place, Bardon

Peggy's Place is a Meanjin/Brisbane-based refuge and transitional accommodation service for women and children escaping DFV. It was established to address a gap in the DFV support system: safe, trauma-responsive accommodation for women and children who have left crisis refuge settings but are not yet ready for independent living. Its model combines secure accommodation with holistic, dignity-driven support, including trauma-informed counselling, medical support, legal and housing assistance, therapeutic care, social connection, employment and upskilling guidance, and financial support. By creating a stable and supportive environment, Peggy's Place seeks to restore dignity, strengthen self-determination, and help women and children rebuild pathways to independence. *Creative Transitions* delivered seven 2-hour workshops to a total of N = 8 women and N = 4 support staff who before participated over the course of the program. All participants identified as having CALD backgrounds.

Program Site #2: YFS Playgroup in Supported Housing, Slack's Creek

This site provides safe, stable social housing for people experiencing disadvantage and is operated by Churches of Christ, a leading not-for-profit organisation that supports individuals and families facing housing stress, homelessness, or risk of homelessness in accessing secure, affordable housing to rebuild their lives. YFS delivers a weekly on-site playgroup for mothers and their children living at the site, creating a safe, inclusive space to connect, learn, and grow. Grounded in a strengths-based approach, the program supports young families to build confidence, strengthen relationships, and access community supports, while shared play experiences enhance child development and reduce social isolation. *Creative Transitions* delivered six 45-minute workshops to a total of N = 5 women, N = 5 children, and N = 2 support staff who before participated over the course of the program. Participants represented a mix of First Nations and non-Indigenous backgrounds.

COMMUNITY SITES

Program Site #3: Young Mum's Squad, Logan

Young Mum Squad is a free weekly support and social program for mothers aged 25 and under in Logan and surrounding areas. Delivered by the YFS Step by Step team, the group supports young mothers from diverse backgrounds, including those who have experienced foster care or other life challenges. The program provides a welcoming space to build connections, develop practical skills, and share meals together. By fostering peer support and community, Young Mum Squad empowers participants to strengthen confidence, reduce isolation, and navigate the early years of parenting with greater resilience and belonging. *Creative Transitions* delivered two 2-hour workshops to a total of N = 8 women, N = 4 children, and N = 2 support staff who before participated over the course of the program. Participants represented a mix of First Nations and CALD backgrounds.

Program Site #4: FamilyLinQ Hub, Kingston

YFS delivers a supported playgroup within the FamilyLinQ hub at Kingston State School, creating a safe and inclusive space for parents and children to connect, learn, and play. FamilyLinQ is Queensland's first integrated, school-based community hub, bringing together education, health, early childhood, and family support services through a single welcoming entry point. Designed in response to local community needs, the hub supports families experiencing disadvantage by improving access to coordinated wrap-around supports. Through its playgroup, YFS strengthens parenting confidence, supports child development, and fosters social connection, contributing to improved wellbeing, learning outcomes, and long-term community belonging. *Creative Transitions* delivered six 45-minute workshops to a total of N = 11 women, N = 11 children, and N = 2 support staff who before participated over the course of the program. Participants represented a mix of First Nations and CALD backgrounds.



Figure 3. Participant drawing reflecting on the music program at FamilyLinQ.

We were due to run the program at a fifth site, Jinndii Waijung, a purpose-built supported housing complex in Yarrabilba for young mothers and children escaping DFV or homelessness. Developed by Lady Musgrave Trust and partners in partnership with YFS, it provides secure transitional accommodation, communal spaces, and case-management support to help families rebuild safely. For a range of practical reasons, it was not possible to run the full program

at this time. Nonetheless, Jinndii Waijung and Lady Musgrave Trust have still played a valuable role in the *Creative Transitions* program, including securing the YFS sites. We acknowledge the input and feedback of Jinndii Waijung staff and the young mums in the co-design phase. We have also drawn on highly informative exchanges and experiences with the Jinndii Waijung staff to inform both enablers and barriers to program delivery.

Program Insights

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

Across the program, four interrelated domains of impact were identified, capturing the ways in which music and creative practice supported women and children during transitions out of homelessness and while they face housing insecurity and other life challenges. These domains include (1) emotional regulation and inner wellbeing, (2) agency, voice, and identity re-formation, (3) social connection, belonging, and collective care, and (4) hope, capability, and life re-engagement. Together, the four domains reflect a holistic, strengths-based understanding of recovery that recognises both individual and relational processes of change.

Social and emotional wellbeing is a critical foundation for recovery during transitions out of homelessness, when experiences of trauma, instability, and displacement can significantly disrupt individuals' sense of safety, identity, and connection. Within this context, creative and relational practices such as music offer accessible, non-threatening pathways to support regulation, restore a sense of inner balance, and nurture moments of relief and connection. Grounded in trauma-informed and child- and family-centred frameworks, this section explores how music functions not only as an expressive medium but likewise as a practical and embodied resource for rebuilding emotional stability and supporting wellbeing in everyday life.

DOMAIN 1: EMOTIONAL REGULATION AND INNER WELLBEING

Consistent with a trauma-informed and child- and family-centred analytical approach, this domain captures how music functions as a *regulatory resource* for women and children navigating destabilising transitions out of homelessness.

“*Better than an energy drink!*”

Across all settings, immediate outcomes were consistently associated with the creation of a calm, safe, and non-judgemental space, enabling regulation, self-care, and moments of embodied relief. Participants articulated clear intentions aligned with these outcomes, describing a desire to “have fun, relax, relieve stress, feel calmer, more positive, and energised” (Young Mums Squad intake group). These aspirations were realised through sensory and relational musical practices, including singing, drumming, and listening, which supported shifts from overwhelm and dysregulation to calm presence.

Music was frequently described as embedded in everyday emotional coping, with one participant noting, “I’ve got three kids, so we all love music. ... Whether we’re in a good mood, in a bad mood ... I’ll put on some music” (Young Mums Squad participant). This statement highlights music’s role as an accessible, self-directed tool for emotional regulation within parenting contexts. Importantly, participants also described how musical skills learned within sessions could be applied intentionally to regulate heightened emotional states: “If I was in a space where I am angry or feel rage, and I sing this song, it could be very strong” (Peggy’s Place participant). Another participant mentioned, “I love singing. It helps your body explore emotions” (Peggy’s Place participant).

Observed shifts in affect and energy further illustrate the embodied impact of these practices. At Peggy’s Place, a participant moved from feeling “tired and unmotivated” with slowed cognition at check-in to leaving “happy, calm, and energised,” describing drumming as “better than an energy drink!” (Peggy’s Place participant). These immediate changes were consistently noted by facilitators: “I’ve really enjoyed seeing that sometimes there’s a difference between how they feel when they enter the group and when they exit” (YFS music facilitator). Echoing this, one of the YFS mothers said, “I really enjoyed it. I felt like it was actually therapy. Music therapy. I felt like it was good for the soul and all the music and we did drawing—like, it was really creative—just something to look forward to each week” (FamilyLinQ Playgroup participant). This mother reflected this in a drawing (see Figure 4).

Facilitated techniques such as humming and breathing supported grounding and co-regulation, reinforcing both individual and collective wellbeing: “Humming together proved to be particularly powerful, grounding, calming, and unifying” (Peggy’s Place music facilitator). Reflecting on these techniques, one participant noted it was “a nice exercise for knowing my body right now” (Peggy’s Place participant). These practices align with the framework’s emphasis on embodiment, attachment, and relational safety, enabling participants to connect to themselves and others without requiring verbal disclosure of trauma. One participant captured this immediate shift succinctly: “Today is really good. Before, my inside was too heavy” (Peggy’s Place participant).

Crucially, these regulatory effects extended beyond individual participants to intergenerational outcomes. Staff observed how musical interaction supported children with complex needs, including moments of co-regulation between facilitator and child: “She was on the verge of a meltdown, but then I played that little game [drumming] with her, and it completely changed her mood, and it got her into a joyful,

happy place” (YFS Playgroup music facilitator). Such reflections align with the framework’s focus on shared regulation between mother and child, where adult nervous system support and child responsiveness are mutually reinforcing.

At a broader level, staff reflections highlight the therapeutic integration of music within service environments, with practices such as drumming continuing beyond program delivery: “We’ve got the drums in our counselling rooms now and our children’s spaces” (Peggy’s Place staff). Music is therefore not only an activity but, more importantly, a sustained modality of healing, offering what was described as “that space where it’s not having to go deep... just... that healing-ness of music” (Peggy’s Place staff).

Overall, this domain demonstrates that music programs contribute to social and emotional wellbeing by enabling regulation, grounding and moments of relief within complex and uncertain life circumstances, supporting both individual recovery and relational attunement between mothers and children.



Figure 4. Illustration by FamilyLinQ participant.

DOMAIN 2: AGENCY, VOICE, AND IDENTITY RE-FORMATION

Aligned with a strengths-based, empowerment-oriented approach, this domain examines how creative processes support women to reclaim authorship of their narratives, exercise agency, and reconstruct identity beyond experiences of homelessness and violence.



“This music program has allowed *the voice of women* to come into this space, as well [as] for caseworkers, for counsellors, and [for] admin workers and business. ”

Across project sites, additional layers shaped this work, particularly for CALD and First Nations participants, including the impacts of cultural and intergenerational trauma. All participants at Peggy's Place identified as CALD, and there were high proportions of CALD and First Nations women within YFS contexts.

This context made cultural responsiveness and adaptability central to effective program delivery. Following Session 2 at Peggy's Place, Lead Music Facilitator Sarah reflected,

After realising the entire cohort came from non-English-speaking backgrounds, I revised the program structure. I considered ways to support healing, wellbeing, and expression that were not language-heavy. Drumming and the use of images emerged as key approaches. While I had planned to continue lyric-writing, I recognised the need to simplify and shift the approach. Drumming offered a powerful non-verbal modality for regulation, emotional expression, and group cohesion.

These adaptations, which included drumming, image-based prompts, and songwriting in participants' first languages, proved to be effective strategies within this domain. Intergenerational trauma was also an important consideration, particularly in YFS contexts. This trauma involved both disruptions to attachment across generations and interruptions to cultural transmission (e.g. language, ceremony, kinship knowledge, and connection to Country). At the same time, it was critical to recognise the strength and resilience embedded in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, including the healing capacities of story, music, dance, and connection to Country.

These understandings informed program design and were reflected in facilitator observations. Following Session 5 at YFS Slacks Creek, one reflection highlighted the significance of a group activity using the “ocean parachute” and the song “Saltwater People.” The activity used rhythmic movement and music to create a shared sensory experience, with participants collaboratively generating “waves” around a child at the centre.

This moment was experienced as symbolic of layered systems of support: family (the child's grandmother), culture (song, water, Eldership), community services (YFS staff), and trauma-informed musical facilitation. An unanticipated extension of this moment further demonstrated community connection. The child's grandmother, an Elder, offered to engage her local Indigenous sewing group to create an "ocean parachute" for the program. This was experienced as a powerful instance of cultural continuity and community integration, embedding the program within local networks of care, creativity, and knowledge.

Across both transitional housing and community contexts, music functioned both as a therapeutic activity and as a site of expression, choice, and self-definition, supporting women in imagining alternative futures and articulating evolving identities.

Collective songwriting at Peggy's Place demonstrated how structured creative prompts can facilitate self-reflection and narrative reframing. Through invitations such as "As a woman, I am... At this moment, my experience is... My dream for the future is...", participants articulated affirmations of "dignity, strength, and voice" (Researcher reflection, Peggy's Place). Responses during these exercises highlight how music-making becomes a process of identity reconstruction, enabling women to name their present realities while envisioning future possibilities.

Similarly, activities within the YFS Playgroup created opportunities for participants to engage in creative decision-making at their own pace, reinforcing autonomy and voice. When invited to either draw their future selves or write a song verse, most participants chose drawing, while one woman exercised creative risk by composing and performing her own lyrics to her child. This moment of authorship was collectively recognised and affirmed by the group: "You're a songwriter, girl!" (YFS Playgroup transcript). Such responses demonstrate how peer validation within a non-judgemental environment strengthens confidence, identity, and a sense of capability.

Reconnection with identities and skills prior to experiences of homelessness and DFV also emerged as a key pathway for identity re-formation. One participant at Peggy's Place, who had previously studied piano, re-engaged with her musical self through the program, eventually composing and sharing her own piece. Significantly, "she spoke about moving beyond 'copying' towards creating something that felt true to her" (Researcher reflection, Peggy's Place), reflecting a shift from replication to authentic creative expression. This transition exemplifies how music supports movement from constrained identities to self-directed expression.

By taking place in housing facilities or wrap-around community hubs, participants who may not usually have opportunities to engage in creative activities were exposed to experiences, skills, and modes of expression that may not have been possible in the past:

Some of these mums aren't in the position to buy their own instruments or have even had that sort of experience prior. So, I think it's fantastic that not only you were able to donate those instruments, the ukulele and the guitar, but even having you present and showing us how to use it... It's a brand-new experience for some of these mums, and it just opens a whole world of possibilities of how you can heal yourself and share that with your child every day in the most easiest way. (YFS staff)

Creative agency was further evident in moments of spontaneous improvisation: "At various points, each of the three women creatively improvised rhythms or vocals unprompted by the facilitator. They appeared excited and enthusiastic about creating their own rhythms in the established grooves" (Researcher reflection, Peggy's Place). These unprompted contributions highlight growing confidence, willingness to take creative risks, and an emerging sense of ownership over the musical process.

The flexibility of program design was a critical enabler of these outcomes, aligning with the framework's emphasis on choice, pacing, and relational safety. At YFS, activities were co-designed with participants, ensuring responsiveness to their preferences and goals. This approach was positively reflected upon in staff feedback: "So enjoyable. It's not like, 'Sit down, you have to do this.' You've made it flexible. ... It's still structured in a way, but flexible" (YFS staff). Such environments support agency by allowing participants to engage on their own terms rather than within rigid program structures.

Importantly, the impact of the program extended beyond participants to influence broader organisational culture "because," the staff noted, "this music program has allowed the voice of the women to come into this space, as well [as] for caseworkers, for counsellors, and [for] admin workers and business" (Peggy's Place staff). This highlights how amplifying women's voices through creative practice can reshape relational dynamics within services, positioning lived experience and self-expression as central to care and support.

Overall, this domain demonstrates that music-based creative processes foster agency, voice, and identity re-formation by creating conditions in which women can safely express themselves, make choices, and reconnect with or reimagine who they are. Through both individual and collective practices, music becomes a powerful medium for reclaiming identity, strengthening confidence, and narrating pathways towards different futures.

DOMAIN 3: SOCIAL CONNECTION, BELONGING, AND COLLECTIVE CARE

Consistent with Creative Transition's focus on relational wellbeing, this domain examines how music programs foster connection to self, others, and community, supporting belonging and collective care during transitions out of homelessness.

“*Food* brings us together, and so does *music*.”

Across all locations, music created shared, non-verbal, and inclusive experiences that enabled participants to move beyond isolation and into relational engagement. These forms of connection are particularly significant for trauma-informed practice, where safety, non-judgement, and choice underpin participation.

At the group level, music facilitated shared focus and collective participation, shifting dynamics away from fragmented or individualised activities towards communal engagement. As one YFS staff member observed, “It’s not like everyone’s doing their own thing. Everyone’s just drawn to the one activity rather than ‘Oh, we have to do this with Mum again’” (YFS staff). This comment highlights music’s capacity to create a unifying focal point that strengthens relationships both within peer groups and between carers and children. Similarly, music was positioned alongside other culturally meaningful forms of connection—“Food brings us together, and so does music” (YFS staff)—emphasising music’s potential as a relational resource in everyday life.

Reflecting on their experiences in the music program a young mother said, “I like we could all work as a team to come up with an idea for the song. It shows good perspective of an actual family—especially young mums—what we get out of doing everything and the drawing as well. It was pretty cool” (FamilyLinQ Playgroup participant). She depicted this in her drawing reflecting on the program (see Figure 5).



Figure 5. Illustration by FamilyLinQ participant.

Participants at Peggy's Place described a growing sense of togetherness through collective music-making, with one participant noting that the group felt "like a band" (Peggy's Place participant). This metaphor reflects a shift towards shared identity and belonging. For one participant, a highlight of the workshops was the teamwork and collaboration between residents of diverse backgrounds:

We are all from different backgrounds. Little bit like cooking something in a big hot pot. So, we are just producing the same thing from different backgrounds. Someone's vegetable, someone's meat, someone's spice. And then end up [with a] big, delicious stew. (Peggy's Place participant)

For others, music offered potential pathways to future connection, even where relationships were still forming:

Some women I haven't seen [before], and I'm hoping it means music is going to be [able] to create the friendship in this facility. I'm always with listening and thinking. Sometimes, I think it's just individual. ... Maybe, for example, in a Christmas time, we sing some songs together, even dancing together, could be nice to make connection. (Peggy's Place participant)

Here, music functions not only as a present relational practice but as a scaffold for imagining future social participation.

Importantly, the program supported connection without requiring verbal disclosure of personal or past experiences, which is critical for participants experiencing trauma, language barriers, or loss of voice. As noted by staff, simply sharing sound together was "hugely significant for women who, even, not just language barrier, but the loss of voice, even something about, 'Oh I don't have to say anything, but I can just do this, and that's enough for now'" (Peggy's Place staff). This focus on the non-verbal was reinforced through collective practices such as humming and breathing, along with

the fact that you're not being isolated as an individual and being expected to speak in the session, or whatever it might be. But it's that collective sort of blending in with each other's voices. ... If we had done nothing else but still gather and hum together, breathe together, dance together, and do those simple exercises, that's where the magic of that connection and all of those benefits come from. (Peggy's Place staff)

One participant described how participating in music allowed expression of both "bright" and "dark" colours in her life: "Not just the beautiful, vivid colours. Also, there are dark colours. It ends up going to be a big work ... big, beautiful, meaningful" (Peggy's Place participant). These practices align with the framework's emphasis on embodied and non-verbal forms of connection as valid and powerful indicators of wellbeing.

Connections between mothers and children were a central outcome, reflecting the framework's focus on intergenerational wellbeing and co-regulation. Through the program, participants continued musical engagement at home, with examples including one mother singing program songs with her baby and another drumming with her son (Peggy's Place). A facilitator emphasised the importance of these interactions:

It's about helping the women being able to come into a place of feeling safe in their bodies so that then they can co-regulate that feeling of regulation and safety with their children. And it actually takes a lot of work to get there. (YFS music facilitator)

Observations during sessions reflected these relational shifts: "When [the child] wasn't in the circle, she was with you [the mother], and she was doing the music with you. And so, yeah, that was really beautiful to see" (YFS music facilitator).

Music also created space for reflection on parenting and future aspirations, supporting relational depth: "I think sometimes, you know, when you're a mum ... maybe just having a space to talk about what they want for their future. And they kind of they did that, and I thought that was really great" (YFS music facilitator). Staff further linked participation to practical parenting benefits, noting,

There was some research done not long ago about spending quality time with your children. And some people don't know what that looks like. And I think they said you spend, you have to spend at least 20 minutes of quality time every day. And I mean, that's great if you know that, but you've been working all week and you're tired. So, I think this is a great way to incorporate that at least 20 minutes. (YFS staff)

The staff continued to observe positive attachment and bonding between parents and children during the sessions:

I think for Playgroup especially ... the children and parents have both actively engaged. I think that's something we found difficult at the beginning of the Playgroup journey because the mothers just... I get it: they're tired, they're probably just trying to survive every day, and they just want to sit there and chat with each other. ... Because our purpose is to build that attachment, they need to be involved. ... But I found that the music, once you build that into a big, fun, interactive thing, that's just drawn them both into the same activity, which is fantastic to see. And it's something easy that they can take home and do. Like, they can even do it while they're shopping, you know, while they're having a bath. They can adjust all these sort of, yeah, tools and strategies just within the music to have in their toolbox. (YFS staff)

Participants in the YFS FamilyLinQ Playgroup frequently described using music, singing, and dancing with their children in their daily routines at home, noting the positive outcomes for both the child and the parent:

[He] loves brushing his teeth, so I reckon he would love a song about that. ... I try to get him to do it with me, and he has fun. ... I try and just like laugh through it, honestly. Otherwise, I get too overwhelmed, and it's not serious. (FamilyLinQ Playgroup participant)

This mother's comment highlights how music provides accessible, everyday practices that strengthen family relationships.

The workshops also fostered safe, non-judgemental environments that enabled vulnerability and shared meaning-making. For one participant, the ability to express spirituality within the group was central to feeling safe and connected:

Spiritually for her, she has to feel like "When I sing ... I need to know that this space will accept that this is what I need to feel safe," which was awesome. Also, because she could speak up and be herself and not feel ashamed in that, that connected with other people in the group, women that went, "Oh, I believe this as well," and started talking, and that made that bit of a connection already. So, it created a space for sharing things that we wouldn't normally share. So, that was really awesome. (Peggy's Place staff)

These relational dynamics were also observed by researchers:

The women were very engaged and supportive of each other. Helping each other to translate words, noticing when someone needed encouragement, and drawing on each other's reflections and stories. It was a safe space for sharing not only stories with each other, but also knowledge and information about the body and about wellbeing. (Researcher reflection, Peggy's Place)

Such practices demonstrate collective care in action, by which participants actively contribute to one another's wellbeing.

Finally, the programs created meaningful opportunities for socialisation and connecting with people from different social and cultural backgrounds, including migrant families and children with complex needs. Music enabled participation across languages and supported developmental outcomes, as reflected by one parent who reported improvements in her child's social skills, language development, and patience (YFS Playgroup participant).

Overall, this domain demonstrates that music programs play a critical role in fostering connection, belonging, and collective care. Through shared musical practices, participants are supported to rebuild social networks, strengthen family relationships, and experience a sense of inclusion and mutual support that is foundational to recovery and wellbeing.

DOMAIN 4: HOPE, CAPABILITY, AND LIFE RE-ENGAGEMENT

Aligned with a strengths-based and future-oriented analytical approach, this domain examines how creative participation supports women to reconnect with their own capabilities, imagine possible futures, and re-engage with life during a period often characterised by instability and uncertainty. Importantly, these outcomes are not linear progressions but emergent, incremental shifts in confidence, aspiration, and everyday participation.

“She has felt *free*
again, and it has opened up
something inside of her
where she has been able to get
back out in the world,
and the world has **rewarded her**
with her own *home.*”

From the outset, participants in the YFS Young Mums Squad articulated a desire to build skills and nurture both their own and their children's development, including interests in songwriting and learning instruments. These aspirations reflect early indicators of future orientation and agency, grounded in both individual growth and intergenerational wellbeing.

Facilitator observations highlight how participants frequently exceeded initial expectations, demonstrating rapid skill acquisition and growing confidence:

I was delighted and surprised how quickly they picked up the (very brief) lesson on playing different ways and sounds on the drum. When planning, I thought I would only be able to get to the level of them playing some simple rhythms together, but I realised very quickly that we could progress to playing two different polyrhythms together. (Peggy's Place music facilitator)

Such moments illustrate capability development as both technical and relational, reinforcing self-efficacy and openness to further learning.

For some participants, these shifts were closely linked to broader life transitions. Following the program, one woman who had secured independent housing reflected on the role of music in enabling this transition:

She said, because of this music program, she has felt happy again. She has felt free again, and it has opened up something inside of her where she has been able to get back out in the world, and the world has rewarded her with her own home. She said this has been a music therapy for her, and she said, if this just helps one person it has been a great success. She has found the confidence to write her own song, to sing her own song, to play her own song, and to record her own song, and to put that song out into the world with the confidence and energy that the world has now rewarded her with. (Researcher reflection, Peggy's Place)



This account demonstrates how creative expression can support internal shifts (e.g. confidence, identity, emotional readiness) that lead to external outcomes (e.g. housing stability, participation in the wider community).

In the YFS cohort, one woman was observed to have “blossomed” through participating in the music programs individually and with her son. As YFS staff noted,

She’s faced quite a bit of adversity in the past, and she has been quite amazing in addressing a lot of her needs on her own. ... I think seeing her participate in the musical part of our sessions... I think it’s kind of nice to see that she was doing it with a smile, and you can see that it’s kind of summed up everything that she’s gone through, and is able to express it in a way that she’s embraced it all. ... She’s playing with happiness. And even with her son... She’s a great mum, and you can hear her singing to him and things like that. It’s just amazing. You just see her blossom. (YFS staff)

Participants also described feelings of “fullness” and “pride” at the conclusion of the program, indicating recognition of personal achievement and progress. These affective states align with the framework’s emphasis on valuing gradual changes and subjective experiences of growth. For migrant families, engagement in music additionally supported children’s language development. Creative activities further enabled participants to articulate hopes for the future, including aspirations for housing and financial security and companionship. One participant expressed a clear desire for self-expression and contribution: “I want to put something out there with my voice” (Peggy’s Place participant). Such statements reflect emerging confidence and a shift towards outward engagement with the world.

At the same time, staff observations emphasise the structural pressures faced by women during this transitional period, including expectations around employment and independence. Within this context, reconnecting with creative identity supported one participant in asserting agency over her own pathway:

[There is] a lot of pressure getting to a job. “You have to do a job. Everybody is working,” and she just said, “No, this is not me. I have to wait. I’m not ready yet. There’s something else. I have all these talents; I have connections; I’ve got learning.” So, I think that’s enabled her to say no, even from pressure within the service, you know?” (Peggy’s Place staff)

This story highlights how capability can include the ability and autonomy to make decisions aligned with one’s readiness rather than conforming to external expectations.

Within the YFS Playgroup, participants identified the importance of flexible, individualised approaches, particularly for mothers of children with complex needs: “Working one-on-one with [child]’s mum and [child]’s mum gives them a better option at home” (YFS Playgroup participant). Such reflections underscore the importance of adaptable program delivery in supporting sustained engagement and practical application beyond the sessions.



Finally, participation itself can be understood as an act of re-engagement. Despite significant personal challenges, one mother's commitment to attending sessions reflects both resilience and future-oriented parenting: "Just trying to show up for [child] still, because I don't want to be sad all the time. He deserves a good childhood" (Young Mum Squad participant). This statement encapsulates the intersection of hope, responsibility, and care that underpins many participants' motivations, demonstrating how small acts of engagement contribute to broader trajectories of recovery and wellbeing. In a similar vein, when reflecting on her experiences in the music program a young mother at FamilyLinQ drew an image with what she described as Māori symbols and included the word *Aroha*, a Māori word that means love, compassion or empathy, and representing a deep, boundless sense of connection and responsibility to others and the natural world (see Figure 6).

Overall, this domain demonstrates that creative programs support hope, capability, and life re-engagement by enabling women to build skills, articulate aspirations, and take meaningful steps towards re-establishing stability and purpose in their lives, both for themselves and for their children.



Figure 6. Illustration from FamilyLinQ participant.

ENABLERS AND BARRIERS TO PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

This research has identified some of the structural, relational, and contextual conditions that enable or constrain the integration of creative programs within homelessness and other social services. These factors are critical to understanding why outcomes can be uneven, fragile, or emergent, and to identifying the conditions required for meaningful, trauma-informed implementation.

“ It takes lots of input to help
that person to get there...
It was definitely not just a
‘come and turn up.’ ”

A key enabler was the embedding of music programs within service environments that prioritise holistic wellbeing and relational care. Delivering programs on-site enhanced accessibility and reduced participation barriers, as reflected by staff: “Especially having it here, it gives people a taste of something that they might not have experienced before” (YFS staff). This aligns with the framework’s emphasis on safety, familiarity, and low-threshold engagement in trauma-informed settings.

Strong collaboration between facilitators, caseworkers, and site staff was also essential. The involvement of trusted staff supported engagement and rapport, particularly for participants experiencing heightened vulnerability: “We felt that it was important that we were there, in terms of the vulnerabilities of the women were so high because of language difficulties, cultural differences” (Peggy’s Place staff). Similarly, reassurance from staff helped establish safety and trust: “Just having that chat about, you know, ‘We’ll be there. It’s a safe space. If you don’t feel safe, you know, you can step out for a bit’” (YFS staff). These findings underscore the importance of relational trust and continuity in supporting participation.

The flexibility and trauma-informed approach of facilitators were identified as a significant strength. Participants and staff valued programs that balanced structure with responsiveness. Facilitator presence and emotional regulation were also critical: “The person facilitating must also be in a space where they are grounded... It has to be a place of ‘Come as you are’ and ‘I can hold this; I’m not bringing other stuff in’” (Peggy’s Place staff). This reflects the framework’s emphasis on facilitator attunement, safety, and co-regulation.

However, significant barriers were also identified. Women in transitional housing often face competing priorities, including legal, housing, and employment demands, which can limit consistent participation: “Conflicting priorities. So, a call from a lawyer that’s been set up, they can’t go, ‘Sorry, I’ve got music program on this day’” (Peggy’s Place staff). Similarly, broader systemic pressures, such as expectations to engage in employment or training, often take precedence: “[Staff do] not always hav[e] the time then to ask the participant, ‘What is it that you want?’” (Peggy’s Place staff). These pressures highlight the challenge of sustaining engagement in non-mandatory wellbeing programs during periods of acute transition.

Cultural responsiveness also emerged as a critical consideration. Staff highlighted the need for sensitivity to participants’ cultural and religious backgrounds: “Many of the women that we currently have come from countries in which their upbringing is in religion... And if we bring something into the space that is New Age, that’s not going to work” (Peggy’s Place staff). At times, language and cultural differences presented barriers to participation, such as discomfort in translation tasks: “Translating lyrics: While most of the women embraced the activity, [one participant] seemed quite uncomfortable translating the lyrics to her native language” (Research reflection, Peggy’s Place). While there were initial concerns about the language and cultural differences, the adaptiveness of the facilitating team and open communication with staff were recognised as strengths of the program:

We had a planning workshop, and we covered lots of territory, but I don't think it was made explicit to us at that point just in terms of the extent of language barriers and who we were going to be working with, and huge credit to everybody. Within one workshop, things were worked out pretty quickly. And I think also credit to the communication channels we have with the team who provided feedback immediately. (Researcher observation)

These insights reinforce the importance of culturally responsive and adaptable program design.

Importantly, within the Peggy's Place context, not only was cultural responsiveness a challenge to be navigated but it also became a central strength and intentional focus of program design that enabled the achievement of meaningful outcomes. The facilitation team actively prioritised culturally attuned approaches—such as reducing reliance on English-language lyric writing, incorporating non-verbal modalities (e.g. drumming, image-based prompts), and supporting expression in participants' first languages—which enhanced accessibility, participation, and a sense of safety. This strengths-based orientation aligns with contemporary policy and practice frameworks in community services, including YFS and FamilyLinQ, which emphasise culturally responsive, family-centred, and strengths-oriented approaches that recognise and build upon participants' existing cultural knowledge, identity, and capabilities. In this sense, responsiveness to cultural diversity functioned not only as an adaptive strategy but also as a foundational mechanism through which agency, engagement, and wellbeing outcomes were supported.

Participants' ongoing experiences of trauma and recovery also shaped engagement. Staff noted that participation often required sustained support and encouragement: "It takes lots of input to help that person to get there. ... It was definitely not just a 'come and turn up'. No, it would not have worked" (Peggy's Place staff). This reflects the framework's recognition of recovery as non-linear and requiring relational scaffolding over time.

Program delivery was further complicated by inconsistent attendance. Facilitators reported challenges in tailoring sessions to participants when group composition frequently changed: "Even from one term to the next... It was a different cohort... It's very hard as a facilitator to plan" (YFS music facilitator). Staff similarly observed variability in engagement across different groups, noting both initial challenges and later successes: "It wasn't a failed session... We saw some seeds planted and then some people run with it" (YFS staff). These dynamics emphasise the need for adaptable, iterative program design.

Clarity around the role and purpose of music facilitation was also identified as a factor that can contribute to the efficacy of the program. Misunderstandings about the facilitator's role could limit program integration: "I feel like, sometimes, the staff don't understand, like, I'm not a teacher... I'm a music therapist" (YFS music facilitator). Such facilitator reflections highlight the importance of shared understanding and alignment across service teams.

Resource limitations and infrastructure constraints further impacted delivery. Facilitators often had to improvise because of limited equipment: "We didn't have the bells and whistles of a studio. ... We had to improvise" (Research reflection, Peggy's Place). In addition, funding constraints were a significant barrier to sustainability: "We don't have someone that can lead it without us having to put money behind that... It would be lovely, but not now" (Peggy's Place staff). Participants also emphasised the need for increased funding to enable more tailored and inclusive programming: "We need more funding for it to continue... Because it's not each individual is the same" (YFS Playgroup participant).

Overall, these findings demonstrate that successful integration of creative programs within homelessness and other social services requires a combination of trauma-informed practice, relational trust, cultural responsiveness, flexible delivery, and sustained resourcing. At the same time, structural constraints, including funding, competing priorities, and service system pressures, shape the extent to which these programs can be consistently accessed and embedded within care environments.



CREATIVE OUTPUTS AS EVIDENCE

Songs, recordings, reflections, and other creative artefacts produced through the program are meaningful forms of evidence that capture participants' journeys of change. These artefacts foreground women's authorship and voice, offering opportunities to reclaim narrative authority in the aftermath of experiences that may have involved silencing or loss of agency. In this sense, creative outputs can also function as sites of relational repair, where participants reconnect with themselves and, in some cases, with others through shared processes of listening, collaboration, and expression.

At the same time, these materials provide observable indicators of skill development and growing confidence. The evolution of the participants' engagement, from tentative contributions to more assured creative expression, can be traced through the artefacts themselves, revealing shifts in musical ability, communication, and self-belief. These changes often extend beyond technical skill, reflecting increasing willingness to take creative risks, share personal perspectives, and participate actively in group processes.

Finally, the tangible nature of these outputs enables broader advocacy, integration, and sustainability. Songs, recordings, and documented reflections can be shared with stakeholders, service providers, and wider audiences, making visible the often-invisible processes of healing and growth. In doing so, they help to articulate the value of creative, strengths-based approaches within the homelessness and DFV sectors, supporting program integration into service delivery models and strengthening the case for ongoing investment and scaling.

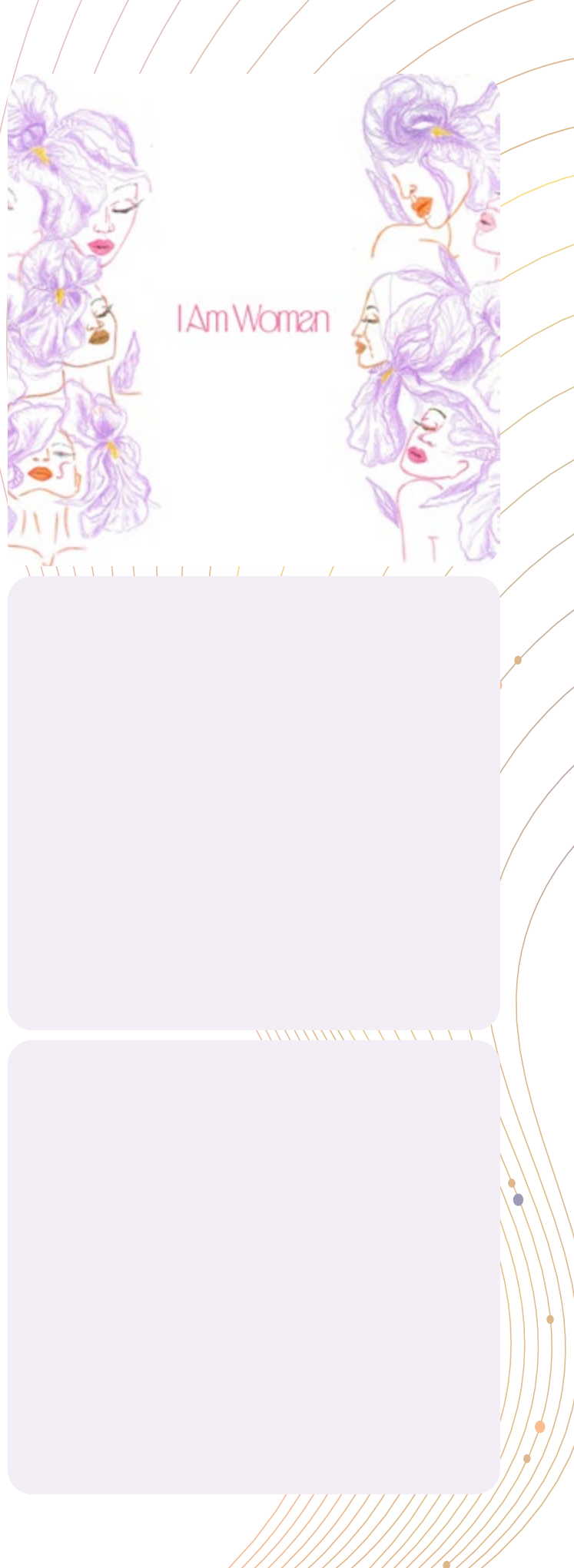
To view the lyric videos of the songs produced, visit <https://www.youtube.com/@creativechangelab>

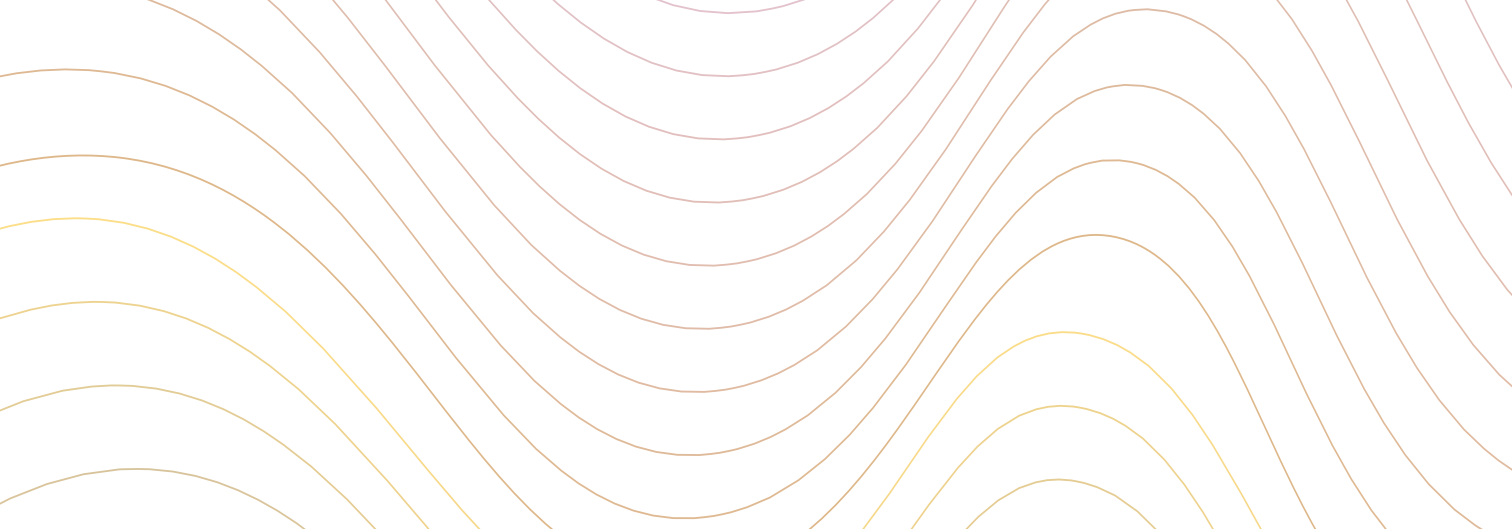
To listen to the songs, search for the following titles on all major streaming services including Apple Music and Spotify:

"I Am Woman" by Ali Crane and the *Creative Transitions* Project (created with participants at Peggy's Place).

"Я — жінка" by Kateryna and the *Creative Transitions* Project (created at Peggy's Place).

"Big Day Out" by Hughie Doherty and the *Creative Transitions* Project (created with the Mums and children at FamilyLinQ).





SHARED TRANSFORMATION: WIDER TEAM IMPACTS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN PRACTICE

A defining feature of the *Creative Transitions* program was that music facilitators, researchers, and support staff at the program sites all actively participated in the workshops. While the focus of this report is on the impact this program has generated with the participating women (and their children), we have also been keen to take a 360-degree view and consider how programs like this also affect those researching and supporting them. As such, drawing on reflections from the team as well as our regular talking circles and debriefs, this section considers the impacts on the wider team.

Across the reflections, a key impact has been the way the program has reignited a deep appreciation for the power of music and creativity among facilitators, researchers, and staff. Many described feeling energised, inspired, and reminded of the meaningful role creative practice can play in people's lives, particularly in contexts of trauma and transition. Importantly, this was not experienced as a one-directional dynamic of "service delivery" but rather as a shared, egalitarian process in which all participants, including staff and researchers, contributed alongside the women and their children. This flattening of hierarchy fostered a strong sense of collective ownership, connection, and authenticity, with several team members noting how powerful it was to simply "be themselves" in the space rather than occupying formal professional roles.

The project has also had a profound impact on research practice and thinking. Researchers reflected on how the program challenged traditional notions of evidence and knowledge production, highlighting the value of creative, narrative, and participant-led forms of expression. Methods such as songwriting, talking circles, and visual art were seen not only as tools for engagement but also as rich forms

of data in their own right, enabling deeper, more emotionally resonant insights than conventional measures. This experience reinforced the importance of trauma-informed, strengths-based approaches and underscored the relational dimensions of research, where connection, trust, and presence are as significant as any formal outputs. In this sense, the project has contributed to a shift towards more "heart-centred" and participatory research practices that prioritise lived experience and accessibility.

For facilitators and support staff, the workshops have also had notable personal and emotional impacts. Several reflected on the unexpected ways the program supported their own wellbeing, offering moments of restoration, healing, and reflection. The embodied, sensory, and creative nature of the sessions—through music-making, drawing, and shared rituals—created spaces of presence and joy that extended beyond participants to include the whole team. Facilitators, in particular, described shifts in their sense of identity and purpose, seeing themselves not only as practitioners but as community builders and agents of social connection. The emphasis on vulnerability and authenticity within the circle was identified as central to building trust while also encouraging staff and researchers to engage more openly and reflexively in their work.

Finally, the program has influenced the practices and cultures of the partner organisations themselves. Staff at sites such as YFS and Peggy's Place reported being inspired to integrate music and creative approaches into their ongoing work, from incorporating songs into team meetings to rethinking how creativity could inform program planning and client engagement. This points to a broader ripple effect, where the impacts of *Creative Transitions* extend beyond the workshops into everyday organisational practice, strengthening staff capacity and fostering more holistic, relational approaches to care. In this way, the project not only supports participants directly but also builds momentum for sustained, creative, and trauma-informed practice across the wider service ecosystem.

Future opportunities

1. OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE HOMELESSNESS AND SOCIAL SERVICES SECTORS

Embed and resource creative practice as a core component of integrated, wrap-around homelessness support

Position arts- and music-based programs as essential elements of housing and support models by embedding them alongside housing, legal, and case management services. This includes formalising partnerships with music therapists, community artists, and cultural organisations to deliver sustainable, culturally responsive creative programming that supports emotional regulation, identity rebuilding, and social connection during the transitional period.

Use creative programs to address social isolation and belonging

Invest in group-based music and arts initiatives that provide safe, low-pressure ways for women to reconnect with others, particularly where verbal communication or trust may be difficult.

Prioritise on-site, accessible creative delivery

Deliver arts programs within housing sites and community hubs to reduce barriers and create familiar, safe environments for engagement while ensuring staff are on board and have capacity to assist the program.

Recognise creativity as a pathway to identity reconstruction

Support programs that enable women to reclaim voice, authorship, and future narratives through songwriting, performance, and other creative processes.

2. OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE HEALTH SECTOR

Position music and arts as evidence-based health and wellbeing approaches

Recognise participatory music, creative expression, and arts engagement as effective strategies for improving mental health, emotional regulation, social connection, and wellbeing in vulnerable populations.

Fund and embed arts-based, culturally responsive, and intergenerational creative programs as preventative health strategies

Invest in trauma-informed, culturally responsive arts initiatives as early intervention approaches within homelessness transitions, recognising their role in supporting wellbeing, reducing long-term health and social costs, and strengthening protective relationships. This includes funding programs that enable non-verbal and culturally inclusive participation (particularly for CALD communities) while fostering intergenerational engagement through music and arts to enhance parent-child connection, co-regulation, and developmental outcomes.

Adopt creative strengths-based wellbeing frameworks

Expand health and prevention models to include joy, play, creativity, and expression as legitimate and measurable health outcomes.

Embed creative practices to support health in community settings

Integrate music and arts into hubs such as FamilyLinQ and playgroups, positioning them as essential contributors to holistic health and wellbeing.

3. OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE ARTS SECTOR

Position the arts as central to social impact and recovery

Advocate for the role of music and creative practice in addressing homelessness, DFV, and mental health as part of national cultural and social policy agendas.

Develop long-term embedded partnerships with social services

Move from project-based delivery to sustained place-based collaborations within housing and community settings.

Prioritise co-design and lived experience-led creative processes

Ensure programs centre participants' voices, enabling authentic authorship, storytelling, and creative control.

Invest in trauma-informed arts training and workforce development

Equip and incentivise artists and facilitators with the skills needed to work safely and effectively in complex social contexts.

Support evaluation and evidence generation

Partner with researchers to build a robust evidence base demonstrating the impact of arts programs on health, housing, and social outcomes.

4. OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS INTEGRATING MUSIC PROGRAMS

Embed music programs within core service delivery

Integrate music into regular programming (e.g. playgroups, counselling, group work) rather than as one-off activities.

Co-design creative programs with participants

Ensure activities reflect participants' musical preferences, cultural contexts, and goals, supporting agency and engagement.

Ensure relationally safe and well-resourced program delivery

Prioritise the presence of trusted staff to support participant safety and engagement, particularly for women experiencing trauma or cultural barriers, while ensuring programs are adequately resourced through investment in skilled facilitators, appropriate equipment, instruments, and dedicated spaces to enable high-quality delivery.

Design flexible, modular music sessions

Allow for changing cohorts and fluctuating attendance by ensuring sessions can stand alone and adapt in real time.

Build organisational understanding of music therapy and facilitation

Provide training for staff on the purpose and outcomes of music-based approaches to ensure alignment and support.

5. OPPORTUNITIES FOR MUSIC AND OTHER ARTS FACILITATORS

Adopt trauma-informed, relational facilitation practices

Prioritise safety, choice, pacing, and non-judgement, recognising the complex experiences participants bring.

Focus on creativity and expression over technical skill

Emphasise process, exploration, and voice rather than performance or musical proficiency.

Provide multiple entry points to participation

Use a range of activities (e.g. drumming, humming, listening, movement, songwriting) to accommodate different comfort levels, cultures, and abilities.

Support agency and authorship

Create opportunities for participants to make creative decisions, share stories, and develop their own musical outputs.

Work collaboratively with service providers

Build strong relationships with staff to support engagement, continuity, and integration into broader care plans.

Be reflective

Engage in reflective practice to ensure grounded, attuned facilitation that supports safe and effective group dynamics.

These recommendations support cross-sector efforts to ensure music, arts, and creative practices are not supplementary but central to recovery and wellbeing for women transitioning out of homelessness. When embedded within trauma-informed, relational, and well-resourced systems, creative programs can support emotional regulation, identity re-formation, social connection and long-term re-engagement—key foundations for sustainable housing and life outcomes.

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Appendix 1:

CREATIVE TRANSITIONS PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL

Creative Transitions: Program Logic from Planning Workshops with Queensland Health, Peggy's Place and Slacks Creek YFS Young Mums Squad

VALUES	GOALS	SUCCESS & INDICATORS	EVIDENCE BASE	SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS	STAKEHOLDERS	ASSUMPTIONS
Empowerment, choice and freedom	To have fun.	Visible/observable improvements in women's mental health, mood, social participation.	Trauma-informed practice with diverse facilitators.	Targeting the program to women looking beyond basic and immediate needs	Women and their families	The women want to do it. They will feel safe to share their ideas.
Inclusivity and variety.	To make our lives "more colourful" (PP residents).	Participants who didn't previously see themselves as musicians or creatives feel a sense of artistic identity.	Community music.	(i.e. shelter, food, security) to offer creative enrichment.	Peggy's Place; YFS.	The arts are good for you.
Creativity, self-expression and vulnerability in a non-judgmental environment. "There is no 'incorrect' way of what we do" (YMS group)	Create "our next adventure!" (PP residents).	Increased demand for the program.	Health promotion.	Women are transitioning out of acute homelessness and need support at this overlooked stage of transition.	Griffith University; QW/GHP	Women feel strong and creative, and they see themselves as strong and creative.
Respect and diversity - "a union of multi-cultures" (PP residents).	Women to be heard, empowered and feel a sense of control through this program.	Women report feeling more connected.	C & T, different learning approaches, adult learning.	Recognising the increasing rate of homelessness, particularly among (older) women, and the complexities of intersectional stories.	Crisis Support Services; Our Watch; DV Shelter; Surrounding Communities.	There will be an appropriate facilitator.
Trauma-informed practice.	Allow children to connect with music - "Help our babies to develop their music skills" (YMS group).	Women are engaged in the program on their own terms.			Recovery services; Women's Health Services; Strong Women Thriving; other DFV survivors.	Women (and facilitators) will have time to participate.
Equity.	Women to see music as a vehicle for individual relaxation and regulation.	Tangible artefacts from the program - e.g. recordings, original songs, new skills.			Prisons and detention centres; Other State Government departments; QCOS; ACOS.	Participants have trauma, we know what kinds of trauma/violence was experienced, and that the program won't re-traumatise them.
Safety and security - both physical and emotional.	Reconnecting with women's musical/creative selves.	Strong engagement, connections with facilitators and participants.			Reconnecting with women's musical/creative selves.	The transition into housing is hard and something is needed to help
Holistic wellbeing.	Self-care; Women prioritising their own needs and wants through the program.	Achieving the outcomes that the group want.			Self-care; Women prioritising their own needs and wants through the program.	The women will want to share their stories or the creative output.
Responsiveness and reflexivity.	Women seeing the potential of music for collective empowerment through companionship.	Desire for more activities.			Women seeing the potential of music for collective empowerment through companionship.	There is an appropriate physical space for the program; they can physically get there; and that they are physically safe to do it.
Open-mindedness and courage to "open the door to the world" (PP residents).	To learn instruments and songwriting skills.	The program supports the women in their transition into longer term housing			To learn instruments and songwriting skills.	The women will see the value in this project
Staff who promote supportive environments through evidence-based practices, collaboration and strong partnerships.	To explore different genres of music.	Women feel safe to share and be vulnerable.			To explore different genres of music.	That the participants can speak and express themselves in English comfortably.
Depth, patience, slow progress.						
Fun, lightness, joy.						

INPUTS		ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES	INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES	LONG TERM OUTCOMES
The "Dream Team"		Funding for six sessions, to be designed by partner organisations PP Staff and Residents: - around 10 musicians 6 x 2 hour sessions, held fortnightly - Mid-August program start - Survey to be distributed to residents about what their interests are, what gear they might need, their goals. - Mindfulness/relaxation activities; songwriting opportunities; music-making.	Recordings of songs and performances, and other creative content.	Participants discovering their potential. "Unlocking the new in myself" (PP residents).	Extending and further developing new skills.	Women and children are flourishing, resilient and changing their narratives.
Money			Tools, guidelines and resources to support others to do this work	Expressing emotions, embodiment, "unlocking/unblocking" tensions.	Continuing to develop self-expression.	Music remains present in the participants' lives.
Music facilitators and research assistants			Published findings in peer-reviewed literature.	A sense of connection through the shared experience of the participants.	Discovering a stronger sense of self-identity, self-worth and self-determination.	The women have an outlet they can draw on.
Relationships the women have with these facilitators			Professional development and team learnings.	Women creating music, singing their own songs.	Prioritising own needs and trying new things.	Music becomes intrinsic to Peggy's Place through increased resources (e.g. establishing a music room or a music appreciation group)
Health promotion expertise in the program management and evaluation			A final report with tangible recommendations.	Self-care and feeling more positive.	The women develop a broader sense of their capabilities beyond the project, knowing they can do new things.	Music has a positive impact on the women's children as they develop their musical skills and connect more with their families.
Instruments and equipment				Have fun, feel relaxed, calmer and energised.	More opportunities for collaboration and community.	Continued relationships and networks.
Facilities						Recognition at the social services and policy levels of the role that art can play in health and wellbeing.
						The program may not reduce homelessness or DFV, but might make the transition into secure housing smoother.
						Normalisation of accommodation and health services.
						Advocates and peer advisory groups who can promote the program.
						Embedding the arts in wider service delivery and social systems.
						Helping other groups of people connect with music.

COLOUR LEGEND

