

International Social Service AUSTRALIA

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT **2025-26**

Who We Are

ISS Australia is a national not-for-profit organisation providing intercountry social work, legal and mediation services for children and families separated by international borders. As a member of the global ISS network, we collaborate with around 140 other ISS member countries worldwide.

Our Mission

To support, connect and reunite children and families separated across international and domestic borders.

Our Vision

For children and adults to be connected to family, culture and community, wherever they are in the world.

Message from the CEO
Megan Mitchell AM

Amid global change, ISS Australia stays true to its values of service, justice, and cooperation.

Our impact reflects not only what we do but how we do it, with compassion, partnership, and a steadfast focus on the needs of children and families.



Our Impact at a Glance

- Through cross-border casework, the **International Child Welfare Service** supported more than **100** children in care, helping them remain connected to their families and culture while achieving safe and lasting permanency.
- Through our legal and social work services, the **International Parental Child Abduction team** supported **264** families involving children taken to **94** countries.
- Through the **International Post Adoption Tracing Service** and **NSW Special Search Service**, **86** people separated from family by adoption or care intervention received support to search for and reconnect with their loved ones.
- Through the **International Family Mediation Service**, **52 families** navigating cross-border disputes received support in a neutral and safe space, helping them work together to make decisions that serve the best interests of their children.

Our People and Impact

ISS Australia was supported by 24 dedicated staff and volunteers in 2025-26

In 2025-26, ISS Australia worked extensively on 491 cases and handled nearly 1,000 enquiries

94% **of our funding goes directly into service delivery**

2025-26 Revenue
$2,307,803 / Surplus $80,305

Looking Ahead:
Our Goals for 2027

- **Expand Professional Learning and Development** – Build on ISS Australia's specialist expertise by expanding access to professional education, increasing the reach of our International Parental Child Abduction Fundamentals online course, and developing our online curriculum on International Kinship Care.
- **Reimagine International Kinship Care** – Champion equitable, non-discriminatory family placement pathways for children in care, addressing systemic barriers and gaps that prevent children from maintaining connections with family members across international borders.
- **Strengthen Cultural Identity and Family Connections** – Draw on our cross-border expertise and commitment to children's rights to help children in care maintain meaningful connections with family overseas, strengthen their sense of belonging, and remain connected to their cultural identity and heritage.
- **Advocacy and Influence** – Continue to advocate for policy and service development to support children and families navigating family and domestic violence, exit trafficking and cultural disconnection.

Thank You

Our work is made possible through the support of government funding (Commonwealth Attorney General's Department and NSW Department of Communities and Justice), philanthropic partners (The Myer Foundation and The Gandel Foundation), our corporate sponsors (Rafton Family Lawyers and Nicholes Family Lawyers), and our donors who believe that every child deserves safety, belonging, and love, no matter where they are in the world.

Finally, we gratefully acknowledge our ISS global network, including our ISS General Secretariat in Geneva, Switzerland, whose collaboration makes it possible for us to support children and families impacted by cross-border issues.

The lasting impact of family connection

When Lulu* accessed her adoption records in her early 20s, she discovered information about her birth father and Māori heritage that had not been part of her life growing up.

With support from ISS Australia and ISS New Zealand, Lulu began searching for her paternal family. Although she learned that her birth father had sadly passed away, she was successfully connected with her four half-siblings and has begun rebuilding important family relationships. Lulu's story highlights the lifelong importance of family, cultural identity and belonging, and how tracing can help people reconnect with their heritage, even many years later.

Get Involved

For decades, ISS Australia has supported children and families separated by international borders through cross-border casework, family tracing, kinship care and parental child abduction services.

While some of our work is government funded, many of our vital services rely on donations and philanthropic support.

Tax-deductible donations help us continue delivering practical casework that makes a real difference.

Support children. Connect families. Help us continue our work across the world. Donate today to support our work.

Donate now to support our work



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