



EDDIE BETTS
FOUNDATION

IMPACT

REPORT

2024



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	01
2024 IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS	04
FOUNDATION STRATEGY	05
NATIONAL REACH	06
LEADERSHIP ACADEMY	07
PLAYER TESTIMONIES	10
CASE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK	11
CLOSING THE GAP OUTCOMES	13
EARNED MEDIA	15

ABOUT

Established in 2023 by AFL legend Eddie Betts, the Foundation is an Aboriginal-led and owned not-for-profit that works with young people from more than 20 remote and regional Aboriginal communities to improve learning and employment outcomes, working to remove barriers to success and participation.

We pride ourselves on being a trusted organisation across Australia - grounding all we do in respect and taking a strengths-based approach, recognising that our young people are already leaders.

Our work is underpinned by a case management framework that puts the young person at the centre of everything we do, while creating a culturally safe environment where they can thrive. This model harnesses the power of sport and Eddie's successful work over his 17-year career to nurture and develop Aboriginal talent - focusing on holistic development including personal development, leadership, education, sporting skills, and cultural pride.

Having worked with over 600 young people and in ten communities in the past two years, the Foundation has an ambitious agenda for 2025 and beyond. We will focus on increasing not only the reach of our programs, but also their breadth. This will include working with new communities through the expansion of our National Community Clinic Program, an expanded Elite Football Academy supported by a dedicated team of youth workers, and the launch of our Mentorship and Peer to Peer Program.

We are excited about what is ahead, and the potential of the young people we meet and work with every day.



FOUNDATION VALUES

Central to our work with young people is the role of sport in building skills, confidence and connection to community. In 2024 we have developed a range of programs to do just this - working closely with young people, their families and communities from remote and regional Australia to ensure our work is person-centred, trauma informed and culturally safe.

We understand cultural and community contexts, which means we can work closely with young people to identify the right pathway

- Living in regional and remote communities means that we need a different approach and system for supporting players to mature and enter the system
- Support needs to be holistic and integrated - understanding family and community context and broader needs (e.g. education, health, family)

We think about talent differently, drawing on our deep and trusted relationships to identify talent early in regional and rural Australia

- Aboriginal established and led, credible in community
- We work with communities - connecting with elders, local sporting clubs and services to connect to young people who often are unable or may not want to access traditional pathways

Strong connections into multiple systems (sporting and employment) is central to our work, which allows us to connect young people into a range of pathways

- Positive working and collaborative ranging from AFL clubs and Next Generation Academies, through to local services and employers across regional and remote Australia

Ability to bring together Aboriginal leaders to provide tailored and culturally safe advice

- Our team has lived experience, and we understand the challenges and barriers faced by young people from across Australia
- We provide direct mentorship to young people, on terms that resonate and connect with them



2024 IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

At the end of 2023, we set out to achieve three key goals for 2024: support young people into better educational and sporting pathways, expand our leadership academy program, and strengthen the Foundation's operations. We are proud to report that we have not only met these goals but exceeded them in several ways:

- **Expanded Leadership Academy Program:** the Academy saw significant growth this year, providing youth with elite training opportunities, mentorship and learning with tailored education classes.
- **Person-Centred Support:** we developed a new case management framework, offering tailored, holistic support to each young person, ensuring they have the resources needed to succeed in education and sport.
- **Tailored Pathways:** We created graduation pathways connecting young people with employment and sporting opportunities, ensuring smooth transitions from education to the workforce an/or professional sports.
- **Leadership & Operations Strengthening:** we successfully recruited a new CEO and a full-time youth worker, significantly enhancing our capacity to deliver on our mission and provide direct support to participants.

This report sets out our achievements and marks a year of significant growth and impact, setting a strong foundation for continued success in 2025. We're grateful to our team, partners, and supporters for making these milestones possible.



FOUNDATION STRATEGY

STAGE 1: 2022-24

BUILD OUR FOUNDATIONS

- **NATIONAL FOOTBALL ACADEMY ESTABLISHED** (24 young people from across Australia, 100% retention and school attendance)
- **MAJOR PARTNERSHIP WITH COLES GROUP**
- **CREATION OF A MODEL ACADEMY PLAYER and CASE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**
- **COMMUNITY CLINICS HELD IN KALGOORLIE, DARWIN, PORT LINCOLN, CEDUNA** (800 young people)
- **2x REMOTE COMMUNITY TALENT ID CLINICS**
- **2x FULL TIME EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS**
- **15x SPORTING ACCESS GRANTS** (15 young people)
- **FIRST ACADEMY GRADUATES** (2024) - wrap-around employment and education pathways

STAGE 2: 2025-26

EMBED OUR IMPACT

- **NATIONAL COMMUNITY CLINIC PROGRAM** (1000+ young people)
- **EXPANDED LEADERSHIP ACADEMY** (50+ male and female young people) supported by **DEDICATED TEAM OF YOUTH WORKERS** and **TAILORED EMPLOYMENT/ EDUCATION PATHWAY**
- **PARTNERSHIP WITH AFL** to expand impact and pool resources
- **MENTOR AND PEER TO PEER PROGRAM LAUNCHED** in partnership with social service partners and Government
- **EXPANDED EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**
- Formalised **GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP** to deliver Closing the Gap Outcomes

STAGE 3: 2027-29

EXPAND OUR REACH

- **ESTABLISH EDDIE BETTS FOUNDATION HUB**, an integrated sporting and educational facility in Melbourne providing wrap-around supports
- **EXPAND ACADEMY** to include female athletes and formalised sporting pathways (e.g. Next Generation, AFL)
- **EXPAND FOUNDATION PROGRAMS** to other sporting codes (e.g. basketball)

2024 IMPACT

NATIONAL REACH

Central to our work with young people is the role of sport in building skills, confidence and connection to community. In 2024, we continued to strengthen this by delivering a range of sporting programs designed to support young Aboriginal people, their families, and communities. Our work remains person-centred, trauma-informed, and culturally safe, ensuring that each participant feels supported and empowered.

At the heart of our programs is the Football Academy, which in 2024 brought together close to 30 young people from over 20 communities across Australia. This year's Academy Program not only provided an elite sporting experience but also created an environment of peer-to-peer learning and positive role modelling. Our strengths-based approach includes a diverse curriculum, with expert-led sessions covering nutrition, healthy living, LGBTQI+ inclusivity, consent and gender training, and financial literacy, alongside the high-performance football development participants expect.

Our commitment to increasing access to sport was furthered through our Sports Access Grants Program and Community Clinics, which were held in remote locations such as Port Lincoln and Ceduna. These clinics reached nearly 600 children in 2024, offering a crucial connection to community, talent identification, and opportunities for sport. Alongside physical activity, participants gained valuable skills and support, including education on healthy eating, building connection, and positive role modelling.

Through these initiatives, the Eddie Betts Foundation continues to create meaningful pathways for Aboriginal youth, fostering leadership, resilience, and pride in both sport and community.



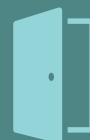
TALENT IDENTIFICATION



FOOTBALL ACADEMY



COMMUNITY CLINICS



SPORTS ACCESS GRANTS



SUPPORTED REGIONAL AND REMOTE COMMUNITIES

Northern Territory

- Darwin
- Tiwi Islands
- Alice Springs
- Tenant Creek
- Santa Teresa

Western Australia

- Perth
- Newman
- Kalgoorlie
- Kimberley:
 - Kununurra
 - Halls Creek
 - Beagle Bay
 - Wyndham

South Australia

- Port Lincoln
- Ceduna
- Adelaide

Victoria

- Ballarat
- Shepparton
- Mildura

Queensland

- Cairns

2024 IMPACT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Throughout 2024, our Academy model has undergone significant change - increasing in scale and frequency, expanded curriculum, and a dual model - including an intensive week-long version, and longer pre-season focus. With four Academies having been held this year (a four-fold increase on 2023), we are proud of the impact that this has had - with further information below on key elements of the program.

AFL skills and training

Focuses on the development of key AFL skills like ball handling, footwork, and game awareness.

Key personnel: The Eddie Betts Foundation coaching panel, including; Eddie Betts, Neville Jetta, Sonny Walters, Wayne Milera and Tate Kaesler.

Strength and conditioning

Athletes learn safe and effective training techniques to build strength and prevent injuries.

Key personnel: Will Morgan, Strength and conditioning coach at the Victoria Institute of Sport and OSVI Richmond, specialists in sports injury treatment

Nutrition

This program focuses on how proper nutrition supports athletic performance and recovery.

Key personnel: Sam Coppinger, Dietician for the Western Bulldogs Football Club

Mental and game preparation

Athletes learn strategies to manage pressure and enhance focus during competition.

Key personnel: Dave Williams, Sports Psychologist at the Geelong Football Club

Running technique

Improving running efficiency and speed through better biomechanics and technique.

Key personnel: Joel Hocking, high performance coached who specialises in Athletics, AFL and Basketball

Data analysis and performance feedback

Athletes receive performance insights to track their development and adjust training.

Key personnel: Victor Nguyen, Data analysis from the Collingwood Football Club.

Respectful relationships

This program promotes positive communication, empathy, and healthy relationships with women and LGBTIQ+

Key personnel: Victor Smith, Program developer at Northern Star

Alcohol, vaping and drug education

Educating athletes about the risks of substance use and promoting healthy choices.

Key personnel: Victor Smith, Program developer at Northern Star

2024 IMPACT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

This year we codified what we know it means to be an Eddie Betts Foundation Academy leader - and through our programs this year we leveraged the role of sport in order to work with young people to foster these attributes in a practical, and culturally safe way



ELITE SPORTING POTENTIAL

High performance testing and exposure e.g. exhibition matches; data and game day analysis

Nutrition, cooking and healthy eating sessions - Learning about food groups and making healthy choices; how to fuel body pre/post game

Strength and conditioning coaching - Tailored program to support pre and mid-season training, and to build foundation fitness

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

Sports psychology sessions - Focusing on mental health and game day preparation

Leadership sessions - 1:1 sessions with leaders in the sporting industry; access to high performance environments

Peer to peer support and companionship - Group bonding activities; team work

COMMITTED

Respectful relationships and social media sessions - Correct use of social media; respect for women and LGBTQI+ community

Drug and alcohol, vaping, and smoking information sessions - Dangers of smoking, vaping, drug use; resources to help



COACH TESTIMONIES

“Our programs focus on preparing the boys for the next level, a significant goal for many of them. Over the past 12 months, they have grown immensely, both in their athletic skills and personal development.

We emphasise cultural safety, creating an inclusive environment led by industry leaders with lived experience. This ensures that when they transition to higher levels of performance, they are not only ready but confident and equipped with the tools they need to thrive.”

NEVILLE JETTA - DEVELOPMENT COACH, COLLINGWOOD FOOTBALL CLUB

“I believe in Eddie’s mission and the Foundation’s commitment to giving back to communities and creating opportunities for youth. Since the first academy back in November last year, the foundation has seen tremendous growth.

Eddie has been pivotal in showcasing each player’s strengths, which has really boosted their confidence and skills. The Eddie Betts Foundation football program is a fantastic asset to the game, providing valuable opportunities to young people who otherwise wouldn’t have access to this kind of exposure”.

TATE KAESLER - DEVELOPMENT COACH, GOLD COAST FOOTBALL CLUB

“I’ve known Eddie and Anna for years, after playing with Eddie at the Adelaide Football Club. Being part of the foundation team this week has been fantastic; witnessing Eddie’s work on a larger scale is inspiring.

The group of boys has bonded well and trained hard together. Growing up, I didn’t have access to programs like this, so it’s a great opportunity for these boys to learn from both current and former AFL players. Exposure to initiatives like this is crucial for their development, something I wish I had when I was their age”.

WAYNE MILERA - AFL PLAYER, ADELAIDE FOOTBALL CLUB



PARENT FEEDBACK

“The Eddie Betts Foundation has been great for my kid. Their staff and mentors have a strong understanding of Aboriginal youth especially from a community and grass roots level. They provide opportunities that otherwise wouldn't be accessed. Keep up the good work. ”

“My son took away heaps of professional advice from sporting players. He enjoyed learning about the boys from different communities and their game styles, along with learning and understanding the game of footy.

He knows that he can match it with some of the best talent, playing against older boys and coaching advice from some of the best past/present AFL Players.”

“I would have to say attending the Eddie Betts Academy was one of my son's favourite highlights of his football life. He spoke about all the amazing first time experiences and highlights including the Coles cooking class, learning from Eddie and Coaches and attending an NBL game. He has made heaps of new friends that he otherwise wouldn't have made.”

“I can't thank the foundation enough, my boy hasn't stopped talking about all the things he got up to during academy week. He is a lot more confident in himself and his football ability.”

“My boy loved the experience at The Eddie Betts Foundation. He spoke about all the amazing experience. I would recommend the academy to everyone, its a once in a life time opportunity that can change young kids lives and future”



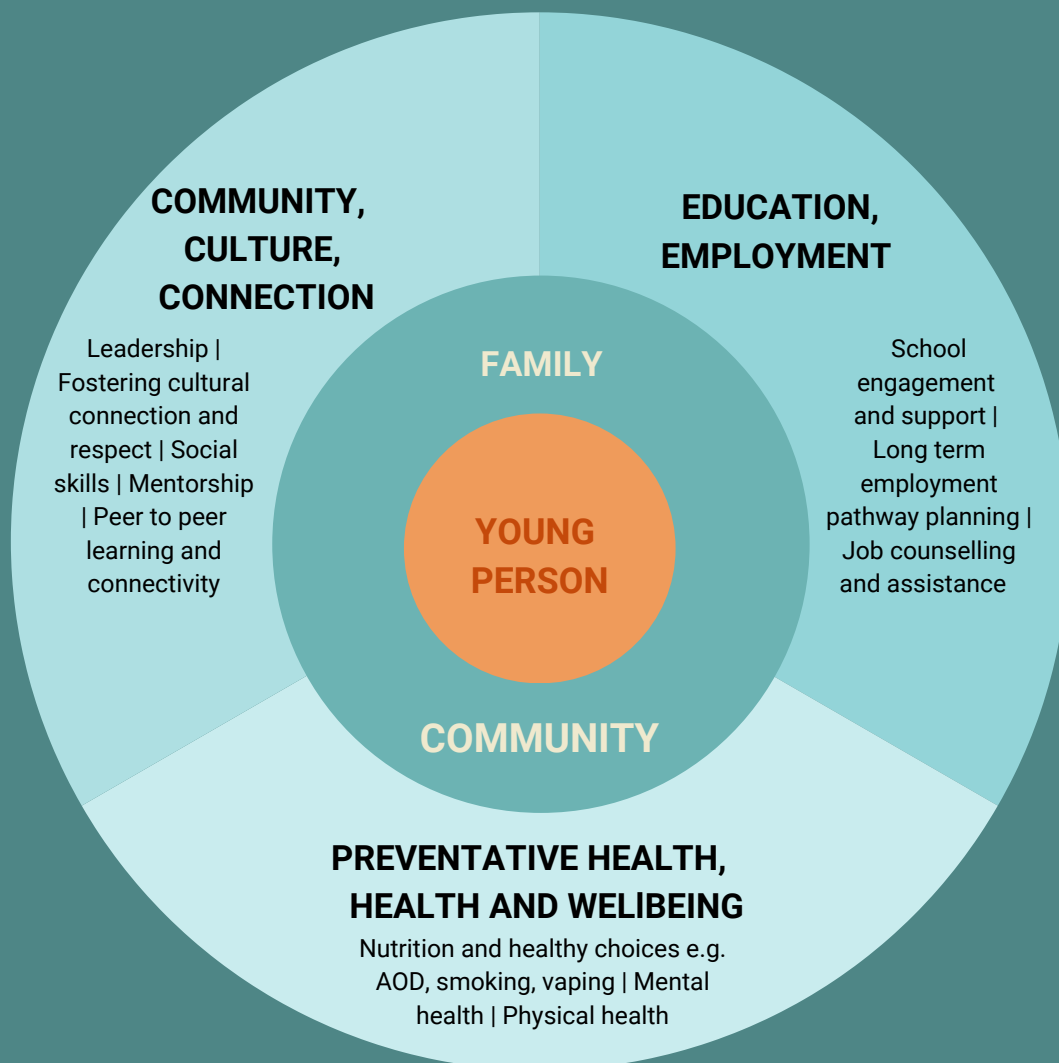
2024 IMPACT

CASE MANAGEMENT

While Academies are energising and significant points of connection, we know that the work in between to connect with young people is as important.

Underpinning this is our Case Management Framework which ensures that we take a **holistic approach to development**, and that family - parents, Aunties and Uncles, and the community - including local Aboriginal service providers, are involved every step of the way. We take a **young person-first approach** - placing them at the centre, and working hard to ensure our supports are **trauma informed, and culturally appropriate**.

Working with each young person, we develop an **Outcomes Plan** based on three key areas of impact: Community and Culture; Education and Employment; and Preventative Health, Health and Wellbeing. We then **measure our impact over time, taking a long-term view**.



2024 IMPACT COMMUNITY CLINICS

In early October, the Eddie Betts Foundation teamed up with Coles to deliver free Coles Healthy Kicks clinics for the Port Lincoln and Ceduna communities, in South Australia

Young people and their families came together to celebrate healthy choices - enjoying fresh fruit and water, high-energy activities, all capped off with a sausage sizzle with some of the AFL's biggest Aboriginal stars

Led by local legends Eddie Betts and Tyson Stengle (Geelong), with special guests Wayne Milera (Adelaide) and brothers Jayden and Alwyn Davey (Essendon), clinic participants moved through eight different activity stations that focused on agility, teamwork, and hand-eye coordination

"It's amazing to see how excited the kids are to be with their role models, to join in on all the activities and have some - these clinics really help bring everyone together" - local football club member

Thanks to all those who helped make the clinics such a success - the aunties and uncles, mums and dads, local sporting clubs, local health and community services. And of course, thank you to our partner Coles, and the team from the Port Lincoln store who generously gave their time and energy - we could not have done it without you

The communities' love of sport was on show throughout - with young people, friends and families coming together to celebrate in the sun - and we cannot wait until the next clinic



CLINICS IN PORT
LINCOLN
/ CEDUNA



550+ YOUNG
PEOPLE
REACHED



5-12 AGE RANGE
REACHED



500KG + OF FRESH
FRUIT DISTRIBUTED
TO ABORIGINAL
FAMILIES



PARTNERED WITH
LOCAL COMMUNITY
AND HEALTH
SERVICES



2024 IMPACT CLOSING THE GAP

A part of our commitment to Closing the Gap, we measure impact against outcome areas that best align with the work of the Foundation. Below is an overview of how we have contributed in 2024.

POSITIVE REPRESENTATION IN THE MEDIA

- Significant growth in social media platform, providing a platform to showcase young people's stories and talent
- Televised matches on national television (e.g. FOX, Kayo), providing exposure and an opportunity to connect with broader audience

PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- Academy weeks encourage healthier lifestyles by combining sports training with nutrition education
- This year we welcomed a number of external experts to share their perspective e.g. AFL club nutritionist, AFL club psychologist, past and present players
- Other issues addressed through curriculum include obesity, AOD, smoking and vaping, diabetes and related health concerns

CULTURAL IDENTITY AND PRIDE, REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY AND OPPORTUNITY, AND ENCOURAGING SOCIAL INCLUSION

- All our programs are Aboriginal-led and place cultural safety at their core
- We have seen significant peer to peer/cohort benefits from our programs, with young people forming connections that go well beyond our programs
- Our Foundation proudly has a vital role in celebrating and strengthening Aboriginal cultural identity, contributing to the broader goal of cultural diversity and understanding

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP

- The Academy program is the key way we develop young leaders, empowering them to succeed - whatever it is that they want to achieve
- In 2024, ~30 young people were supported in their development, with our first cohort of graduates who have gone onto employment and education

HOLISTIC EDUCATION

- Our curriculum is holistic and delivered by a multidisciplinary team - with 2024 seeing an expansion in our focus to include all elements of our Case Management Framework

SUPPORTING RECONCILIATION AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

- Programs supporting Aboriginal empowerment and cultural preservation contribute significantly to reconciliation efforts by acknowledging historical injustices
- The Foundation's work seeks to promote reconciliation in everything we do e.g. cultural exchanges



SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

1 JANUARY 2024 - 5 DECEMBER 2024



EDDIE BETTS FOUNDATION

EARNED MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

The Eddie Betts Foundation has had exposure across multiple reputable media outlets in 2024 including; FOX Footy, KAYO, SKY News, 7 News, SEN, Channel 9 and more. Reaching a combined media viewership of over **3,033,626** people and counting.



Herald Sun

Kayo



The Advertiser

THE AUSTRALIAN



WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN 2024

CONTACT

info@eddiebetts.com.au

 @EDDIEBETTSFOUNDATION

 THE EDDIE BETTS FOUNDATION

ARTWORK BY CHARLIEWANTI



THE EDDIE BETTS FOUNDATION RECOGNISES AND PAYS RESPECT TO THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES, WHO HAVE BEEN THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF THE LAND AND WATERS FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS. WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THIS LAND ALWAYS WAS AND ALWAYS WILL BE ABORIGINAL LAND.