
CheckPoint Organisation Ltd

CheckPoint Check In

Biennial Report 2017-18



checkpointorg.com





CheckPoint’s journey from conception to a worldwide charity tackling mental health issues using the power of video games.



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Changing
lives one
gamer at
a time.

The Story of CheckPoint



Dr Jennifer Hazel *Founder,
Executive Director and Clinical
Director of CheckPoint*

The most common question I get asked is: how did CheckPoint come about? What inspired you to create a charity supporting gamers' mental health? What's all that about?

It's a story I love telling. My boss was telling me how terrible video games are - "they're addictive and make you violent!" he proclaimed. So I showed him the evidence - that actually games could be useful for treating a variety of mental illnesses. I realised I'd found my passion in life.

I began exploring how games could be of benefit. As a passionate, lifelong gamer this was something I knew to be true! I began to go to cons and to ask the gamers out there - do games help? How? Why?

It was like opening flood gates. Gamers want to talk about this...a lot. We have struggled with mental health issues, we have found solace and hope in games - and in one another. We want to learn and grow together. This was real, and I could really make a difference. I realised how important this work was - and how no one else was doing it. So, I did it. And that is the story of CheckPoint.

We are confident that what we are doing will improve the lives of people all over the world, using the power of video games. Together, we will create a world where games are revered as being tools for positive wellbeing, and where gamers have the tools they need to feel supported, and fulfilled. ***Let's do this!***

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

Dr Jennifer Hazel

CheckPoint is a charity that provides mental health resources for gamers and the gaming community.

Our Mission

To raise awareness for mental health issues, reduce stigma, and improve wellbeing in our community.

Our Vision

A world using video games for positive wellbeing and resilience.

Gamers who feel supported and understood.

Level Up!

Changes in Organisational Structure

As CheckPoint was founded in June 2016, we are still a relatively young company and these two years have seen huge movements as we grow, find our feet, and develop a place in the gaming industry.

In June 2017, founding member Jane Cocks stepped down and we welcomed a new director - Dr Shelley Xia. We wish Jane all the best and have been thrilled to have Shelley with us.

Since we started, our team size has tripled!

We gained a valuable asset in Pritika Sachdev, our Social Media and Community Manager. Pritika has revolutionised the way that CheckPoint interacts with its audience and has fostered a healthy, wholesome and supportive community in the GamerMates.

We also welcomed Mark (Content Editor), Jamie (Volunteer Manager and Stream Coordinator), AJ (Moderation Lead), and we opened our International Advisory Board with Kyle and Viola representing Canada and Italy respectively.

We're so proud of the way our team has grown and thrived, and cannot wait to continue working together in the future.



Activity Select



From video to stage, from conference floor to chat room - CheckPoint meets gamers where *they* are.

It's been a fun and interesting journey, establishing ourselves in the online video gaming community. Our biggest challenges have been finding out what the community wants, how to provide it, and how to do that sustainably.

We've tried all sorts of different initiatives and done a lot of market research. A lot of our projects have not gotten off the ground, but we're so glad to have tried them.

Here's a quick summary of what's worked (and hasn't!):



GamerMates

Turns out a pro-mental health online community for gamers was just what the community wanted and needed.

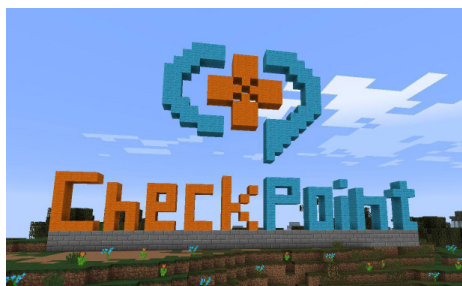
Our Discord channel has gone from strength to strength, persistently recruiting new users and creating a wholesome and supportive environment for everyone within it.

We tried a membership based service on the CheckPoint website, with user profiles, badges and achievements and forums, but the uptake was pretty low so we ultimately have retired it.

The Discord community have more than filled that gap!

We have group gaming sessions playing Overwatch, Tabletop Simulator and Stardew Valley, we have a Game a Month Club, mental health support chats, and much more.

We've even acquired our partner server, PatchGaming, to expand our reach to even more gamers.



"Being a part of GamerMates means having a bunch of like-minded people to talk about your favorite games about. But also, to occasionally find compassion and empathy in the times when depression is at its worst."



"I'm so grateful for GamerMates because being part of this pro-mental health gaming community allows me to have fun while both giving and receiving mental health encouragement and support in a positive, inclusive community where everyone is welcomed and valued."



"I think the respectful, natural, stigma-free way CheckPoint has explored and described #mentalhealth conditions puts you in an incredibly unique position to further address these things in a normalizing, empowering way."



"@CheckPointOrg I applied today to attend a Social Anxiety group. Still can't believe I did it. It's all down to you guys at CheckPoint and @Rx_Pixel Don't know what switch you guys flicked in my head the fact I am trying to tackle my Anxiety again well forever grateful Thanks!"

The CheckPoint Series

Tackling mental health issues using the power of video games.

What an experience! In June 2017 we launched our first Kickstarter campaign - for a webseries tackling mental health issues using the power of video games.

We were stunned by the response, raising a total of \$63,000 (which was \$8k above our goal), with several days to spare. Over the next few months we set about creating the series, with the incredible directing and editing talents of Toby Venus and Ben Hasic behind the camera.

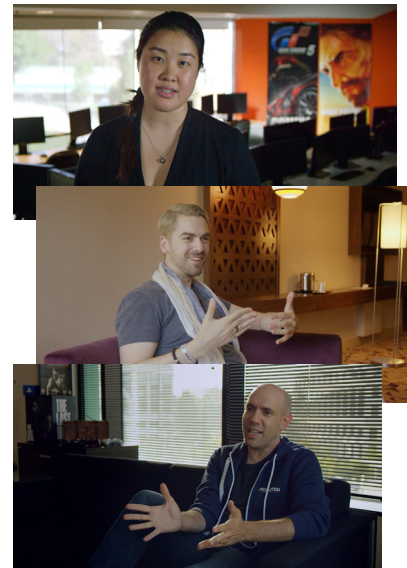
We shot most of the to-camera stuff in AIE Sydney and the IGN offices (which look awesome), and then we travelled to PAX West in Seattle,

as well as a sneaky trip to the Naughty Dog studios in Santa Monica for our guest interviews.

Some were also shot on home soil in our own flat in Sydney!

The series was released in January 2018 to phenomenal response. We were featured on Total Biscuit's Cooptional Podcast - and may he rest in peace. We had numerous publications and hit our milestones easily, as well as reaching literally tens of thousands of unique individuals to let them know that mental health issues are common, there is help, and it's okay to ask for that help.

We are so proud of what we achieved.



"I am proud to help support @CheckPointOrg for many reasons. The main of which is because gaming is what kept me together when no one else could. And the #CheckpointSeries helps put all that into a perspective for all."



54,300

video views



294,100

viewed minutes



5,245

subscribers



Convention Wellbeing Spaces



3 countries.
22 shows.
7,700 room users.

This is how we came to be, in our personal missions assisting the US organisation Take This with their AFK Room initiative.

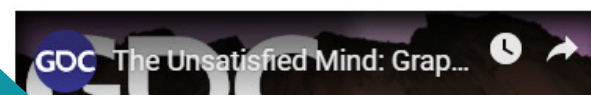
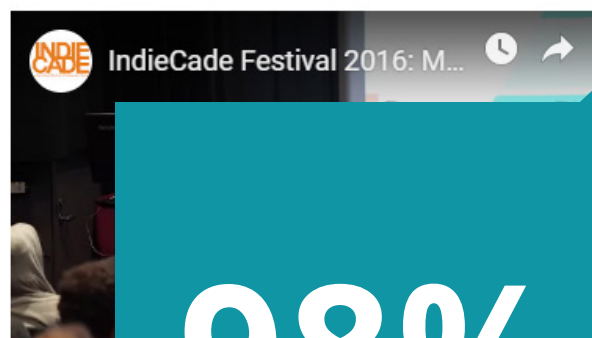
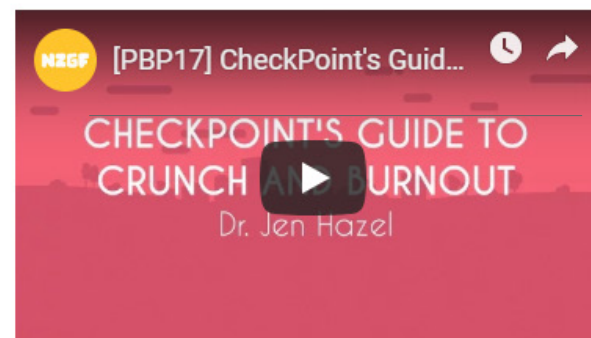
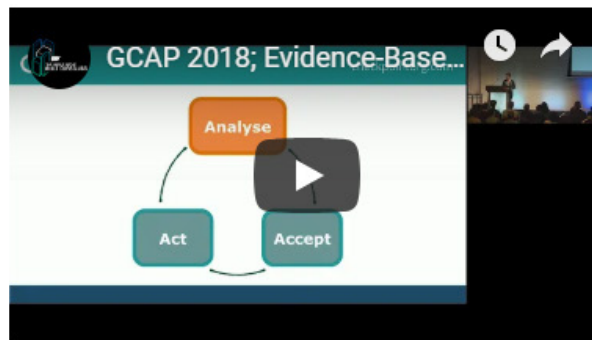
With their inspiration and guidance, we launched a series of chill-out spaces at local (ANZ) conventions, for attendees to use as a way to ground, take a break, and connect with mental health resources.

We got off the ground by partnering with the incredible Australian nonprofit REACHOUT, who provide digital mental

health resources for young people. With their expertise we managed to provide rooms in every Oz Comic Con and AVCon.

This project - The ReachOut Room - was a huge success for consumers but unfortunately due to other commitments ReachOut had to end their partnership. We have gone on to adapt the model as The CheckPoint, which has been implemented at Oz ComicCon, SMASH!, AVCon, RTX, PAX Australia and more.





98%
positive
feedback

"I hope it brings you some satisfaction and fulfillment to know that you have encouraged at least one person struggling with depression to take steps back down the path to happiness again. Genuinely, from the bottom of my heart, thank you, Dr. Jennifer Hazel, and the CheckPoint Organisation Staff, for doing something worthwhile, and making improvements in my life with these videos and your words."

Industry Talks and Lectures

We strongly believe that for games to be therapeutic, their developers have to be healthy. We have dedicated ourselves to travelling to game developers all over the world to share our knowledge and improve the lives of devs. Our key speaker is Dr Jennifer Hazel and she has been regarded with a number of accolades for her advocacy and educational work during this period, including earning a place on the **Speaker's Deck at GDC** for two years running, and an **MCV Pacific Women in Games' award**.



"Got a lot out of this incredible talk. Well prepared, data backed info. Really inspiring and useful info."

"I'll be putting what was presented into practice."



"This talk was on an incredibly important issue that needs more awareness and more people willing to talk about it. The speakers handled the subject well, validating experiences and providing tips and resources that could be very useful!"



"Great handling of some really complex issues. The mindfulness activity was a great addition. Love how actionable the talk was."

"Dr Hazel's work is the most important work in the games industry."

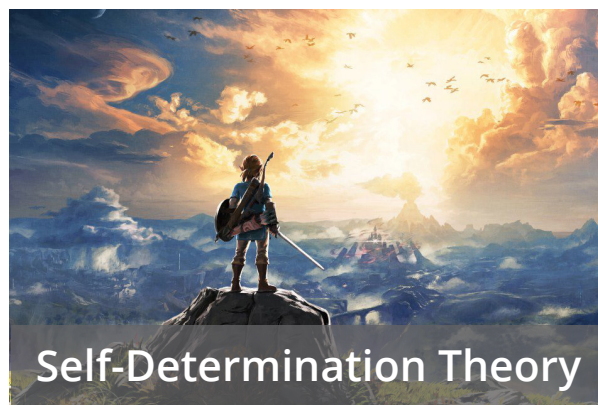
Research and Development

Exploring the Psychological Benefits of Video Games.

It's important to acknowledge that we cannot move forward in creating therapeutic or mental health themed games without robust evidence for their benefit. That's why we're running our very first clinical research project - ethics and governance approved - to investigate the psychological benefits of video games.

Our survey received well over 2000 respondents, the analysis has come through and all that's left is write-up and publication.

It's an exciting time so watch this space!



Self-Determination Theory

One of the main psychological theories we have investigated is this - uniting the concepts of Autonomy, Competence and Relatedness. When participating in something that has all three, evidence suggests the outcome is increased motivation and improved wellbeing. We believe video games unite these themes in an immersive and rewarding environment.



RPGs Come Out on Top

We investigated a number of genres - 17 in total (!) - and we found that not all types of games are relevant to all players. There were significant differences between genre, age, and gender identity. However, RPGs persistently scored much higher than any other genre in a way that was unarguably statistically significant. We're very excited about what this might mean for the future of therapeutic games.

+15G! Our Achievements

When your goals are to raise awareness for mental health issues, reduce stigma, and improve wellbeing, it's hard to measure "success".

The aims are quite subjective - how do you tell whether you have improved someone's quality of life?

The way we try to track our progress at CheckPoint is two-fold, through a combination of quantitative metrics and qualitative feedback from our community.

That way we can see actual numbers on how many people we're



reaching, and we get real stories from those people to tell us just how much our work means.

We want to continue to show how much of a difference we can make together.



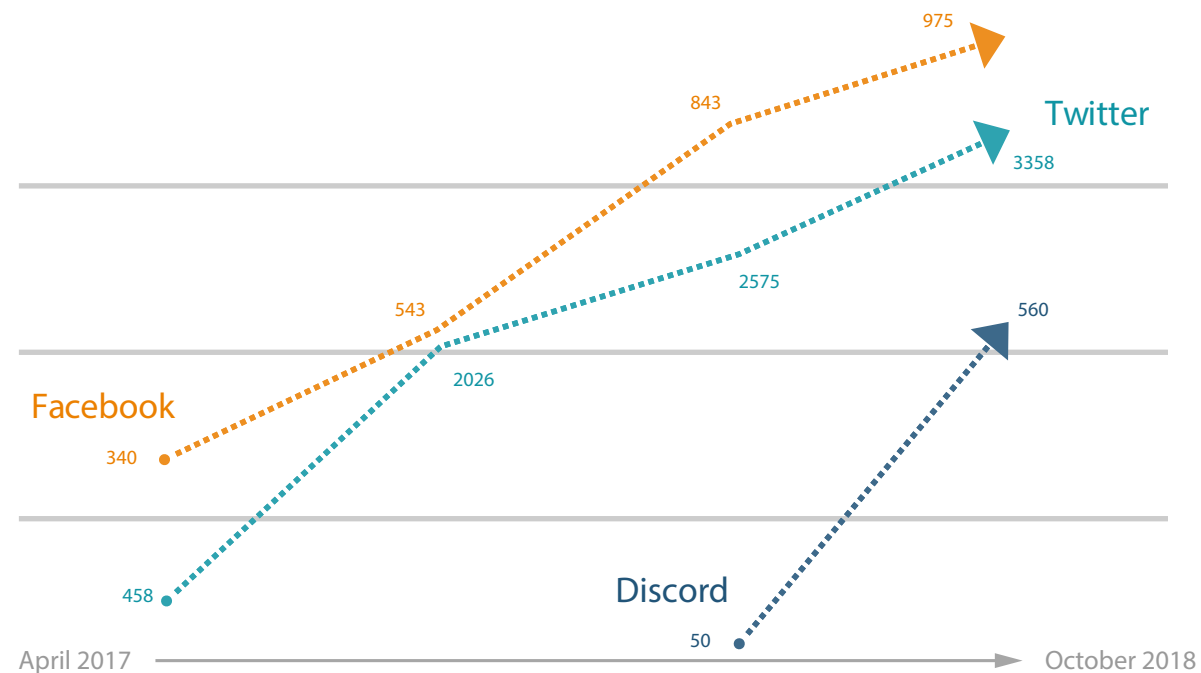
We've been measuring and reporting on our social media engagement, web metrics and other quantifiable data.

Our consistent growth over the last two years has been phenomenal!

Social Media Followers

Measuring social impact through engagement

We began measuring our social media engagement and following in April 2017. The success of this campaign is staggering, proving gamers want to talk about mental health, and when they do, they **engage passionately** and are a **dedicated audience**.



Twitter
Followers
Up +733 %



Engagement

Twitter engagements and Facebook engaged users, per month, average

+437%
Engagement per Tweet

4081
Monthly engagements



+198%
Engagement per Post

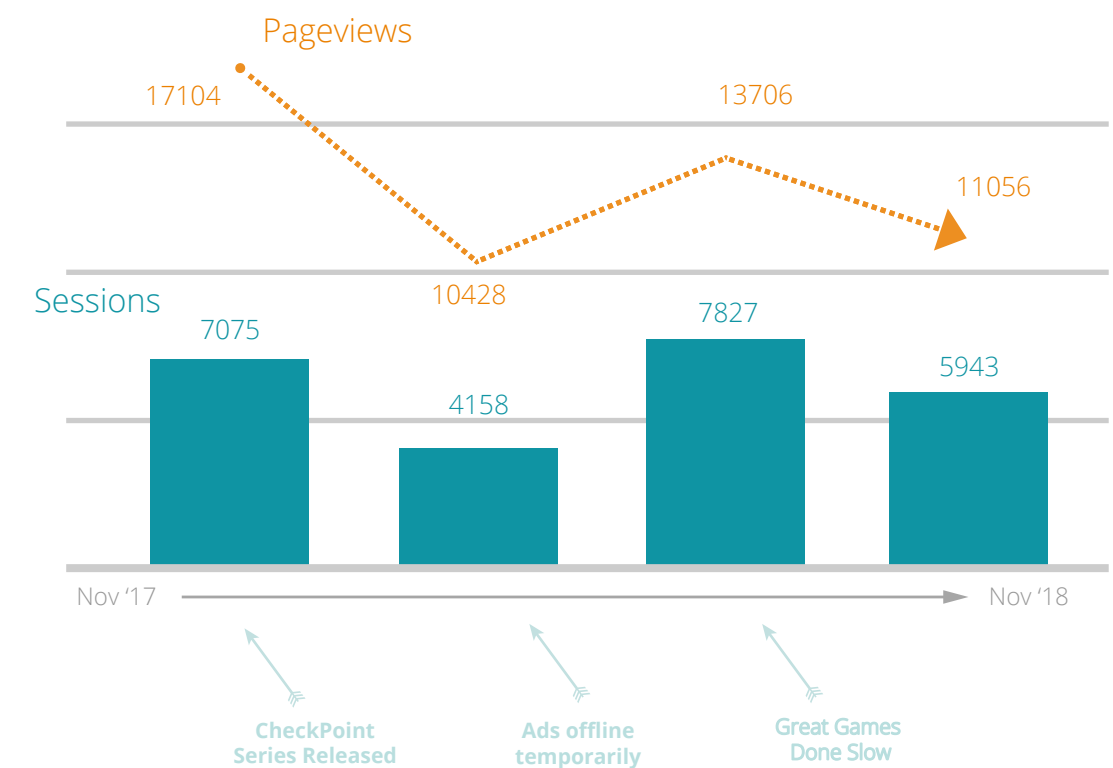
613
Engaged Users



The Power of Advertising

We are thrilled to receive \$10,000 USD every month in ad space on Google for their AdGrants program. You can see the significant difference that those ads make when you look at the periods they weren't present!

Website Metrics | Per month, average







International Reach!

We have official charity registration in Australia, New Zealand and the UK.

But our impact is felt much, much farther.

Hub World

-  **Melbourne**
Our main base of operation is Melbourne, Australia. Most of our team live and work here..
-  **Wellington**
Two directors recently moved to the amazing Wellington. Bringing our initiatives to a New Zealand market is an incredible, rewarding activity.
-  **Seattle**
Having acquired PatchGaming in 2018, we have been able to expand our floor staff to the USA.
-  **London**
Our work with group Gaming The Mind has enabled us to expand our reach to conventions and consumers in the UK.



Decentralising Mental Health Resources

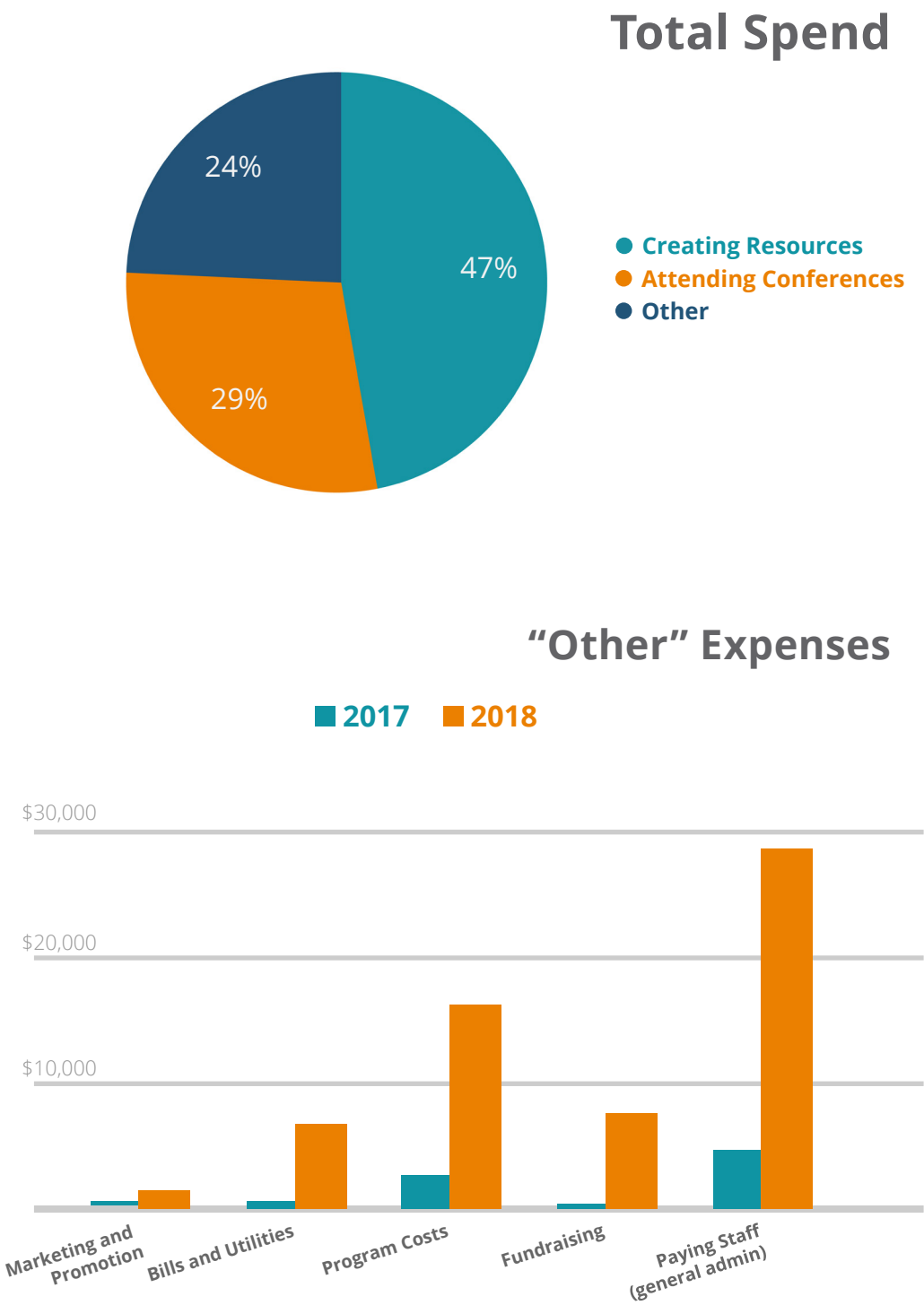
Our videos are available in **French, Russian, German,** and of course, **English**. We have an International Advisory Board representing Australasia, North America and Europe.

We believe that positive wellbeing, resilience, belonging and feeling understood are **rights that everyone has** - no matter where in the world they live.

Financial Reports

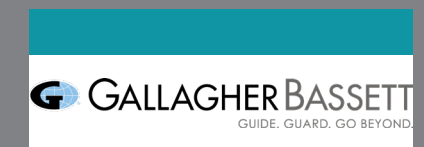
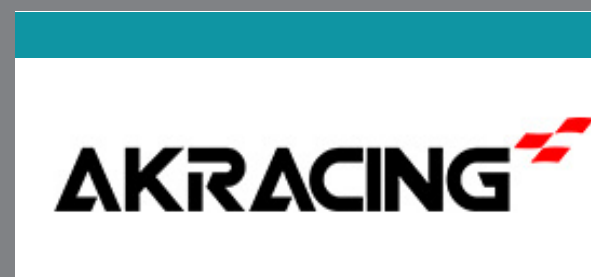
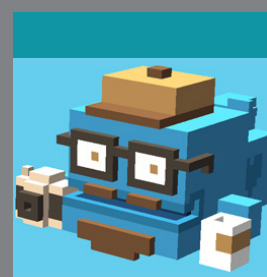
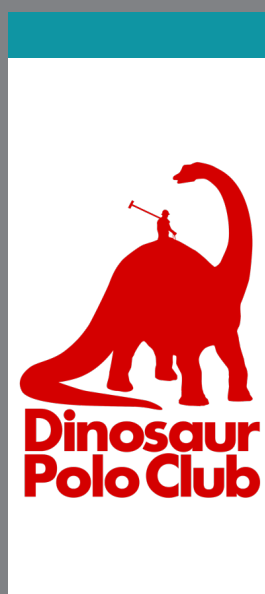
2017 and 2018

	2017	2018
Ingoing		
Surplus		\$98,404
Donations	\$14,434	\$72,265
Kickstarter	\$56,033	
Grants	\$55,920	
Outgoing		
Advertising and Promotion	\$515	\$1,255
Bank Charges	\$165	\$1,446
Computer Expenses	\$1,786	\$619
Staff	\$13,898	\$87,013
Fundraising Expenses	\$77	\$7,480
Insurance	\$158	\$1,528
Other	\$495	\$1,509
PayPal Fees	\$24	\$1,332
Postage, Freight and Courier	\$112	\$918
Program Expenses	\$1,945	\$10,003
Purchases	\$119	\$4,800
Telecommunications	\$58	\$1,359
Travel and Accommodation	\$8,626	\$33,900
End of Year Total	\$98,404	\$17,502



Donor Partners and Sponsors

We couldn't do this work without the help of these amazing people and teams. Their contributions have helped us grow to where we are, and will continue to do so.



The Benefits of Corporate Sponsorship

- Improves visibility to socially conscious consumers
- Offer customers the opportunity to engage on a different emotional level
- Makes your organisation more accessible to a wider audience
- Enhances credibility
- Tax benefits
- Differentiates you from your competitors
- Being supportive of mental health issues in the workplace provides benefits to recruitment and reduces employee turnover
- Corporate social responsibility has been shown to have positive effect on company culture – boosts engagement and improves morale

"Supporting CheckPoint was a no brainer for us at AKRacing as we know that our community receives the direct benefits of what CheckPoint provides. CheckPoint understands the mental health implications of video games and seamlessly connects our community with resources they can understand and access in their everyday life. We've heard firsthand from some members of our community how much CheckPoint's existence helped them through some dark times."

- Chiara Pagano, AK Racing

Epilogue

Looking Ahead: 2019-20

Connecting Gamers
with Mental Health...



...Connecting Mental
Health with Games



These two years have been an absolute privilege for our team. We can't wait to see what the future holds.



More Mental Health Resources

GOAL: Double the size of our library of online resources for gamers.

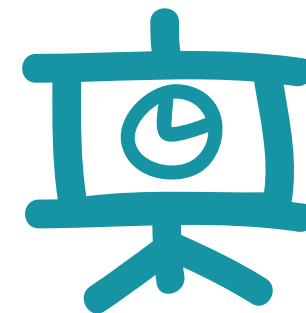
The mental health resources we create and publish are the backbone of CheckPoint. We will double our library with even more formats of resource.



More Supported Gamers

Goal: Expand our returning user base by 150%, and our engagement by 200%.

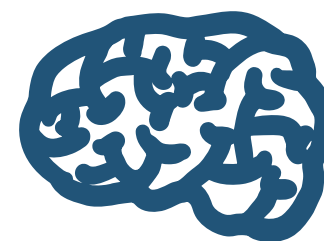
Raising awareness and reducing stigma starts with an audience. We plan to continue expanding our reach to achieve our missions.



More Research and Evidence

GOAL: Publish our existing research and complete the protocol and recruitment for the next project.

Expanding our clinical research base will legitimise the field and our work in it, as well as justifying the development of therapeutic games.



More Healthy Development

GOAL: Curate and launch a our development arm.

We are already providing talks, lectures and consultation about how to maintain a healthy studio and how to appropriately represent mental illness. Our development arm is to expand and grow.



Thank you.



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