

# IMPACT REPORT



December 2023



# CONTENTS



**3**  
INTRODUCTION



**4**  
MISSION



**5**  
THEORY  
OF CHANGE



**6**  
PROGRAMS



**7**  
IMPACT  
IN NUMBERS



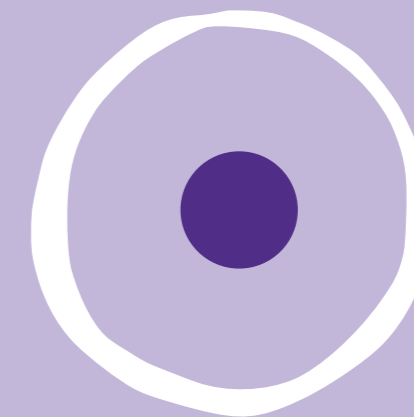
**8**  
IMPACT  
INSIGHTS



**9**  
TESTIMONIALS



**10**  
FRIENDSHIP WALK  
SPONSORS



**11**  
INCOME  
SOURCES



**12**  
LOOKING  
FORWARD



FRIENDSHIP  
CIRCLE IS ALL  
ABOUT PEOPLE



## INTRODUCTION

**We are excited to share with you our second Impact Report! In these pages we hope to convey a sense of Friendship Circle's lasting, local impact. We thank you for joining us on this journey towards a brighter future.**

**Friendship Circle is all about people.**

The young people with and without disabilities who we live for. The generous financial partners who are seeking to make a lasting impact. The volunteers who make the magic happen. The staff with an irresistible urge to create for our community. And, the many people who wear more than one of these hats.

We are excited to share that over the last period we have connected with two amazing people, Gabriel Fittinghoff and Keren Klein, who have successfully filled full-time program management positions for Friendship Circle Under 18s and Friendship Bakery projects. They are building genuine relationships in our Friendship Circle community and are putting numbers on our social impact scoreboard.

Thanks to these humans and their teams, we have more participants and volunteers involved in Day Camp than ever before and the Bakery is operating at close to capacity in our first offering – the skills and experience development program. We also know that people need to be supported with resources.

While we are grateful to our many community partners, special thanks and appreciation is due to our resource partners Moriah College and Emanuel School for hosting our School Holiday Day Camps. With nearly 100 people per day, access to these amazing campuses creates just the right environment for our volunteers and participants to do their best work and leverage donor contributions for impact.

Finally, even when we are on a good run we are never complacent.

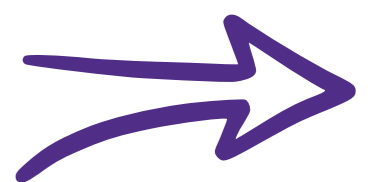
We are committed to continuous learning and are always reimagining what a better future might be. Challenges and changes are to be seen as opportunities to realign with our most important stakeholders. As our volunteer coordinator, Lara Kopelowitz, challenged me last week, “We can do it, we just need to dig deeper”.

Thank you so much for your support and partnership!

Best Regards,



**SENDER & CHANA**







### NICHOLAS - DAD

“When you have a child with special needs you soon come to realise that the world is largely built for ‘normality’. It is a journey that was initially borne by our family somewhat alone and to some extent we retreated. Doctors, therapists, carers provide a treatment or service and awareness, but not a community of acceptance where Brigitte’s uniqueness was just a part of a community of belonging. We crave acceptance and belonging and this is the gift that we have enjoyed both as a family and for our daughter personally.

**Over 10 years ago, Brigitte was fortunate enough to be invited into Friendship Circle and the embrace of the community where she has been accepted and belongs.**

We are truly blessed to be a part of a community that has changed our lives.”



## MISSION

**TO INSPIRE YOUNG PEOPLE BY  
CREATING INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES  
THROUGH EDUCATION, ACTIVITIES,  
CAPACITY BUILDING AND  
SOCIAL CONNECTIONS.**



# THEORY OF CHANGE

Our strategy to change the world is super simple.







### SPORTS CLUBS

Local sports teams and community groups join us for fortnightly inclusive sports sessions with our experienced coaches

### SUNDAY CIRCLE

Regular Sunday morning social and educational sessions for Juniors and Teens

### GETAWAYS

Weekends away with friends relaxing in Berrima and the Blue Mountains or exploring Melbourne where participants can become more independent in a peer-supported, age-appropriate environment

### VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Development program upskilling Friendship Circle volunteers and leaders, giving them a set-up in their careers and connecting them to the community

### FAMILY SUPPORT AND EVENTS

A mix of social, educational and networking events for parents and families, plus online support groups

### DAY CAMPS

Days full of fun and friendship for Juniors and Teens during school holidays when families need it the most

### FRIENDSHIP BAKERY

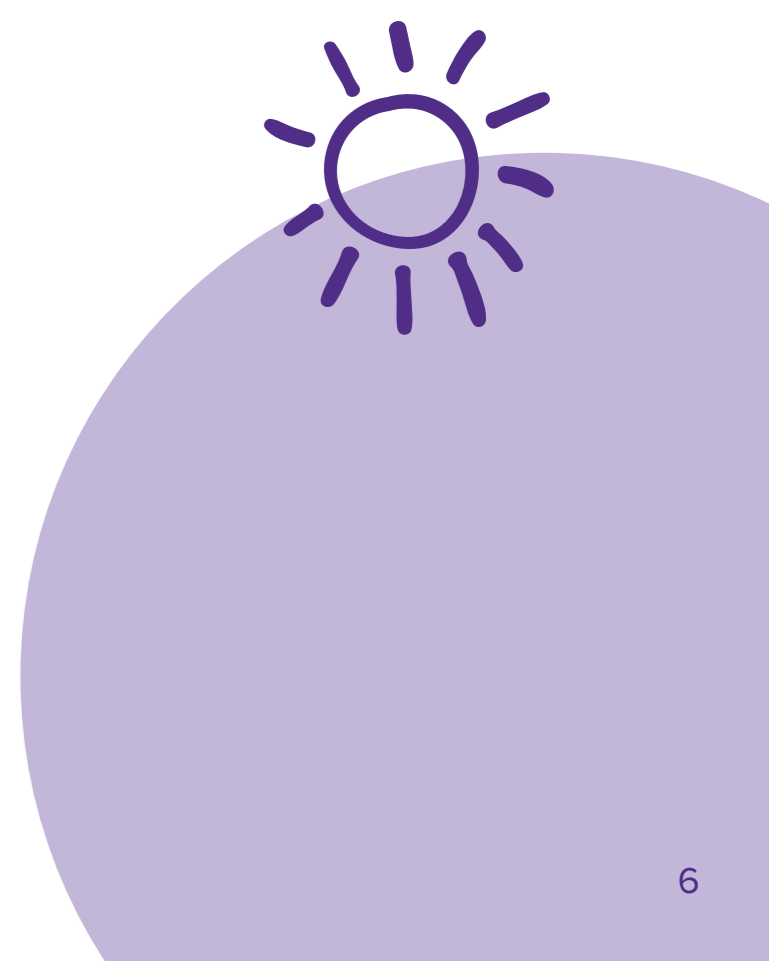
Retail bakery in the heart of Vaucluse where aspiring bakers and baristas with disabilities develop skills and experience, and connect with the community

### FRIENDS AT HOME

Weekly home visits by passionate teenage volunteers engaging children with disabilities in their most comfortable environment

### FC SOCIAL

Regular social and educational catch-ups in the community for young adults with and without disabilities



# IMPACT IN NUMBERS

## PARTICIPANT SESSIONS FILLED

- 422 DAY CAMP SESSIONS
- 273 FC SOCIAL MEET-UPS
- 193 FRIENDS AT HOME VISITS
- 422 FRIENDSHIP BAKERY SHIFTS
- 111 SPORTS CLUB SESSIONS
- 422 SUNDAY CIRCLE SESSIONS
- 69 WEEKEND GETAWAYS

## VOLUNTEER SESSIONS FILLED

- 1338 DAY CAMP SESSIONS
- 394 FRIENDS AT HOME VISITS
- 125 SPORTS CLUB SESSIONS
- 528 SUNDAY CIRCLE SESSIONS
- 117 WEEKEND GETAWAYS
- 25 OTHER VOLUNTEERING SESSIONS

## TOTALS

- 2175 TOTAL PARTICIPANT SPOTS FILLED
- 2527 TOTAL VOLUNTEER SPOTS FILLED
- 4702 TOTAL SPOTS FILLED

## COMMUNITY

- 16,745 VOLUNTEER HOURS IN 2023
- 9,814 ENGAGED IN OUR COMMUNITY
- 2,953 PRIMARY AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS THROUGH STUDENT OUTREACH AND EDUCATION INITIATIVES





# IMPACT INSIGHTS



## WILL PARTICIPANT

Community and social connections are helping people in our community to live a full life.

“Friendship Circle has been a game changer for me and so many people I know. I never thought I’d find such a great group of people who really care about friendship and inclusion.

It has encouraged me to come out of my shell, meet some great new people – and helped me realise the importance of unity, inclusion and love. Since joining, I’ve become good friends with Gabi, Sam, Nicky and Mikey. I’m now part of the FC Social program and love hanging out with my buddies. I also go to Day Camps and teach the kids how to play and enjoy sport and the importance of exercise!”



## DEAN PARTICIPANT PARENT

Our activities impact and improve the lives of entire families.

“Thomas is our only child. Before joining Friendship Circle, weekends were our real headache. Since Thomas had no other kid to play with due to his disabilities, he appeared anxious and unsettled.

Since joining Friendship Circle, especially the Sunday Sports program, he is always high-spirited after each session, recalling the names of volunteers and the activities. His overall confidence has soared. Our whole family can’t wait for the next Sunday Sports session! Thanks heaps to the organisers, volunteers and contributors of Friendship Circle.”

## VANESSA TEEN VOLUNTEER PARENT

Our fun and meaningful activities plus positive role models help young people find their voice.

“Sports Club provided a fabulous way for my son Ariel to spend a Sunday morning doing what he loves most – kicking a soccer ball, hanging out with friends while making a meaningful contribution. The sensitive, fun, and incredible Friendship Circle team of young leaders helped Ariel and his friends be relaxed, confident and eager to participate. Ariel loved seeing ways in which all participants could connect through sport and even if the involvement was different for each person, everyone walked away feeling happier and more relaxed.

It filled me with great pride watching my son develop confidence and connections with people with and without disabilities. Seeing such committed and passionate young leaders from our community inspired Ariel as well, to see ways in which he can continue contributing and making an impact as he grows older. I feel grateful to Friendship Circle for providing a meaningful experience for our children to become communally responsible and engaged at this critical age.”





**MARK**  
**VOLUNTEER**

Friendship Circle gives us all a chance to develop our social lives and build true friendships. These friendships allow us to feel included, and support each other as we navigate our adult lives.




**MOLLY**  
**PARTICIPANT**

My favourite part of all the Friendship Circle activities is hanging out with my buddies. I like playing with my buddies.

**LINDA**  
**PARTICIPANT PARENT**

Above all, Friendship Circle has given Nicky a sense of belonging. It is his home away from home and has been part of Nicky's life since primary school. He has now finished high school and Friendship Circle has grown with him. As parents, it has answered our prayers, he is not isolated and has made lots of great friends.




**NOA**  
**VOLUNTEER**

Having the experience to meet and connect with a variety of people of all abilities is so unique and special. The weekend in the Southern Highlands was truly heart-warming and allowed me to have fun, take a break and make so many great memories.

**JOSH**  
**PARTICIPANT**

The Getaway is one of my favourite things to do of all times. I loved going to Flip Out and Inflatable World, eating pasta, and getting to know my buddy and what they are into.



# TESTIMONIALS



# FRIENDSHIP WALK SPONSORS

Shout out to the amazing business sponsors who partner with us to deliver a more inclusive community for their stakeholders.



## PRINCIPAL SPONSOR



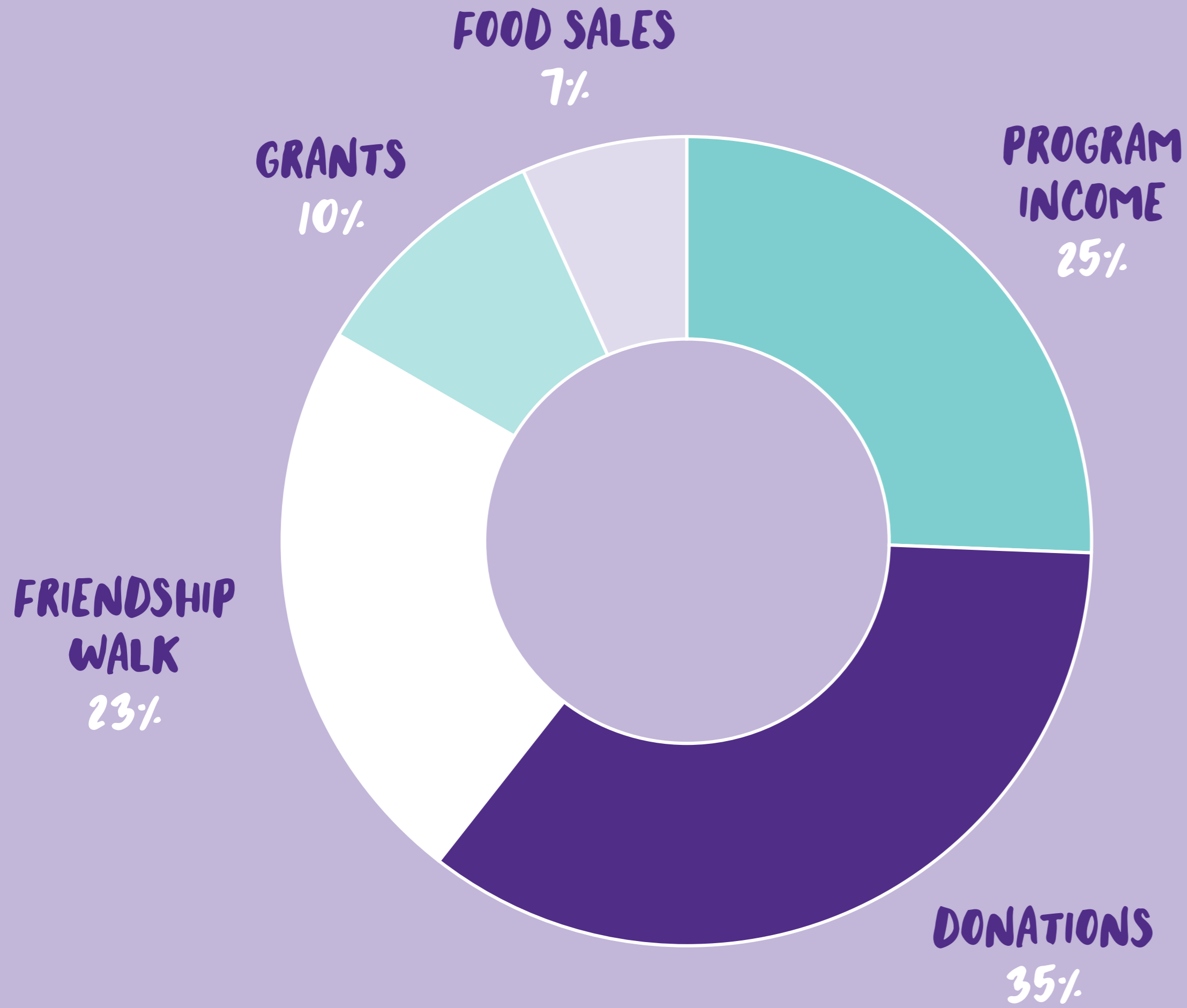
## GOLD SPONSORS



## SILVER SPONSORS







## 2023 INCOME SOURCES

Whether you subscribe to a Challah delivery, sponsor a friend at the Friendship Walk, or are a corporate sponsor – you make a difference.





# LOOKING FORWARD

## KEEP OUR COMMUNITY ENGAGED

We continue to invest in engaging, upskilling and inspiring the Friendship Circle community towards a better future for young people of all abilities.

## SOCIAL PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG ADULTS

We are improving our social programming for young adults including easing the transition for school leavers with disabilities.

## MORE OPPORTUNITIES AT FRIENDSHIP BAKERY

We are developing workplace visits, more market stalls, and collaborations with employment services for participants to gain more skills and experience on their path towards employment.

## DEVELOP FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

We are planning more engaging events and campaigns to sustain our growing activities by reaching deeper into our community of volunteers and participants for financial partners.

## DIGITISE OPERATIONS

We are seeking to decrease the administrative load so that our passionate team can scale our efforts to upskill our volunteers, create social opportunities and build community connections.







# FriendshipCircle

**DONATE**

## **WEBSITE**

[sydneyfc.org.au](http://sydneyfc.org.au)

## **EMAIL**

[hello@sydneyfc.org.au](mailto:hello@sydneyfc.org.au)

## **ADDRESS**

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79-85 Oxford Street  
Bondi Junction NSW 2022

## **POSTAL ADDRESS**

PO Box 7709  
Bondi Beach NSW 2026

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