



DIRT & DUST RUN IMPACT

FUELING CHANGE WITH EVERY KILOMETRE

Dirt n Dust Run, in collaboration with **WA Rotary Relief**, has provided \$60,000 in seed funding for a new **Mental Health Disaster Aid Fund**. This initiative aims to support mental health in disaster-affected communities, ensuring long-term resilience and recovery.

WA Rotary Relief, has a strong track record in disaster relief across Western Australia. They respond to various disasters such as bushfires and cyclones, providing practical and mental health support. Some of their significant initiatives include:

Key Past Initiatives by WA Rotary Relief:

- **Wooroloo Bushfire (2021):**
 - 86 houses lost.
 - Provided 47 lockable and waterproof containers (\$214K), tool libraries (\$73K), and fencing support (~\$165K) in collaboration with BlazeAid.
- **Cyclone Seroja (April 2021):**
 - Severe damage in the Mid-West region with ongoing mental health challenges.
 - Supported mental health programs, such as the JK Rock Solid Leaders Program (~\$16K).
- **February 2022 Fires:**
 - Affected the agricultural heartland, impacting multiple properties.
 - Provided fencing materials (\$25K) and installed diesel generators in Katanning for emergencies (\$100K).
- **2023 Wooroloo Bushfire Follow-up:**
 - Continued support for residents still impacted, including water tank repairs, shower/toilet repairs, and leach drain installation.
- **2024 Fires in Parkerville and Nanga Brook:**
 - Assisted with lockable waterproof containers and skip bins for rubbish removal.

WA Rotary Relief's operational approach focuses on long-term recovery and community engagement, working closely with organisations like BlazeAid and the Minderoo Foundation. Their flexibility allows them to provide timely assistance that fills gaps left by traditional responders.

The new Mental Health Disaster Aid Fund aligns with Rotary's focus on both mental health support and practical aid. This fund will help to address the mental health challenges that arise during disaster recovery, continuing their legacy of compassionate and effective support. We are excited to see how this initiative will further contribute to building stronger, more resilient communities in times of need.

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Dirt n Dust has provided \$18500 for **In Between the Ears**, an initiative created to raise awareness and offer support for individuals suffering from post-concussion syndrome (PCS) and traumatic brain injuries (TBI) specifically at local AFL level. Founded by Brendan and Chris, who have lived with ongoing post-concussion syndrome and mental health challenges, In Between the Ears was born out of their desire to help others navigate their recovery journey.

To date, In Between the Ears has been self-funded by Brendan and Chris while they continue working full-time. This has limited their ability to reach as many people as they would like. However, with a grant from the Dirt n Dust fundraiser, they have been able to provide direct and tangible assistance to ten PCS and TBI sufferers.

Key Support Initiatives:

• Noise-Cancelling Headphones:

Phonophobia, or sensitivity to sound, is a common symptom among PCS/TBI sufferers. Everyday sounds can become unbearably loud, leading to overstimulation, anxiety, and even panic attacks. With the Dirt n Dust grant, In Between the Ears has been able to offer high-quality noise-cancelling headphones, such as the Sony WF-1000XM4 (in-ear) and Sony WH-1000XM5 (over-ear). These headphones aid in meditation and mindfulness, which are essential tools for concussion recovery and promoting mental well-being.

• Referral System for Healthcare Support:

In Between the Ears has also established connections with local healthcare professionals to create a referral system. This network includes physiotherapists, psychiatrists, concussion-friendly GPs, and other specialists who can assist sufferers. With the funds provided by Dirt n Dust, In Between the Ears will now be able to alleviate some of the financial stress associated with initial medical appointments by covering the cost of the first visit, helping individuals take their first step toward recovery without the burden of financial pressure.

The ability to provide this support, from noise-cancelling headphones to financial relief, has been life-changing for many. For those who struggle with PCS and TBI, these simple yet meaningful tools can drastically improve their quality of life.

"We are immensely grateful for the support provided by Dirt n Dust, which has made a direct impact on the lives of individuals suffering from these challenging conditions. We look forward to continuing this journey of supporting our community together"

Through your support Dirt n Dust has provided \$28500 in financial support to **Doors Wide Open** in Bunbury. This community organisation plays a critical role in assisting individuals and families affected by drug addiction, offering both support and resources for recovery and mental health.

With the help of Dirt n Dust's funding, Doors Wide Open will be able to:

- Continue providing essential services such as counselling, group therapy, and peer support programs.
- Expand their mental health initiatives, offering additional support for individuals facing the emotional and psychological challenges of addiction.
- Increase outreach efforts in the community, helping more individuals and families in crisis access the resources they need to begin their recovery journey.

Doors Wide Open has been a beacon of hope for many in the Bunbury community, providing not only recovery support but also focusing on the long-term mental health and well-being of those affected by addiction. We are proud to be part of this mission and to contribute to the positive impact they are making.

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Dirt n Dust has proudly donated over \$108,000 to **Australian Rotary Health's Lift the Lid on Mental Health** initiative. This substantial contribution reflects our ongoing commitment to supporting mental health research and education across Australia.

Lift the Lid on Mental Health is a nationwide campaign focused on improving mental health outcomes by funding vital research into the prevention and treatment of mental health conditions.

With the help of Dirt n Dust's donation, Australian Rotary Health will be able to:

- Continue funding cutting-edge mental health research aimed at improving treatment options and support services.
- Increase awareness and education about mental health challenges in communities, helping to reduce stigma and promote early intervention.
- Support young Australians through targeted research and mental health programs, ensuring better access to mental health care for future generations.

This donation is a testament to Dirt n Dust's dedication to improving the well-being of individuals and communities. By partnering with Australian Rotary Health, we are helping to "Lift the Lid" on mental health issues and ensure a healthier future for all.

A key aspect of our fundraising efforts is that 40% of the monies raised by Dirt n Dust are allocated to South Bunbury Rotary (soon to be Greater Bunbury Rotary). This ensures that the funds are distributed at a local level to organisations specifically aligned with mental health and well-being, allowing us to make a direct and meaningful impact in our community.

With this structure, Dirt n Dust is able to support both national mental health research and local programs that address mental health challenges within our region. This dual focus allows us to contribute to broad-reaching initiatives while maintaining a strong connection to our community's needs.

South Bunbury Rotary has extended its support to **Sail Into Life** Bunbury, an inspiring program that offers inclusive sailing opportunities for people of all abilities. This initiative promotes not only physical activity but also emotional well-being and community connection through the joy of sailing.

Sail Into Life provides a safe and supportive environment where individuals with disabilities or those facing mental health challenges can experience the freedom and empowerment that comes from being out on the water.

The funding from Dirt n Dust will directly contribute to:

- Maintaining and upgrading specialized sailing equipment to accommodate a wider range of participants.
- Expanding the program to welcome more individuals from the local community who could benefit from both the physical and mental health aspects of sailing.
- Offering training and support for volunteers who help deliver this valuable service.

By promoting inclusion, building confidence, and improving well-being through sailing, Sail Into Life is making a real difference in Bunbury. Dirt n Dust is proud to be part of this life-changing initiative, helping more people experience the therapeutic power of being on the water.

"Thank you for your continued support and belief in programs like Sail Into Life, that enrich our community in so many ways."

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South Bunbury Rotary has provided financial assistance to **Riding for the Disabled** in Caple, supporting their vital work in helping individuals with disabilities. This funding will contribute directly to their therapeutic horse-riding programs, which not only enhance physical abilities but also provide significant mental health benefits to participants.

The programs offered by Riding for the Disabled have a profound impact on both the physical and emotional well-being of individuals. Horse riding has been shown to improve coordination, confidence, and emotional resilience. It also offers participants a calming environment where they can connect with animals, which is beneficial for mental health and stress reduction.

With Dirt n Dust's financial support, Riding for the Disabled will be able to:

- Ensure the ongoing care and maintenance of their horses to provide the best possible therapeutic experience.
- Invest in specialised equipment that meets the unique needs of the riders.
- Expand their capacity to offer mental health support through equine-assisted therapy, benefiting more individuals in need.

By fostering both physical and emotional growth, Riding for the Disabled plays an essential role in promoting overall well-being within our community. We are proud to contribute to this life-changing initiative and look forward to seeing the positive outcomes of this support.

OUR GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE INCLUDE:

- **Transparent Allocation:** We work closely with South Bunbury Rotary to ensure that funds are allocated to organisations with proven track records in mental health support and services.
- **Regular Reporting:** Detailed reports are provided on how funds are distributed and the outcomes achieved, ensuring accountability and transparency in the use of the resources.
- **Oversight:** Both Dirt n Dust and Rotary have oversight in place to review and approve the allocation of funds, ensuring they are used in accordance with our shared mission and objectives.

DRIVEN BY PASSION, POWERED BY VOLUNTEERS

The Dirt n Dust Run is a testament to the power of community and volunteerism. Every aspect of this event is orchestrated by a tireless team of volunteers who dedicate countless hours each month to ensure its success. From the meticulous planning of the route to the governance, financial management, tech support, and participant engagement—every gear in our machine is turned by someone who believes deeply in our mission.

Our mechanics, medics, caterers, and drivers work seamlessly behind the scenes to transport gear, manage logistics, and create engaging activities like themed days, puzzles, and quizzes that define the spirit of Dirt n Dust. What makes this event truly unique is its commitment to direct impact: **100% of all funds raised** through the Dirt n Dust platform **are allocated to vital causes** associated with mental health and well-being, ensuring that every dollar contributed by our participants advances our mission without being diluted by administrative costs. This model not only maximises our impact but also reflects the pure volunteer-driven spirit that fuels our efforts to make a difference.