



PAT CRONIN  
FOUNDATION



# 2022-23 ANNUAL REPORT



*Be Wise*

LET'S END THE COWARD PUNCH



# A milestone year

From embarking on an Australia-wide expansion to developing a much-anticipated Prep-Year 12 Be Wise violence-prevention program, the 2022-23 financial year has been one of major milestones.

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# A message from the Cronin family

So much has happened in our lives in the past 12 months with Pat always a part of every occasion.

In February Pat's sister Emma married the love of her life, Patrick – and that is not a typo.

We are certain that our Pat had a part to play from Heaven in bringing Patrick into Emma's life.

Pat had a reserved sign at the wedding (which you can see in the photo) and we know he was looking down on our family on such a beautiful day.

As with many things in our lives however every joyful moment is bittersweet as we recognise that Pat should have been with us in person and not just in spirit.

When we formed the Pat Cronin Foundation we were told by some people that we would need to change our focus.

However time has proven to us that Pat's story and our Be Wise message is still as strong today as it has ever been.

Our expansion plans began in early 2023 with trips to South Australia, New South Wales and the Northern Territory before the 30th of June with the rest of Australia planned by the end of 2023.

Pat's story had the same impact in these new markets as it has had in schools in Victoria since we began.

We were very pleased to add a third major partner in YVE on top of our renewed partnerships with Barry Plant and Le Pine Funerals.

In addition, a third grant from the Victorian State Government was further vindication of the work we are doing.

To our growing and loyal supporter base and all others who have supported our work we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

“Time has proven that Pat's story is still as strong today as it ever was ...



The support we have received has allowed our small and dynamic team to deliver life changing education and spread our Be Wise message of optimism that we can make a difference for a better future, free from the Coward Punch.

This Annual Report will give you an insight into what we have achieved and what we have planned for the future.

Thank you for your support and for remembering Pat. Let's End the Coward Punch.

**Matt, Robyn, Emma, Lucas (and Pat) Cronin**

# Pat's story

He will never have another birthday, or play another footy game, or finish studying health science and physiotherapy under the scholarship he was awarded.

Pat went out on Saturday, April 16, 2016 for a few quiet drinks with mates after playing his first senior football match alongside his big brother.

He wasn't a fighter – it just wasn't his scene. But when a brawl started to build outside the pub – being a loyal and caring mate – Pat stepped in to pull a friend away.

It was then that Pat was punched in the head from behind. He stayed on his feet, checking all his mates were OK.

Soon after however he started to develop symptoms, had a seizure and was taken to hospital unconscious.

Two days later his family made the agonising decision to turn off his life support.

Pat's death has left a gaping hole in our lives and devastated his friends and the broader community. If this can happen to us, it can happen to anyone.

## He will always be 19 years old ...

We are here to honour Pat's life by helping young Australians make wise decisions so we can end the senseless violence that devastates families and communities.

Seven years later, in 2023, we are here to end the Coward Punch. Be Wise. Think Carefully. Act Kindly.



“ If this can happen to us, it can happen to anyone.

## About us

The Pat Cronin Foundation is a pioneering not-for-profit focused on preventing Coward Punch attacks. We take a public health approach to prevention by educating young people, raising awareness and contributing to research on social violence.



## Soaring demand

**Never has the demand for violence-prevention education been greater than right now.**

From teenagers 'fighting for likes' on social media, a staggering record of disciplinary actions in schools across the country – and, according to one study – nearly half of all Principals have been victims of assault from parents and students – it's clear there's some work to be done.

In 2022-2023 we delivered 398 school presentations at 260 separate schools reaching 63,481 students throughout Australia.

A further 71 presentations to sports clubs and other organisations in Victoria reached 4,446 young people.

In May 2023 alone, we delivered a remarkable 76 presentations in 59 schools including our first-ever foray into the Northern Territory – where we visited eight schools and gave 14 presentations.

The extraordinary demand for our presentations continued on from the first half of 2022, fuelled by the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns on student behaviour.

The feedback we've been getting is the difference in schoolyard behaviour is immediately apparent following one of our presentations.

This is mirrored in our pre and post-presentation survey data, which measures student attitudes on broad range of metrics.

### Australia-wide push

In a year of milestones, perhaps the single-biggest achievement has been an undertaking to expand into all states and territories, detailed on the next page of this report.

- ▶ We have also begun rolling out a comprehensive Prep-Year 12 Be Wise violence-prevention program across the country.
- ▶ Due to demand from teachers, we developed a second hour-long presentation focussing on strategies to help school students manage anger and conflict.
- ▶ We secured a groundbreaking 12-month role assisting the City of Casey address violence as part of the Victorian Government's Building Safer Communities Program.
- ▶ We released complete survey results of the impact of our presentations.



# Awareness

Building an understanding of the impact of Coward Punch attacks, empowering the community to make violence socially unacceptable and providing young people with the tools to make wise decisions are key components of our awareness programs and activities.



## The Be Wise Walk

The Foundation is truly grateful for the assistance it receives, and if there's any event that showcases the strength of the community, it's the Be Wise Walk.

In 2022 with the easing of COVID restrictions, an 'army' of around 100 volunteers helped put together a highly successful event which raised just over \$100,000.

Handling the logistics of preparing for the Be Wise Walk requires an Organising Committee of around 20 volunteers made up mostly of the GFCA crew.

The 2022 edition of the Walk also brought the total number of participants to more than 8,300 since inception in 2016.



## The Be Wise Ball

If there was ever an opportunity to shine a light on the Foundation and its messages, it was the 2023 Be Wise Ball.

The exterior of the venue – the Melbourne Town Hall - was bathed in yellow (the colour of the Foundation) immediately setting the tone.

The Ball, which raised over \$60,000, paid special tribute to its supporters – including Melbourne mates Grant and Rick who embarked on a 1500km

bicycle ride from Alice Springs to Darwin (see p10) to raise cash as well as the Foundation's profile.

It was also an occasion to announce that top-rating 3AW radio announcer and entertainer Denis Walter OAM had accepted an ambassador's role for the Foundation.

Denis is the latest in a range of celebrities from all walks of life giving generously of their time to help spread the message to Be Wise and End the Coward Punch.



## Convenience Advertising Partnership

Now in its fifth year, our Summer poster campaign launched in 160 licensed venues across Victoria.

Gaining TV coverage, the posters, 'Walking away takes balls. Only cowards throw punches.' and 'Don't let them be a dick. Only cowards throw punches', were designed to connect with a younger adult audience.







## A groundbreaking city-wide project

**2023 marks the start of a groundbreaking project involving the Foundation and the Victorian City of Casey, southeast of Melbourne.**

We're partnering with as many as 25 secondary schools in the Be Wise – Preventing Social Violence program.

Directly involving 7000 students, it is being funded by the Victorian Government's Empowering Communities initiative as part of the Building Safer Communities program.

Proudly supported by the City of Casey, it will showcase our newly developed Be Wise Education program – now available throughout Australia.

The Foundation will deliver face-to-face presentations in schools as well as work closely with teachers in implementing our eLearning resources and activity-based learning kits.

This is an exciting new project for us because of its scale, scope and innovative nature and has the potential to reach tens of thousands of people within Casey.

The project complements another landmark initiative, as the Foundation teams up with YMCA Victoria at Casey Stadium to reduce violence on and off sporting fields – a move that could reach as many as 1.2 million players, fans and staff.

ABOVE: Casey Stadium Centre Manager Josh Sadler and PCF Partnerships Manager Steve Layt.

# Our reach ...

## 72,741

Number of people in 2023  
(schools and clubs)

## 187,050

All-time total number of people

We made it our mission to extend our presentations into schools in every state and territory in Australia in 2023, with interstate trips accounting for around 10 per cent of our reach.

In the first six months of this year, we've delivered our signature 'Violence is Never OK' presentation in Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, the Northern Territory and Tasmania, with plans to reach Queensland, Western Australia and the ACT in the second half.







“ These sessions go a long way in raising awareness of the lasting impact violence can have.

## A CASE STUDY



800 cheering students and a 1500km bike ride



## Darwin

Our first-ever foray into the Northern Territory – in which we delivered 14 presentations to eight schools across Darwin – was highlighted by around 800 cheering students and teachers.

Darwin High staged a spectacular welcome to mark the finish of a unique Foundation fundraiser across the Top End in June.

The occasion coincided with the arrival of two passionate supporters riding bicycles 1500km from Alice Springs to raise over \$120,000 for our vital work, in an event dubbed the Ride2BeWise.

The Foundation partnered with the school to raise awareness of our programs and attract media attention.

Tim Morgan, NT Department of Education – Senior Director Darwin Region, thanked the Foundation for its contribution to anti-violence and wellbeing education in Territory schools.

“Our schools strive to empower students with the skills and tools to avoid social violence and these sessions go a long way in raising awareness of the lasting impact violence can have.”

Challenging outdated stereotypes is crucial to changing attitudes to violence, with a survey of over 17,000 high school students revealing some dramatic turnarounds.

## Creating a shift in attitudes

When asked whether:  
**‘Most people respect others who use physical force’**

**BEFORE THE PRESENTATION:**

**44%** of male students agreed



**AFTER THE PRESENTATION:**

**28.4%** of students agreed



**TURNAROUND IN OPINION: 16%**



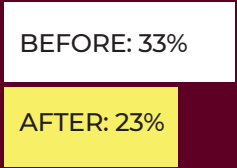


# Real results that teachers can see

\* Based on a sample of 10,000 students

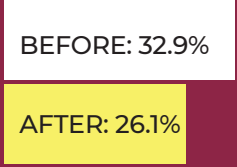
Our presentations are giving students new perspectives

‘Fighting can be a way to have fun’



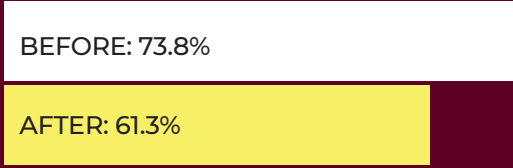
CHANGE 8.8%

‘I like to watch fights at school’



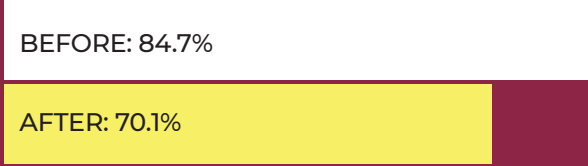
CHANGE 6.8%

‘I’d fight to help a friend’



CHANGE 12.5%

‘Violence is OK to defend yourself’



CHANGE 13.6%

## Partners and supporters

### Our Corporate Partners



Our teams across Victoria feel strongly about the vital work being done by the Pat Cronin Foundation.

We love seeing the engagement across all of our team members with the Foundation’s work, from local school and sports team visits, to the events of the Be Wise Walk and Be Wise Ball.

Well done to the Foundation team for delivering such a worthwhile and crucial service.

**Lisa Pennell**  
CEO Barry Plant Group

The Pat Cronin Foundation provides vital educational presentations and programs.

Their deep connection to the community and desire to make a positive change is inspirational.

We are so proud to be partners.

**Andy Brown**  
Regional Manager  
Le Pine Funerals

YVE are proud to be a major partner of the Pat Cronin Foundation. The foundation values aligned extremely closely with ours. Our core principle ‘My Family My Safety’ is something that guides all our work. We all want to go to work, be safe and come home. This principle should be the same in social settings.

The more people the foundation can reach out to, the better and safer we all will be and their mission of stopping violence and end the coward punch will become closer to a reality.

**Alastair Garlick**  
General Manager YVE



# Partners and supporters

## Corporate Supporters



## Government Partners



## Education Partners



## Community Partners



# Ambassadors

## Matthew Richardson



Matthew Richardson was a successful AFL footballer, playing 282 games with the Richmond Football Club. Since retiring, Richo has become a strong media performer, featuring on several Channel Seven sporting shows, and as a football commentator on both television and radio.

## Sam Switkowski



Sam Switkowski is a current player in the AFL at the Fremantle Football Club. Sam played junior football with Pat and is passionate about supporting the work of the Pat Cronin Foundation. Sam co-ordinated a Walk to Anywhere event in Perth attracting new supporters to the Foundation.

## Peter Helliar



Peter Helliar is a well-known comedian, actor, television presenter and writer. Since 2014 Peter has been one of the regular hosts of The Project on Network Ten. Peter participated in the 2019 Be Wise Walk to the Valley and cited it as one of his top 10 highlights of the 2019 year.

## Mark Murphy



Mark is the Principal of Whitefriars College—the secondary school Pat attended. He is married to Caroline, and they have five children (including Luke who was in the same year level as Pat at Whitefriars). Mark is our first Education Ambassador.

## Denis Walter



A popular TV and radio presenter, Denis' career spans 40 years, 16 albums and one Be Wise Ball performance. He was the MC of the Be Wise Ball in 2022. A proud grandfather of two boys, he was awarded an OAM in 2015 for service to the performing arts.

## Craig Huggins



Craig 'Huggy' Huggins is a radio broadcaster on Melbourne's Gold 104.3 and is a family friend of the Cronins. Huggy got to know Pat through the Research Junior Football Club where his son Tye also played. Huggy has been our MC and Ground Announcer at our Be Wise Walks and is always happy to promote our Be Wise message.

## Sarah Rowe



Multi-code athlete and Collingwood AFLW star Sarah describes the Cronin family's drive to change attitudes to violence as an 'incredible sense of purpose'. "For me, if the initiative can save the lives of others, the effort will have been worthwhile."



# Financial sustainability

The 2022-23 year was a year of continued growth for the Pat Cronin Foundation with activity at all time high levels with 260 presentations delivered.

Our model of offering a fully funded presentation to every school that books a presentation means that our financial position is put under pressure without the addition of new funding from supporters, partners and Government.

It was very pleasing to receive a new grant from the Victorian State Government to partly fund the continuation of our growth in Victoria.

A further staff appointment was made at the end of 2022 with our first Operations Manager. We also added further resources to support our Marketing and Communications.

Our financial documents show a loss of \$69,445 in 2022-23 compared to a loss of \$72,575 in 2021-22.

The more presentations we deliver, the more our costs increase. However, this a true indication we are delivering on our promises to share Pat's story with as many people as we can.

Our financial position remains very strong with net assets of \$514,637 and the ability to comfortably cover all expected expenses for the foreseeable future.

Our challenge for the future continues to be securing more funding through all sources including Government, Corporate Partners, Fundraising and sale of additional presentations, our eLearning and Primary School programs.

The revenue obtained through the Foundation's fundraising activities, and from our partners, donors and supporters is vital in supporting the Foundation's delivery of fully funded Education and Awareness sessions.

Every dollar raised is invested back in to the Foundation to support its aims, grow its reach and increase it capacity to deliver the Be Wise, End the Coward Punch message.



# Financial statements

at 30 June 2023

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Total Assets	577,883	607,308
Total Liabilities	63,246	23,226
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>514,637</b>	<b>584,082</b>
STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Revenue	873,266	498,171
Other Revenue	4,622	1,937
Depreciation	(13,820)	(11,530)
Event & Fundraising Costs	(135,641)	(77,954)
Awareness & Education Costs	(222,079)	(100,868)
Merchandising costs	(16,633)	(26,240)
Staff Costs	(430,492)	(258,577)
Other expenses	(128,668)	(97,514)
<b>Total Profit or (Loss) for the Year</b>	<b>(69,445)</b>	<b>(72,575)</b>
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Receipts from donors & fundraising	345,901	168,847
Receipts from merchandise sales	19,877	20,253
Receipts from education & awareness sessions	64,738	18,751
Receipts from Government Grants	236,750	165,600
Receipts from partnerships	206,000	124,720
Interest received	4,622	1,937
Payments made to suppliers & employees	(906,850)	(561,698)
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>(28,962)</b>	<b>(61,590)</b>



# Our team

We have welcomed a range of new staff members in the past year to assist us in our expansion throughout the country.



**Dr Geoff Smith**  
General Manager



**Belinda Ceritelli**  
Operations Manager



**Steve Layt**  
Partnerships Manager



**Nadine Curphey**  
Education Development Manager



**Sharyn Noy**  
Administration Assistant



**Amy Annetts**  
Marketing Lead



**Darren Grant**  
PR Manager

## EDUCATION PRESENTERS



**Alan Latu**  
Seasoned public speaker and sports coach



**Aidan Phelan**  
Background in education and special needs



**Stacey Dvorak**  
Helps audiences embrace courageous choices for personal growth



**Steve O'Malley**  
Family friend and anti-violence advocate



**Ben O'Toole**  
Experienced public speaker and Coward Punch survivor



**Gail Ackroyd**  
School chaplain with counselling experience in the juvenile justice system

## BOARD



**Matt Cronin**  
Chair  
Founding Director, Pat's father, Certified Financial Planner



**Robyn Cronin**  
Board Director  
Founding Director, Pat's mother



**Rick Atkinson**  
Board Member  
Certified Financial Planner



**Liam O'Brien**  
Board Member  
Health and recreation specialist



**Anthony Guy**  
Board Member  
Chartered accountant with commerce and law qualifications



**David Hrovat**  
Board Member  
Secondary school teacher



**Michael Bishop**  
Board Member  
Commercial lawyer with not-for-profits experience

## CASUAL PRESENTERS



**Peter Treseder**  
Family friend and professional presenter



**Neil Connell**  
A passionate presenter with an extensive background in AFL coaching



**Warren Richards**  
Family friend and active member of the local community







## OUR APPROACH TO WISER CHOICES AND SAVING LIVES

We use Pat's story as an illustration of what can happen when young people are faced with violence, and how wiser choices can be made.

Using this approach we know we have saved lives, prevented incidents and helped young people to reflect on and change their attitudes to violence.



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