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Familyaccess NETWORK INC.

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Statement of Service Philosophy

Family Access Network's vision is for a community which acknowledges and values the dignity and worth of all citizens and enables individuals to deal positively with adverse situations in their lives. We contribute to this vision by providing support for homeless young people, including those pregnant and/or parenting and couples, in the form of access to accommodation options enabling them to achieve stability and empowerment to full independence.

Co-ordinate a Life Skills Program to provide social skill development opportunities for young people.

Provide Tenancy Support on all aspects of Victorian rental laws for tenants and landlords in the form of information, advice and advocacy.

Core Principles

In recognition of the needs of homeless and displaced young people, provide services that offer individual support according to their perceived needs.

To reduce homelessness by supporting and assisting young people who are homeless and in crisis, towards independence and empowerment and undertaking advocacy and developing public awareness of the issues involved with homelessness in general.

To undertake specialist advice to tenants and landlords in public and private housing.

Description of Service

Family Access Network is a community based service, operating in the Eastern Metropolitan Region. The service was established in 1981 and is located in Box Hill.

The services provided are:

- Access to low cost supported housing for homeless young single, pregnant, parenting families and couples aged 16-25 years.
- Support to assist young people in the target group to access private rental accommodation, secure public housing or other support as required.
- Telephone information and referral service on options and resources for young people seeking accommodation. Housing Establishment Fund to assist with rental arrears, rent in advance, limited bond and removal costs.
- A team of volunteers to provide positive role modeling and links into the community.
- Life Skills Program for young people residing or with links in the City of Whitehorse. A variety of workshop based programs to assist young people to learn new skills in a personal development framework.
- Consumer Affairs Inner East is available as a free and confidential resource to tenants/landlords residing in Monash, Manningham, Whitehorse and Boroondara. Information is available on all matters relating to Residential and Rooming House Tenancies, preparation and representation for tenants at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal. Conciliation is available for landlords, agents and tenants. CAIE operates a regional community education program. Telephone and onsite interpreters are available on request.



Service Objectives

Supported Accommodation and Assistance Program (SAAP)

- Provide a service to support homeless and/or at risk young people, including young families to access appropriate accommodation options.
- Empower clients to determine their own path towards secure, independent living
- Inform clients about local community supports and resources.
- Adhere to sound case management practices.
- Encourage re-establishment with family of origin, where appropriate.
- Recognise and support volunteers involved in the mentoring program.
- Maintain effective data and implement evaluation procedures
- Promote public awareness of issues surrounding youth homelessness.

Life Skills Program

- Encourage participants to plan, facilitate and participate in a range of creative, educational, personal development in a supportive and safe environment.
- Develop and enhance social /emotional well - being through fostering a sense of connectedness and resilience by encouraging positive contributions to building a sense of community through positive social interaction.
- Create an environment that encourages self expression and acceptance of racial, cultural, sexual and religious diversity.
- Maintain program data collection and evaluation processes.
- Utilise local media to promote the skills and profile of young people. Create partnerships and collaborative projects with other community agencies.
- Recruit and support volunteers to assist in workshops and activities that build positive relationships.

Consumer Affairs Inner East

- Provide an accessible service to tenants and landlords living in the inner eastern region.
- Support and advocate for tenants who are disadvantaged in the marketplace.
- Assist, support and advocate for tenants who are socially, economically, linguistically and/or culturally disadvantaged.
- Inform tenants and landlords of their rights through a broad range of community education activities.
- Identify and address issues that adversely affect the operation of a fair and equitable marketplace.

Volunteering/Community Involvement

- Strategically plan for the volunteer needs of Family Access Network Inc.
- Conduct regular support meetings and training sessions for volunteers.
- Ensure volunteers are informed about relevant agency and sector issues.
- Maintain volunteer brochures and any other relevant materials.
- Acknowledge the services that volunteers provide.



Chair's Report

Congratulations to Staff; Sue, Brigitte, Steve, Yasmin, Lynne, Cathryn, Kelle, Christina, Polly and numerous volunteers associated with FAN over the past 12 months who have combined to provide a range of effective services including assistance with tenancy advice, housing, life skills and crisis support. Well done to all.

The FAN committee has met bi-monthly with Executive meetings also held monthly. Special thanks to Colin, Ted, Chris, Sue and Lynne for your significant input and support. We look forward to the Committee being strengthened by the addition of Kate Coleman (Eastern Tenancy and Housing Limited) and Jackie Bramwell (Eastern Access Community Health), both very experienced community sector/housing workers.

A highlight of the year has been the completion of the upgrading of the FAN offices and client spaces. This has been a much awaited development and the result of a great deal of planning and discussion. A special thankyou to staff for your flexibility in work practices during this time when space has been a real challenge. We would like to acknowledge the invaluable contribution of St Peter's in supporting the additions and in providing important financial assistance. The new spaces will serve FAN staff and clients well into the future and have been well received by all users.

A low point of the year has been the de-funding by Consumer Affairs Victoria of our Consumer Affairs Inner East (formerly Inner Eastern Tenant Information Service) and the loss of two very able staff in Cathryn Taylor and Christina Andrews. This development occurred despite the excellent service being provided by FAN and is most disappointing. After careful analysis FAN chose not to pursue options for tendering for new services which were deemed unworkable with the proposed reduced resources.

Special thanks go to the Rotary Club for their ongoing financial support for the Life Skills Program. This is a very worthwhile program offering a wide range of practical skills for young people who are very appreciative of the support.

Another highlight of the year has been the provision of a new property in Box Hill by Caroline and Derek Young of the Orcadia Foundation. This is an amazing contribution by these long-standing supporters of FAN. The property has already proven invaluable in giving a much needed accommodation option.

We are currently involved in a planning phase with staff and Committee members and are considering possible future options for FAN. These include looking at Government funding alternatives, forming strategic alliances, providing ancillary supports for our clients and additional services at FAN either directly and/or in partnership with other services.

I conclude by thanking Sue Carlile for her capable and dedicated leadership as FAN Manager. Sue and the staff team have worked tirelessly to ensure that services provided by FAN are timely, responsive and effective with excellent outcomes.

Bruce Argyle



2003/2004 Developments

- FAN's recently improved office is consistent with the commitment to a client and staff friendly environment. The project was vitally supported in partnership with St Peter's Anglican Church. Levi Strauss (Australia) Pty Ltd, Melbourne's Community Involvement Team, enhanced the improvements with the donation of staff time and financial resources to the courtyard project. Particular thanks to Lynne Hahn for co-ordinating the project, maintaining the communication link with the architect, Warwick Sheffield and the construction team. The office officially opened at the 2004 AGM.
- The Orcadia Foundation - Caroline and Derek Young, in partnership with FAN established a house to offer long-term secure housing to young families. The emphasis of the project is to foster community connectedness and stability.
- On a sad note one of FAN's programs, Consumer Affairs Inner East, closed its doors on 30 April 2004. The service provided a range of supports and community education programs, which assisted many thousands during the seven years at FAN. In response to a report commissioned by the Minister of Consumer Affairs Victoria, the Eastern and Hume Regions were de-funded in line with the pilot stage recommendations, to be replaced by a central phone response. The closure of the Program is not consistent with the recognised view that people are more appropriately assisted in their own community. With much regret FAN farewelled the committed and valued staff employed in the Program – Cathryn Taylor and Christina Andrews.
- A team development project was held in March 2004. A series of interviews and workshops resulted in reflective tools, feedback mechanisms, practice review and renewal of staff vision for the future.
- Building on FAN's Strategic Plan, staff and committee participated in a range of planning sessions to develop a vision for service delivery, in particular the identified needs of accompanying children and value added service co-location.
- In line with the concept of value adding services for the FAN client group negotiations with Harrison Community Services resulted in the establishment of a two-day a week JPET Outreach Program located at FAN.
- The Volunteer Program Review evolved and further combined with the Co-ordinator of the Life Skills Program role, bringing the position up to full time.
- The Life Skills Program has also undergone review with the inclusion of new models for Peer-Leadership Programs and an enhanced Life Skills model. The models build on the success of the program to date, maintaining the commitment to the provision of a range of flexible and innovative responses.
- FAN's capacity to provide a range of services is reliant on the expertise and commitment of a wonderful staff team. This has been a year of enormous challenge in regard to office renovations, CAIE closure, while maintaining a vision for best practice in the provision of services. I take this opportunity to acknowledge in particular the staff team at FAN for their unfailing commitment, forbearance and willingness to continue to look at what we do, how we do it and how we might do it better. The services provided, which are outlined in the Annual Report, result from the efforts of – Brigitte Hammer, Lynne Hahn, Cathryn Taylor, Kelle Castellano, Steve Hewitt, Christina Andrews, Yasmin Thomas, Polly Williams and Carol Martyn.
- From time to time staff leave to pursue other goals and career developments, or as for the first time this year at FAN as a result of Program closure. FAN thanks and appreciates the contributions made by those who have left in the past year, Cathryn Taylor and Christina Andrews, Kelle Castellano and Polly Williams. Kelle continues to be well linked in with FAN in her role as Co-ordinator of Youth Connexions, and we wish Polly every success in her role as Youth Ambassador with the United Nations in Vietnam.
- We welcome Carol Martyn and look forward to a year of consolidation on the staff team.
- Finally I would like to extend appreciation to the Management Committee for maintaining the role of due diligence in what has been a year of challenge for them also for all the reasons noted. FAN's committee reflects a diverse group of individuals with specific skills and community links to ensure the direction and guidance of FAN's operations.



Trends and Issues in Supporting Homeless Young People

10 Year Summary of FAN

Overview

In considering the current service delivery issues for Family Access Network (FAN) responding to an increasing number of young people presenting as a family unit, an analysis of data over the past ten years revealed a growth of some magnitude. The implication of this growth is worthy of further reflection for presentation as a Trends and Issues paper for inclusion to this Annual Report.

Historical Perspective

FAN commenced in 1981 in response to the emerging needs of homeless and/or at risk young people. Initially the service provision was funded through community contributions and local government support. In 1985 the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) was introduced and FAN was successful in the receipt of funding. SAAP continues to be the core funding for FAN's service provision in response to the needs of homeless and/or at risk young people.

During the 1980's, youth homelessness received a high level of community and media focus. FAN gave evidence to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission original and reconvened enquiries conducted by Brian Burdekin – "Our Homeless Children" 1985 - 1987. At the time 25,000 young people were estimated to be homeless throughout Australia. 1987 was declared International Year of Shelter To The Homeless.

In the early 1990's FAN responded to the small but increasing numbers of young women who were both homeless and pregnant, in many instances the latter contributed to the former. In the absence of few agencies responding to the particular needs of the client group, the numbers presenting to FAN steadily increased.

In 1997 FAN was successful with City of Whitehorse funding to develop a Life Skills Program targeted at the provision of a range of workshop based, personal development and group activities for homeless and/or at risk young people. The Program is available to all young people defined in the target group and many young people from other services both within and beyond the Homeless Sector have accessed the service. The Program was developed in response to the growing numbers of young families and maintained a weekly Young Mum's Group. Many partnerships have been formed in the delivery of the Life Skills Program and under-pins the outcomes achieved in a resource tight sector. A range of short term workshops, groups and other activities have been offered over the 7 year period of the Life Skills Program, however the Young Mum's Group has continued throughout.

City of Whitehorse and Rotary Club of Box Hill support and foster the Life Skills Program with a partnership commitment for three year funding. The Program is additionally supported through The Lord Mayors Fund and The Ringwood Magistrates Court.

Government Consultations/Interventions

The Victorian Homelessness Strategy (VHS) undertook a three-year consultation with the sector from 1999 to 2002 at a Statewide, all of government, level. In 2002, the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR), Department of Human Services (DHS) responded to the VHS with region wide consultations resulting in the development of an EMR Homelessness Strategy. In 2003 a series of consultations/workshops expanded on the EMR Homeless Strategy to consider the introduction of a model of streamlined entry points referred to as "Front Doors". A significant area of consideration for the consultation involved the particular needs of children accompanying adults in the Homeless Sector.

The Youth Homelessness Action Plan (YHAP) emerged from the recommendations of the VHS. Further consultation both within and beyond the homeless sector resulted in the launch of the YHAP Report in May 2004. The findings of the YHAP revealed that in Victoria 11,000 young people access a homeless service and of that number young people who are pregnant or with children represent 20%.



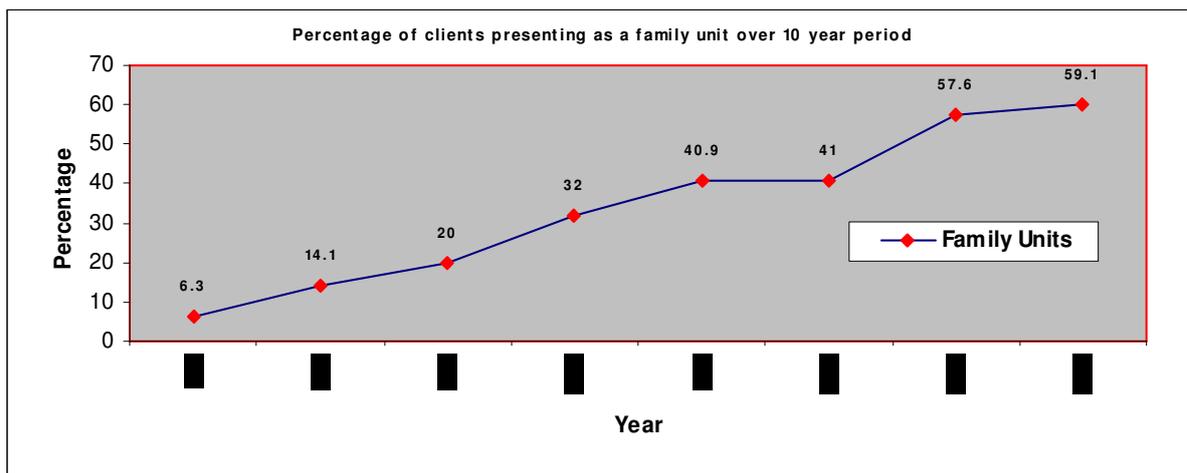
Trends and Issues in Supporting Homeless Young People cont ...

FAN actively participated in each of the above consultations. However, to date, there have been no additional funds provided to assist in the specific support needs of accompanying children.

Children in Homelessness Services Best Practice Group was developed by DHS in March 2004 in response to the recommendations from the EMR Homelessness Strategy. FAN is a member of this group and is committed to raising the profile and needs of accompanying children.

Data

Children in SAAP Report released in June 2004 showed that 58,000 children accompany parents to a homeless service, 88% of those children are under 12 years. The figures are based on data collected for the 2002-03 period.



In symmetry with these statistics, Family Access Network data demonstrates an enormous leap in the family configuration of the presenting client group from 1995 to 2004. In 2004, 59.1% of FAN's client group presented as a family unit, including a total of 54 accompanying children.

As a snapshot to reflect the speed of this growing trend the data for the last quarter, April to June 2004, reflects that 70.3% of all clients present as a family unit, 43.6% aged 15 – 19 years, with 33 accompanying children for the quarter.

Changing Methods of Working with Young People

In response to the changing demographic and thus shifting needs of our client group, as detailed above in 10 year profile, FAN has continued to refine and develop best-practice methods of working with young families experiencing homelessness. In addition to the ongoing development of core SAAP-funded case management support provided to clients, FAN has also nurtured the development of the Life Skills Program as a means of holistically engaging the young people with which we work.

The Life Skills Program, on-site at FAN, is widely regarded within the Eastern Region and Homelessness Sector as a hugely successful non-SAAP funded means of addressing young people's social isolation, disconnectedness and developmental needs. In a presentation at the Council to Homeless Persons, Out of The Blue Symposium in 2003, FAN's innovative service response for young families was highlighted. This was pictorially supported by a photographic project undertaken by FAN's clients, which was also featured at the Symposium. In particular, the Young Mum's Group, a significant aspect of the Life Skills Program, provides an essential peer-driven means of social contact for the increasing number of young families we support. The establishment, expansion and more recent revision of the Life Skills Program and the Peer-Leadership Program is an exciting project which we are certain will continue to bring maximum benefit to our clients and their accompanying children.

FAN continues to strive toward excellence in all aspects of case management principles and practices underpinned by a rights based approach. As reflected in our service philosophy and daily practice, a strengths-based client focused approach is a tenet of our work. This commitment is not



Trends and Issues in Supporting Homeless Young People cont ...

only clearly illustrated by the high number of positive housing outcomes achieved by clients annually, but also FAN's assurance to the ongoing development of therapeutic interventions and case management processes within this family oriented approach.

As a direct response to the increasing number of families supported at FAN, particular attention has been given to understanding the different needs of individuals within family units, and how best to meet these needs. In terms of the case management role provided to clients and their children, particular attention has been given to the development of separate intake, referral, assessment, and case planning documents for the accompanying children of each client. FAN developed a pamphlet outlining a range of options and services for young people and young families in the region, regularly updated and circulated within the sector. Further, as a result of intensive training sessions attended by FAN staff members, a number of useful innovative therapeutic interventions, particularly in relation to engagement with young children, have been revisited. A large part of this play therapy has been reliant on FAN purchasing child-friendly equipment available to children and their parents when visiting the office. Undoubtedly, the fantastic renovations at FAN over the past 12 months have also enabled the FAN reception and general office areas to become a more child-friendly environment.

FAN's flexible approach to supporting young people is additionally illustrated by our commitment to providing material aid to clients and their accompanying children. Although provided outside the core body of SAAP funding, this financial and material aid assistance is considered an essential part of FAN's service delivery, and includes: an education and travel fund to assist young people in their chosen education and training pursuits; a child care fund to assist parents requiring respite or an opportunity to return to school or the workforce; a Private Rental Assistance Scheme to assist clients in entering the private rental market; money for assisting with incurred medical and dental costs; food vouchers and food parcels; material packs for new tenants (including bedding, toiletries, and toys/books for children); and the provision of a 3 bedroom house in Box Hill sponsored through the Orcadia Foundation, to be used as a long term family property at a significantly reduced rate of rent. A number of generous community donations support this component of our work at FAN, and we sincerely hope that such support may be able to continue in the future.

These developments toward excellence in case management practices within FAN's response in our homeless program are despite the continued non-recognition of accompanying children in the SAAP Act (1994) which defines the target group as homeless people 15 years and over. As a consequence the distinct and significant support needs of accompanying children (both with data collected, and worker's caseloads) is not recognised in either agency targets or appropriate levels of funding. FAN continues to face the increasing needs of our presenting client group requiring complex service system responses. In addition to principle issue of homelessness, many of our clients are also presenting with a number of issues such as family violence, substance abuse, sexual assault, mental health and child protection involvement.

It is fortunate that this lack of recognition and funding, rather than disheartening the spirit of the important work undertaken at FAN (both within SAAP and the Life Skills Program) only strengthens our agency's long-term commitment to voicing the needs of young people and their children experiencing homelessness, and ensuring their right to safe, secure and affordable housing.

Future Priorities

In response to planning sessions conducted in 2004, guided by the Strategic Planning recommendations developed over the past five years, FAN has determined the specific support needs of young families, and accompanying children as targeted areas for growth. In particular FAN has prioritized the developmental needs of children and to that end is seeking alternative sources of funding. It is of critical concern to FAN that children accompanying adults in the experience of homelessness have witnessed and been exposed to traumas, which require child-specific intervention. FAN is committed to enabling young families to develop skills and exercise their options in accessing education, employment and training.

Over the next twelve months FAN will continue to respond to this issue with a variety of inter and intra-agency practice and policy interventions, striving for best-practice within a SAAP case management framework.

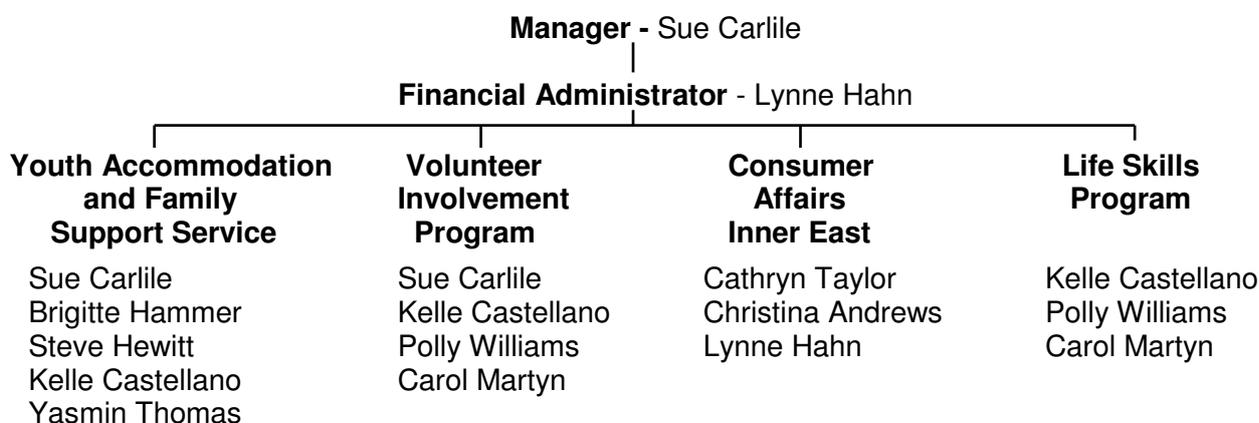
Yasmin Thomas and Sue Carlile



Management Committee Members

| | | |
|--------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Chair | Bruce Argyle | |
| Deputy Chair | Colin Bellis | |
| Treasurer | Ted Russell | |
| General Committee | Chris Meneilly Alex Millar Jackie Bramwell | Sue Carlile Kate Coleman |
| Minute Taker | Lynne Hahn | |

Staff Members



Honorary Members

| | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Olive Clark | Wendy Brooksbank (dec) | Caroline Young | Tony Sell (dec) |
| Rex and Sue Filson | Shirley Ingram (Baird) (dec) | Leo Clarbrough | Rae Cook |
| Ted Long | Steve McLoughlin | Debbie Brown | Robert Joynt |
| Allan Rogerson | David Webster | Sue Carlile | |

Rhys Fox Award Recipients

| | | | |
|------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1994 | Katrina White | Emma Morecroft | |
| 1995 | Amanda Dwyer | Kareem Hamid | |
| 1996 | Annerliegh Parkinson | | |
| 1997 | Melissa Plain | Angela Boyd | Paul Waterworth |
| 1998 | Matt Jones | Kerry Warren | |
| 1999 | Kylie Ives | | |
| 2000 | Andrea Fox | Cherie Davis | |
| 2001 | Mellisa Clemans | | |
| 2002 | Lauren Jones | Lani Elkin | |
| 2003 | Tessa Daniels | Katrina Vanderwiel | |



Supported Accommodation & Assistance Program

Services Provided

The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) is a jointly funded Commonwealth/State initiative providing transitional support and accommodation to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The SAAP Act (1994) defines homelessness as "...a person is homeless if, and only if, he or she has inadequate access to safe and secure housing" (p.4). People become homeless for a number of reasons including: family/ relationship breakdown, domestic violence, financial difficulties, mental health challenges, incarceration, eviction or ending of previous accommodation. Through the provision of temporary accommodation and related support services, SAAP aims to assist clients resolve crisis, re-establish family links where appropriate, and live independently of SAAP services.

Family Access Network (FAN) is a non-government community agency committed to providing support and accommodation to young people aged 16 to 25 years, with identified links to the eastern metropolitan region of Melbourne. This client group includes single persons and family units, which may include pregnant women, single or partnered parents, and couples. Over the past twelve months, 59.1% of clients supported by FAN presented as family configurations. This high number of families, especially those with accompanying children, not only applauds the success of FAN's unique accommodation and support program, but also identifies the critical need for increased and ongoing housing stock and support for families experiencing homelessness within the region.

Support and Case Management

As in previous years, FAN continues to provide an exceptionally high level of client focused, case management responses to assist young people in addressing their support needs. Case management is individually tailored to the needs of the client, and involves 8 key elements: entry screening, assessment, planning, direct service, co-ordination, monitoring and review, exit planning / case closure, and follow-up.

In the provision of support to young people aged 16 to 25 years, FAN continues to assist clients in:

- accessing and maintaining housing in transitional, private rental or public housing;
- provision of information and advocacy in relation to other housing options and services;
- provision of telephone information and referral on options and resources for young people seeking accommodation;
- accessing specialist services such as counselling, legal aid, employment services, or drug and alcohol support;
- provision of financial assistance through the Housing Establishment Fund (HEF) to assist with rental arrears, rent in advance, and removal costs;
- provision of material aid;
- referral to FAN's Life Skills Program and Peer Support Program for personal skills development.

Transitional Accommodation

FAN has access to eleven transitional housing properties. Presently, FAN has nomination rights to transitional housing properties through Community Housing Ltd and Eastcare Housing Services. Nine of these properties, with a total of 20 beds, are located within the City of Whitehorse, of which six are reserved for the exclusive use of families, and three are utilized for shared accommodation of single persons. The remaining two



Supported Accommodation & Assistance Program cont ...

properties, located within the City of Boroondara, with a total of five beds, are both shared accommodation for single persons. All accommodation is conveniently located, with easy access to the FAN office and other services and community facilities. Reflective of the high presentations of clients as family units, FAN is committed to responding to the changing housing needs of clients through ongoing dialogue and negotiation with transitional housing providers.

Other Accommodation Offered

FAN owns one two bedroom property, obtained in 1995 with the assistance of the Office of Youth Affairs. This property, leased to Community Housing Limited, is currently utilized as a shared transitional property.

In 2003, the Orcadia Foundation kindly offered FAN the opportunity to oversee the rental management of one 3 bedroom house in Box Hill. The Orcadia Foundation is a Philanthropic trust set up by Caroline Young (previous FAN volunteer and honorary life member) and her husband Derek. This fully furnished and maintained property is available for a family who have demonstrated a previous and ongoing commitment to a FAN support agreement, are in a position to maintain a longer tenancy, and who are exiting from transitional housing. The purpose of this supported longer-term tenancy is to enable young families equitable and successful access to the private rental market, following the 12 month lease with FAN.

Lead Tenant Program

In response to the particular needs of some clients presenting at FAN, a decision was taken to introduce a Lead Tenant Program in 2003. Presently, two of FAN's nominated transitional housing properties have been developed in accordance with a Lead Tenant model. A lead tenant is an assessed and approved volunteer who lives in the property, providing a positive and stabilizing adult influence for young people who are engaged in case management with FAN. The purpose of the Lead Tenant Program is to provide a safe, secure and healthy living environment for young people experiencing social dislocation, in preparation for more independent living.

Observations

- This year FAN has supported a high number of clients presenting as family clusters. Throughout the twelve month period, 59.1% of all clients assisted by FAN presented as a family unit. This is the highest percentage on record for this agency.
- FAN received a high number of clients presenting in crisis and needing immediate assistance. Referrals have increased from crisis services seeking brokerage intervention for clients.
- The lack of affordable housing has put a strain on all services in the region and has placed a growing demand for public housing. Waiting lists have grown, yet housing stock has not been increased. As a result, applications for priority housing with the Office of Housing have been closely scrutinized. At FAN however, we have been successful with all of our applications this year.
- Despite these obstacles the outcomes for our clients have been very positive. As the figures indicate, many clients have been successful in obtaining private rental, public housing, or returning home.

Yasmin Thomas

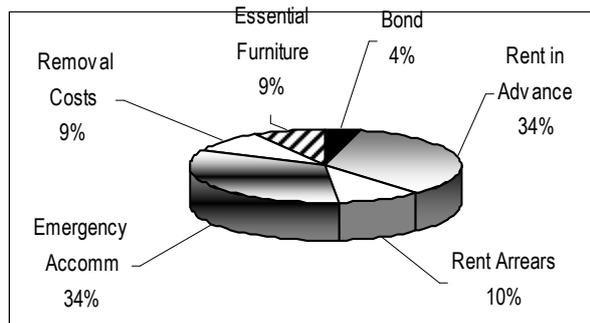


Supported Accommodation and Assistance Program cont

Housing Establishment Fund

Family Access Network receives an annual allocation from the Office of Housing for Housing Establishment Fund (HEF). FAN distributed \$3,755 for the year, providing financial assistance to 28 young adults and 15 accompanying children residing in or moving to the eastern suburbs.

Graph 1: Categories for which the HEF Funds were distributed

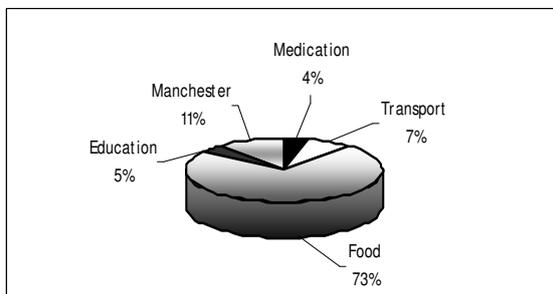


Material Aid

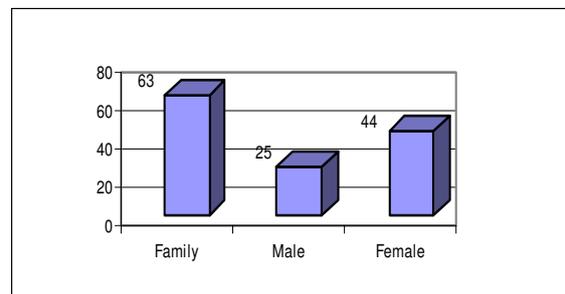
Family Access Network is able to assist clients in a crisis situation with material aid in the form of food vouchers, food parcels, medical, travel, educational and baby expenses. This is made possible through the generous donations received from the community; on going support from the Percy Baxter Charitable Trust, Emergency Aid Program, administered through the Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund; the Magistrates' Court of Victoria – Ringwood; Rotary Club Box Hill and Streetsmart.

Clients who have very few personal items are given kits made up of sheets, pillow cases, towels, face washer and toiletries, donated by the Rotary Club of Box Hill, doona, doona cover and pillow cases through the Ringwood Magistrates' Court. Additional pillows and doonas donated by Rizzo's House of Linen.

Graph 2: Types of Material Aid



Graph 3: Breakdown of Recipients



Lynne Hahn



Supported Accommodation & Assistance Program Data

The SAAP data for the period shows the range of services provided to clients seeking support and outcomes upon leaving. FAN had 110 client support periods for 2003/2004. However this figure only includes SAAP recognised clients (15-25 years of age) and omits the 54 accompanying children (majority of ages fall into the 0 - 2 age bracket) that were also supported. Recognition of children in SAAP services would not only significantly increase the actual number of clients supported but also acknowledge the significant individual/specific support needs of those children. It is also interesting to note that there were 7 clients who were pregnant.

During 2004 FAN once again experienced an increasing trend of young people presenting as a family unit, this year totalling 59.1% of all clients supported (see Graph 1). This figure represents the highest number of young families FAN has supported in the history of the service.

With so many young sole parents with children under 2, the level and type of support required by these clients is significantly higher and more complex, putting a greater demand on the service.

Table 1: Source of Referral

| Source of Referral | % |
|-------------------------------|------|
| Self | 38.8 |
| Eastern SAAP Crisis Centre | 31.1 |
| SAAP Agency | 7.8 |
| Other Non Government Dept | 5.8 |
| Youth Training/Detention | 3.9 |
| Family | 2.9 |
| Community Services Department | 2.9 |
| Other Government Dept | 2.9 |
| Friends | 2.9 |
| Hospital | 1 |

Graph 4: Persons Requesting Assistance

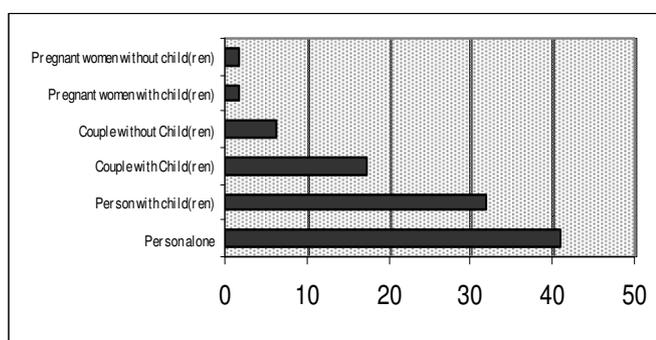
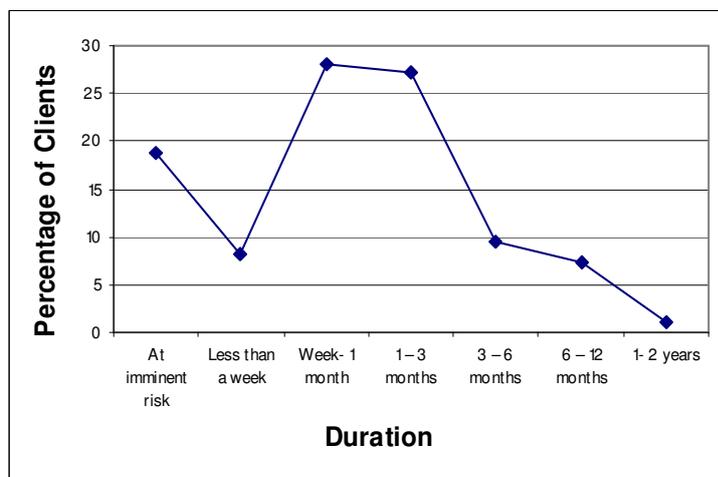


Table 1 highlights that there were a high number of self referrals (38.8%) indicating that FAN is recognized as an approachable and accessible service. Further, 31.1% of referrals are from Eastern Homeless Crisis Services, indicating that FAN not only has a capacity to respond to crisis referrals, but is also identified as a highly regarded service within the region.

Graph 5: Duration of current period of Homelessness



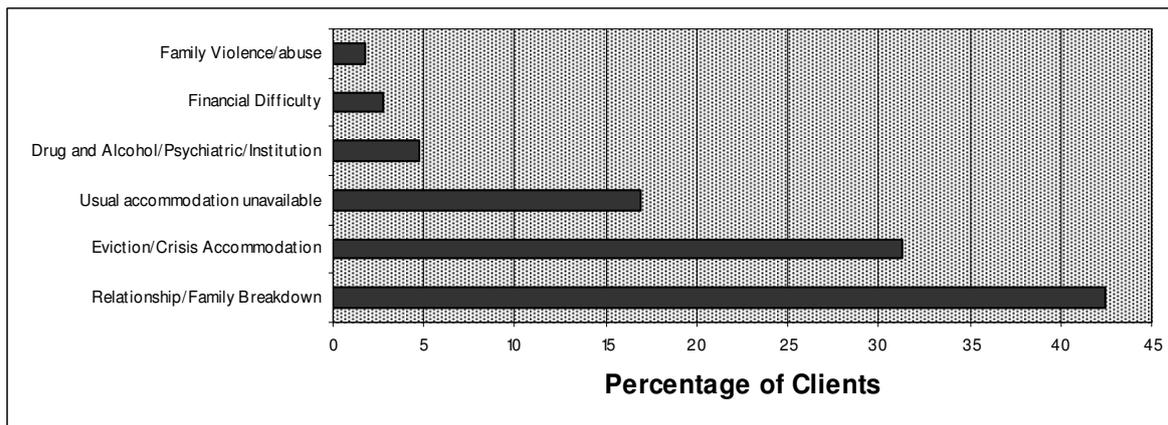
Graph 5 highlights that: 27.1% of clients have recently become homeless or at risk of homelessness. The majority of clients, 55.2% were homeless for between 1 week and 3 months. 17.7% of clients were homeless for over 3 months, some of these up to 12 months or more. These figures are compounded when you consider that many of FAN's clients are sole parents with children less than 2 years of age. In addition, many periods of homelessness include a significant amount of transience.



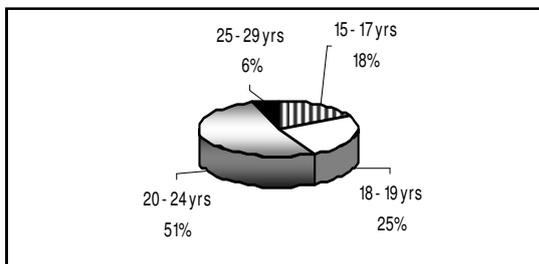
Supported Accommodation and Assistance Program Data cont ...

When looking at the main reason for client experiences of homeless, these figure show that 48.2% are principally related to housing breakdown. A staggering 42.5% are due to some sort of family and/or relationship breakdown.

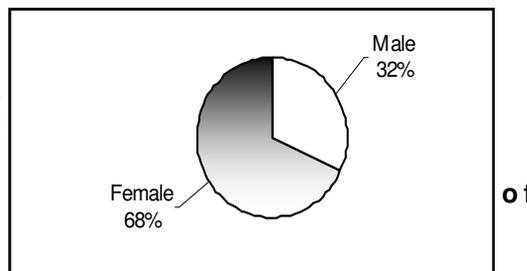
These presenting reasons do not tell the whole story. When looking a little deeper into these figures to determine why there was a family breakdown or an eviction, we find that a high number of clients had combined drug, alcohol and/or mental health challenges that significantly contributed to their homelessness.



Graph 6: Reasons for Seeking Assistance



Graph 7: Ages of Clients
Graph 8: Gender Clients



| Accommodation Options | % |
|------------------------|-------|
| Private Rental | 45.45 |
| Rooming/Boarding House | 16.67 |
| Public Housing | 13.64 |
| SAAP Accommodation | 12.12 |
| Rent Free | 10.61 |
| Living Rough | 1.51 |

Outcomes for clients

Assisting clients to obtain appropriate, affordable and sustainable housing outcomes is the primary objective of our work with clients. Closely allied to this is the provision of support offered that assists clients to move forward with their lives and achieve full independence.

Table 2: Accommodation Outcomes for Clients



Consumer Affairs Inner East (CAIE)

After 20 years of service provision it is with regret that Consumer Affairs Inner East ceased operation on the 30th April 2004. Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) conducted a review of the statewide tenancy and consumer services, making significant changes to the Community Program. A new model was implemented on 1 July 2004 by CAV to address what had been identified as “emerging” consumer issues.

This resulted in the de-funding of 3 agencies within the vast Eastern and Hume Regions which offered services on consumer and tenancy issues to the local government areas of: - Manningham, Boroondara, Whitehorse, Monash, Knox, Yarra Ranges, Maroondah, Moira, Greater Shepparton, Delatite, Strathbogie, Mitchell, Murrindindi, Woodonga, Indigo, Wangaratta, Alpine and Towong. The rationale given by CAV to the sector as to why these regions were targeted was that the demographics were a mix of both a rural and metro interface, with an inclusion of ethnic communities. The remaining statewide tenancy and consumer services have been rolled over until the 1st of July 2005. At this stage their future is uncertain.

With the support of their Committees of Management/Boards and State Peak Bodies the sector, tried to influence the restructure by developing a quality assured community based model, which was presented to Mr Johann Scheffer MP in December 2003. Mr Scheffer’s report “The Way Forward” failed to incorporate a number of the sector’s recommendations.

The sector noted the lack of formal guidelines and protocols regarding the 1300 phone number and the CAV referral process. This was deemed to be an essential requirement for a client focused response. It was equally disturbing to the sector, that the premise for the restructure was based on the statewide agencies statistical data. CAV and the Minister continually stated that 80% of all service delivery was provided by phone rather than “face to face”. CAV compared their data to local agency contact data and concluded that the contacts by consumers to CAV were greater than contact to the local agencies. However the data requested by CAV did not reflect the full scope of services provided by the funded agencies.

CAIE remained committed to years of working pro-actively in all areas of its service provision and community education. Fostering community relationships has been an integral part of the service. The outcome of this valued networking is well supported statistically by the increase in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities to the agency. We are proud to have gained the trust and confidence of CALD clients achieving positive outcomes. CAIE always maintained a best quality standard of service provision resulting in workers achieving positive outcomes using conciliation and advocacy to resolve disputes rather than Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal involvement.

Data

A total of 8,899 CAIE client contacts were registered by CAV . Table 3 however highlights the true face of client contact for the same period which was 15447. Successful conciliation casework constituted approx 11% of contacts, enabling tenants to avoid the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Graph 9: 8,899 Contacts Registered with CAV for the Period Sept 97— April 04

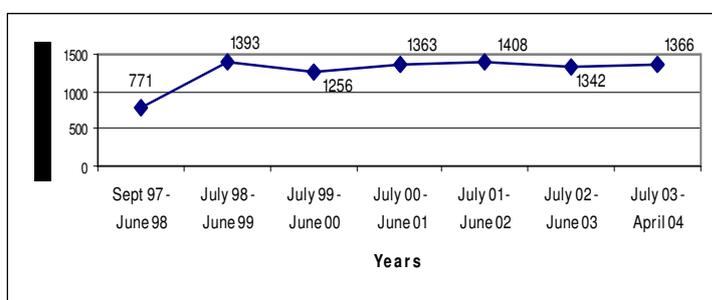


Table 3: CAIE Statistical Data Sept 97 - April 04

| | Number |
|-------------|--------|
| Phone Calls | 12,792 |
| Interviews | 2,655 |
| Home Visits | 88 |
| Letters | 1,268 |
| Forms | 467 |
| VCAT Prep | 336 |
| VCAT | 134 |

We sincerely appreciate the support shown by clients, FAN staff, Committee of Management, Local Members of Parliament, educational institutions, private industry, local council, community and government agencies.

Cathryn Taylor and Christina Andrews



Life Skills Program

Overview

The Life Skills Program has now successfully completed its seventh year, through the generous support of Box Hill Rotary, City of Whitehorse, the Lord Mayors Fund and the Ringwood Magistrates Court. The Life Skills Program is increasingly expanding to reach more young people and most importantly to meet their needs. Participation in the Life Skills Program has provided young people with a greater sense of community connectedness and self-awareness, increased self-esteem, develop greater knowledge about living skills and positive coping skills and build greater links into the community.

Target Group

The Life Skills Program is targeted towards young people under 25 who reside or have links to the City of Whitehorse. It is designed for young people who may be experiencing or may be at risk of homelessness, social isolation, alienation, drug and alcohol use, mental health issues, early school leaving, settlement and cultural issues, family breakdown and/or unemployment. The program also assist young people with acquiring living and developmental skills including those who are pregnant or parenting.

Program Achievements/Activities:

The Youth Access Group ran weekly until April 2004, with emphasis on workshops or group activities over a meal to support the development of skills and links for socially isolated young people.

Two cooking programs ran during the reporting period as partnership ventures between FAN, Youth Connexions and The Young People's Resource Centre.

The Mosaic Garden Project provided an opportunity for young people to develop skills and make a mosaic piece that will be retained as a legacy in the FAN garden courtyard.

On Australia Day 2004 a participant of the FAN Young Mum's Group was a recipient of the City of Whitehorse Young Person of the Year Award.

FAN, in partnership with Starting Out, ran a Personal Development Program for young mum's, specifically addressing self esteem, communication, and stress management.

Program Developments

After a break in the service provision of the Life Skills Program in early 2004, due to staff changeovers, the Life Skills Program recommenced in May 2004. The break allowed for a thorough review process of all Program frameworks and structures. An exciting restructure of the Life Skills Program is underway. The restructure occurred for a number of reasons: to encourage further integration between the programs currently provided to homeless and at risk young people, in particular Life Skills Program and SAAP; to provide young people within the City of Whitehorse a range of specifically targeted programs and to incorporate program frameworks whereby measurable outcomes can be obtained. The Young Mum's Group continues to successfully operate within a new structure, the Youth Access Group has ceased and is to be replaced with two new innovative programs, including a Life Skills Support Program and a Peer Leadership Program.

Young Mum's Group

The Young Mum's Group continues to operate on a weekly basis, attracting new pregnant and parenting young mums at each group. The format of the group includes catching up, topical discussion and mutual support over a healthy lunch, followed by an activity organised and run by the young mum's themselves. The group has felt strongly about sharing their own skills and experiences with each other and keeping the activities they undertake in the group practical, affordable and able to be undertaken in their home environments. Since the Young Mum's group recommenced, the group has taught each other how to make play dough and slime, bake choc



Life Skills Program cont

chip cookies, make paint for finger painting, calendars and swapped their favourite cooking recipes. The group has also been out to lunch together.

The importance of the Young Mum's Group for the participants is evident from the comments made both verbally and in written form on the weekly group evaluation forms. These have included; *"All the girls in the group support each other and don't judge"*, *"the only time I get out is to this group"*, *"I love the food on Tuesdays, we don't eat like this at home"* and *"this is the highlight of my week"*. These comments, even though only a brief snap shot of the evaluation forms, clearly highlights the important function of this group in reducing social isolation, creating positive and supportive networks, linkages into the community and a safe environment in which to take time-out in the lives of pregnant and parenting young mum's.

The New Programs

Life Skills Support

One program currently being developed is the *'Life Skills Support'* program, whereby young people will be given the opportunity to identify a skill they believe need enhancing, such as study skills, understanding mobile phone contracts and supermarket shopping on a budget. The program is designed to be flexible and will incorporate both one-on-one intensive and small group learning. The program aims to reduce the risk of homelessness by preparing young people for independent living. The program framework has been developed to compliment a young person's developmental approach to learning, recognising that learning occurs over time and that young people progress through a series of stages or levels as learning takes place. It is expected the *'Life Skills Support'* program will start its trial phase with FAN's current SAAP clients, before being evaluated, and, if successful, opened up to include more young people under 25 within the City of Whitehorse.

Peer Leadership

The *'Peer Leadership Program'* is currently in its final stage of development and is based on a model of peer leadership and peer support. The framework for the program consists of three distinct areas:

- Firstly, young people undertake leadership training. Core components of the leadership training include; peer support, communication skills, group dynamics, leadership skills, public speaking, activity planning.

A reflective process characterising an experiential learning framework forms the main component of the training, with young people involved in a variety of learning techniques to examine topics at a personal, interpersonal and institutional level. The training will be conducted over 6 sessions, with outside facilitators brought in to deliver particular topics.

- After successfully completing the training program, young people can nominate themselves to join the peer leadership organising group, whereby the peer leaders undertake the planning and facilitation of a peer led 'youth group'.
- The 'youth group' will be open to young people under 25 who reside or have linkages to the City of Whitehorse. Peer leaders will organise and run the groups on a six weekly basis, addressing and dealing with issues relevant to their peers, while also providing appropriate role modeling, information and support to the young people attending the youth group.

It is anticipated the new programs will be implemented early in the new financial year, with the restructure of the Life Skills Program encouraging further integration between FAN's current Programs, in particular the Life Skills Program and SAAP.

Polly Williams



Volunteer Program

The Volunteer Program is again in full swing with numerous highly skilled and extremely motivated individuals giving their time to support FAN's young people and programs and provide invaluable links into the community.

In the past couple of months FAN has advertised the Volunteer Program widely on the Internet, receiving over 500 hits by people wishing to read position descriptions in the first 24 hours of advertising on one particular web site alone. This interest led to an enormous influx of enquiries by people wishing to volunteer their time with the Life Skills Program and Young Mum's Group, as mentors and lead tenants. This level of interest has led FAN to create a waiting list.

Volunteer Opportunities at Family Access Network include : -

Mentoring Program:

Volunteers are recruited to provide a one on one mentoring support to homeless and/or at risk young people. The mentors are matched directly with youth clients who are either single or in a family unit. The role of the volunteer mentor is to provide a positive adult role model and a link into the community. A minimum twelve- month commitment is required.

Lead Tenant Program:

Volunteer Lead Tenants are recruited to provide an opportunity for young people to reside in a share house, which is tailored for their needs. The involvement of an adult role model residing in the household maximises the young persons capacity to live independently.

Life Skills Program:

The Life Skills Program provides opportunities for a range of volunteer roles. Currently volunteers are recruited to support the project activities of the Young Mum's Group, short-term workshops and other program activities. There is some flexibility around the periods of commitment and also the minimum age requirement.

Child Play Supervisor:

In response to the increasing numbers of young families, and therefore children, Family Access Network has expanded its volunteer roles to incorporate the involvement of volunteers as play supervisors for children accompanying their parents. In particular the volunteer role supports the Young Mum's Group and appointments of clients with their support workers. The emphasis is to provide children with a child friendly environment and minimise their exposure to witnessing their parent's distress.

FAN would like to take this opportunity to thank all its volunteers for the time and effort they put into the Volunteer Program, in particular FAN would like to thank;

Carolyn Pearson
Brooke Cracknell
Belinda Miller-McBeth
Lisa Digiantomasso

Belinda Conway
Kay Anderson
Toni Gurwitch

Candy Vulling
Claire Pidoto
Jeannie Baker

Penny McCormack
Kathryn Lea
Allan Rogerson

Polly Williams



Training

Over the past twelve months, Family Access Network staff have participated in the following training:

- Advanced Smart Data
- Advanced Counselling
- Alcohol and Drug Training for Homelessness and Housing Workers
- Depression in Young People
- Domestic Violence and Child Protection
- Homelessness Service System Development Project – Workshops and Conference
- Homelessness & Changing Social Welfare Context
- New Workplace Law
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Out of the Blue - CHP Symposium
- Privacy Act
- Risk Management
- Sexual Abuse
- Substance Abuse, Parenting & Child Development
- Systems Solutions and Family Therapy
- Tenancy Law
- VCOSS Congress
- Workcover – Claims Calculations
- Workcover – Claims Management
- Working with Men in Today's Society
- Working with Young Parents and their Children in Youth Services

Networks/Linkages

FAN consolidated relationships and partnerships at local and regional levels. Staff have acted as members or representatives of FAN with the following groups and agencies over the past 12 months.

- Affordable Housing EMR Working Groups
- Aust Federation of Homelessness Organisations
- Boroondara Youth Service Providers Network
- Camcare
- Cara House
- CAV Regional Forums
- Child Protection and SAAP
- Children's Welfare Assoc of Vic Youth Providers
- Children's Resource Project
- College of Natural Medicine (Box Hill)
- Community Housing Ltd
- Connections - Starting Out
- Council to Homeless Persons (CHP)
- CHP Regional Consultation
- Court Network Melbourne
- Doncare
- Eastern Drug & Alcohol Service
- Eastcare Housing Services
- Eastern Homelessness Network
- Eastern Homelessness Network Reference Group
- Eastern Tenancy and Housing Ltd (ETHL) Board of Directors
- Eastern Domestic Violence Outreach Centre
- Harrison Community Services—JPET
- Hawthorn English Language Centre
- Homeless People's Association
- Managers of Volunteers Network – Eastern
- Migrant Settlement Committee—Eastern Region
- Monash Welfare Network
- Local Area Planning Committee Manningham
- Oakleigh Migrant Resource Centre
- Primary Care Partnerships Eastern Region
- Public Interest Law Clearing House (PILCH)
- REF's Youth Services (formerly Youth Adult Bureau)
- SAAP/THM/DHS Managers Meeting
- Same Sex Attracted Support Group
- Victoria Council of Social Services (VCOSS)
- Volunteering Victoria
- Whitehorse Youth Issues Working Party & Financial Committee
- Whitehorse Community Health Service
- Whitehorse Community Arts Centre
- Women's Housing Ltd
- Youth Week Victoria
- Youth Connexions (City of Whitehorse)
- Young Peoples Resource Centre (St Andrews Uniting Church Box Hill)
- YSAS - Box Hill
- Youth for Christ



Consultations & Reviews

- Children's Welfare Association of Victoria (CWAV) Members Forums.
- Consumer Affairs Victoria, Community Programs Review.
- Consumer Affairs Victoria, Standards Review.
- Council to Homeless Persons Regional Consultations.
- Council To Homeless Persons Sector Wide Forums.
- Eastern Housing Issues Group.
- Homelessness Service System Development Project— Regional Consultations and Workshops.
- Lord Mayors Percy Baxter Trust Round Table.
- Productivity Cuts, Peak Body sessions and Day of Action.
- Regional Homelessness Strategic Plan, Consultations & Implementation Forums.
- Regional Consultations, 13 week duration of support.
- Youth Homelessness Action Plan, State wide and Regional Consultations.
- Volunteering Victoria Members Forums.



Financial Report

Statement of Financial Performance

Statement of Financial Position

Statement of Cash Flows

Notes to the Financial Statements

Statement by Members of the Committee

Independent Audit Report



Statement of Financial Performance

Family Access Network Inc Statement of Financial Performance for the Year Ended 30 June 2004

| | 2004 | 2003 |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| INCOME | | |
| Donations | 35,045 | 23,356 |
| Office of Housing | | |
| EH.HISP | - | 1,185 |
| HEF | 2,661 | 3,850 |
| Human Services One Off Grants | - | 500 |
| Human Services Grants -Other | 222,326 | 216,749 |
| Interest | 5,143 | 7,020 |
| Miscellaneous | 3,197 | 947 |
| Consumer and Business Affairs | 103,016 | 93,609 |
| Profit on Sale of Fixed Assets | 7,290 | -- |
| Property Rental | 9,502 | 9,303 |
| Whitehorse/Rotary Grant | 46,126 | 49,323 |
| Total Income | 434,606 | 405,841 |
| | | |
| EXPENSES | | |
| Building | 6,351 | |
| Depreciation/Amortization | 12,954 | 7,901 |
| Housing Emergency Fund (HEF) | 3,465 | 3,850 |
| Life Skills Program | 6,316 | 6,583 |
| Material Aid | 9,205 | 5,782 |
| Office Operating | 18,123 | 18,941 |
| Property Costs | 12,666 | 10,704 |
| Office Utilities | 10,150 | 9,992 |
| Salaries | 274,640 | 264,496 |
| On-Costs | 46,470 | 47,466 |
| House Expenses | 5,219 | 3,008 |
| Other Program Costs | 250 | 300 |
| Staff Training/Support | 4,509 | 3,162 |
| Travel/Car | 7,358 | 5,608 |
| Volunteer Program | 650 | 800 |
| Total Expenses | 418,326 | 388,592 |
| | | |
| Net Ordinary Surplus (Deficit) for the Year | 16,280 | 17,248 |

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements



Statement of Financial Position

Family Access Network Inc

Assoc No A0028134J

Statement of Financial Position as at 30th June 2004

| | 2004 | 2003 |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| ASSETS - Current | \$ | \$ |
| Cash on hand and at Bank | 44,835 | 54,186 |
| Investment and Term Deposit | 109,463 | 136,759 |
| Interest Receivable | 807 | 1,931 |
| Prepayments | - | 1,028 |
| Sundry Debtors | 1,500 | 2,959 |
| Total Current Assets | 156,605 | 196,863 |
| ASSETS - Non-Current | | |
| Land and Buildings - at Cost | 83,648 | 83,648 |
| Furniture and Equipment- at cost | 22,249 | 17,334 |
| Less Accumulated Depreciation | (12,573) | (10,223) |
| Motor Vehicles | 33,544 | 33,443 |
| Less Accumulated Depreciation | (3,447) | (15,025) |
| Leasehold improvements | 45,457 | - |
| Less Accumulated Amortization | (4,631) | - |
| Total Non-Current Assets | 164,247 | 109,177 |
| Total Assets | 320,852 | 303,081 |
| LESS: CURRENT LIABILITIES | | |
| Unexpended Specific Purpose Grants | 27,872 | 20,232 |
| Provision for Long Service | 19,216 | 20,296 |
| Provision for Holiday Pay | 7,407 | 12,443 |
| Sundry Creditor and Accruals | 8,665 | 8,698 |
| | 63,160 | 61,669 |
| Net Assets | 257,692 | 241,412 |
| ACCUMULATED FUNDS | | |
| Retained Surplus, 1 July 2003 | 157,764 | 140,516 |
| Surplus for Year | 16,280 | 17,248 |
| Retained Surplus, 30 June 2004 | 174,044 | 157,764 |
| Capital Grant Reserve | 83,648 | 83,648 |
| Accumulated Funds at the End of the Financial Year | 257,692 | 241,412 |

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements



Statement of Cash Flows

Family Access Network Inc Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 30 June 2004

| | 2004 | 2003 |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| Cash Flows from Operating Activities | \$ | \$ |
| Rental Income | 12,603 | 9,303 |
| Interest received | 5,143 | 7,020 |
| Other income | 418,218 | 397,409 |
| Payments to Suppliers and Employees | <u>(410,997)</u> | <u>(372,856)</u> |

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Notes to and forming part of the accounts

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Independent Audit Report



Acknowledgments

Government Funding:

- Department of Human Services - Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP)
- Office of Housing - Housing Establishment Fund
- Consumer Affairs Victoria - Tenant Support Program
- City of Whitehorse - Life Skills Program

We wish to thank the following organisations and individuals for their support/ donations over the past financial year:

Organisations:

- Australian College of Natural Medicine
- Box Hill Rotary - Life Skills Program/Education Fund and Personal Kits
- Canterbury Council of Churches
- Channel Ten
- The Staff of Countrywide Tolstrup
- Disadvantaged Youth Fund - M Ogilvie
- Eastern Emergency Relief Network Inc
- Galactic Circus
- Highfield Road Uniting Church Tennis Club
- Levi Strauss (Australia) Pty Ltd and the Community Involvement Team
- Lord Mayors Fund - Percy Baxter Foundation
- Magistrates' Court of Victoria - Ringwood
- Maroondah Computer Services
- Nando's Box Hill
- Rizzos House of Linen
- Southbank Ice Skating Rink
- Spotlight
- St Dominic's Parish East Camberwell Parish
- St Paul's Lutheran Church
- The Body Shop
- Triple M
- Whitehorse Youth Issues Working Party

Individuals:

- O Clark
- L & D Clarebrough
- J Fahey
- R & S Filson
- R Joynt
- J Lawson
- R Leydon
- T & N Long
- E McLean
- N Morsby
- K O'Brien
- N & C Rae
- A Rogerson
- W Sheffield
- A & G Simpson
- C & D Young



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NETWORK INC



2003 - 2004

ANNUAL

REPORT

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2003 - 2004

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REPORT