

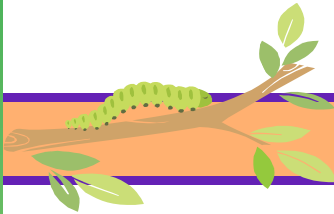


FAN

FAMILY ACCESS NETWORK UPDATE

March 2009 • Volume 67

The cool change of Autumn gives us the strength to rebuild our communities together.



Update from the Manager

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the autumn edition of the FAN newsletter – although with 35 degree temperatures and hot high winds still around it feels decidedly like summer.

I take this opportunity on behalf of the team and board at FAN to express our deepest sadness for the losses of life, homes and the devastation to communities of the fires on black Saturday, and acknowledge the efforts of so many in responding to the crisis. FAN as part of the Whitehorse Counselling Services Alliance will participate in longer term responses, through the counselling and family mediation program.

FAN continues to contribute to and participate in areas of sector enhancement, sector reform and research in a number of ways, current activities include:

Best Practice demonstration report on the alsorts Same Sex Attracted Transgender Intersex (SSATI) pilot, in

partnership with The ALSO Foundation. The project, partly funded by DHS, supports sector replication of the model in some or all of the elements. A launch date has yet to be confirmed by DHS and CHP; however an electronic version may be requested from FAN directly. I am pleased to advise that in response to the request for a graphic designer, Erika Zammit volunteered through Good Company, along with young people linked with the alsorts project developed a cover for the report. Thank you to those involved.

FAN's Staff Induction and Orientation Framework to support smaller organisations. Since April 2008, 20 organisations have applied for and received a copy.

The Children in Homelessness Research with The Salvation Army, Council to Homeless Persons, Melbourne City Mission has commenced interviews in progress and steering committee reconvened for 2009.

Other research projects conducted in partnership during the current and previous years are available on request or via the website www.fan.org.au

I encourage you to read in more detail, within the body of the newsletter, the activities of FAN's programs as reported by the dedicated FAN team.

FAN board and staff are finalising the elements from the QICSA review held in November and will soon complete the Quality Work Plan, which will guide FAN's continuous quality improvement initiatives over the next three years. Kathy Desmond Consulting has supported the efforts of FAN.



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FAN is encouraged by the emphasis on early intervention and prevention; acknowledgement of the specialist homelessness response; identification of specific services for children, and important homelessness reduction targets, of the White Paper on Homelessness released in December 2008.

I am pleased to advise the appointment of Samuel Headberry to the Homeless Support Services team.

Finally it is with sadness I advise of the resignation of Jemmah McKie – Homeless Support Services Team Leader and Youth Counsellor and Family Mediation. Her title and areas of responsibility alone demonstrate her key role in the organisation, add to that OH&S, Internal Contact (shared with Victoria Sobh) for QICSA, Document Management, recently Acting Manager gives an indication of how much she has contributed and how much she will be missed. On behalf of all – staff team, board, clients and sector colleagues thank you Jem and best of luck in the new direction in the family business, if our experience is anything to go by it will grow and flourish.

Regards,
Sue Carlile
MANAGER



PROGRAM UPDATES

Homeless Support Services

Welcome to the March edition, we hope you have all been keeping cool during these hot dry summer days. Here at FAN we have all been horrified and saddened following the recent bushfires in Victoria and heartened at the generosity and goodwill throughout our communities which have prevailed in the fires wake. We extend our sympathies to all those who were affected by the fires, who lost loved ones, pets and property. The Department and other agencies have a number of resources that can help in providing assistance to those affected by the bushfires - below are a few great website resources for relief, information and support:

*www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/pdf/papers/Bushfires2003.pdf

*www.cyh.com/HealthTopics/HealthTopicDetails.aspx?p=114&np=141&id=1893

*www.dhs.vic.gov.au/emergency/current-events/bushfire

If you would like to talk to someone or require further information please contact FAN's Counselling and Family Mediation Services.

FAN is proud to announce the beginning of the new

Same Sex Attracted Transgender Intersex (SSATI) reference and support group for young people aged 15-25 within the Eastern Region. The aim to increase participation and community connectedness, provide an opportunity to build self esteem, social networks and friendship. The group is particularly targeted, although not exclusively, to SSATI young people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness; and currently meet every Wednesday at 4.30pm. All new members are welcome and if you are interested in joining the group or know someone who might be, please contact Mollie at FAN.

We would also like to bring your attention to a few staff changes within the Homeless Support Services over recent months – we welcome aboard Sam Headberry as Youth Support Worker, and a big congratulations to Mollie Kerby for her permanent appointment as Youth Support Worker. We also take this opportunity to announce the recent resignation of Jemmah McKie (Team Leader) and wish her the best of luck with her future endeavors – please read on for a staff farewell message.

Private Rental Brokerage Program

FAN's PRBP is looking forward to another year of building partnerships and community connectedness through the promotion of the Private Rental Brokerage Program. The initiative is aimed at enhancing support to young people aged 15 – 25 years and in particular young people under the age of 21 years and an emphasis's for the need to improved access and support for Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse young people. For more information or referrals contact Victoria.



Children's Program - Early years

The Children's Program has excitedly begun the 2009 year by re-introducing the 10 week swimming program supported by the Box Hill Swim School. The program has proven so popular that a waiting list has been implemented with intentions to run the program within the second half of 2009. The immense enjoyment children experience through their lessons fosters positive attitudes towards continued participation in exercise and sport as they grow older and the opportunity to learn important survival skills at the same time as meeting new friends.



FAN would like to thank the Allanah and Madeline Foundation for their continued support to many children in emergency care, crisis, THM and foster care.

The Buddy Bag Program was developed in response to the high demand of children entering agencies with limited personal belongings. The Buddy Bags provide children with a backpack containing essential item including a teddy bear, clothing, hygiene items, coloring books and more. For further information and future workshops please contact Jacqui.

A farewell message from Jemmah McKie...

Dear colleagues, clients (past and present) and supporters of FAN,

It is with a fulfilled and humbled heart that I say my farewell to you all as FAN's Team Leader/ Youth Support Worker and Counsellor. I started at FAN in early 2006 not really knowing what to expect from the Homelessness Sector, yet felt right at home and hugely supported by the FAN team from my very first day. I gradually 'learnt the ropes' and have been blessed to have worked in an amazing agency with the best mentorship from my Manager, fantastic colleagues and awe inspiring young people. I would like to thank each and every one of you for your patience, support and guidance in not only my professional development but also my personal growth. I look forward to the next phase of my career and wish everyone a happy and fulfilling life, and the very best in continuing to build upon FAN's success where opportunities abound.

Life Skills Program



Over the summer months, the Young Mum's Group saw a total of 17 mums attend the program and it's encouraging to see consistency in the number of clients and children, who continue to connect with the Group and build new relationships. Jess and Alli continue to provide peer support to the Group and contribute a range of skills which enhance the Program; ensuring new mums are welcomed and involved in a range of activities.

Warmest congratulations to Jess Portuguese who was the recipient of The City of Whitehorse Young Citizen of the Year Award for 2009. Jess has been well linked in a range of workshops attached to the Life Skills Program over the past two years including the Young Mum's Group, Peer Support Program, Money Matters, Community Kitchen and Singing Group whereby she performed a number of songs at FAN's AGM for two consecutive years. Since July 2008 Jess has also been linked to the Volunteer Program and

has engaged in a range of activities with her mentor Lynne and we take this opportunity to acknowledge the contribution she has made.

Money Matters continues to enhance clients' financial knowledge and since last newsletter a total of six new clients were referred to the program. Clients identified reduction in debt, budgeting skills, tracking expenses and exploring triggers as the key areas of focus.

Thanks to Krystle, Alli, Aidan, Yasmine, Jess, Matt and Sam who attended the Focus Group in late December and provided feedback in terms of what has and hasn't worked with previous workshops and brainstormed a range of ideas for future programs. This information will support of the evaluation of the Life Skills Program, which is currently being undertaken.

Future workshops include:

Driver Education – Learners
A four week workshop with the aim of supporting clients gain their learners and includes Road to Solo Driving workbook, tests and licence. Response to this workshop has been higher than anticipated

and as a result two workshops are scheduled for the first half of the year.

Driver Education – Driving Lessons, assists in gaining valuable experience driving in a range of conditions and includes number of driving lessons and a one day workshop involving basic car maintenance and a range of guest speakers.

The Peer Leadership Program – explores individual leadership styles and communication skills, with clients identifying personal goals and clients have the option of being involved in a range of peer lead projects.

Scrapbooking Workshop – a one day workshop commencing in March and includes all materials. This workshop is jam packed with ideas to get the creative juices flowing and includes the support of experienced staff as clients work at own pace.



Volunteer Program

Volunteer numbers continue to be consistent, with nine participating in current programs. Unfortunately two long term volunteers are no longer linked to the program, however we are pleased to report both these volunteers had been with FAN for two years or more.

Early January a number of volunteers together with clients attached to the program attended a BBQ and was an excellent opportunity to socialise and meet informally. The event was well received and exceeded attendance compared to previous years due to a strong client turn out, with the event well supported by staff.

The recruitment of volunteers has begun in earnest, with January traditionally being the busiest month in terms of enquiries. The next induction training commences in March and it's encouraging to note an increase of child play supervisors as well as the volunteer support teams. The coordinators in the process of interviewing volunteers for a range of roles including drivers, volunteer support teams, mentors and child play supervisors and can be contacted on 9890 2673.



An introduction from our newest staff member

Hi! My name is Emily Todorov, and I have just survived my 3 month probationary period here at FAN as the new Administration Officer and Executive Assistant. I have had an absolute blast so far, and have been overwhelmed by the compassion, kindness and dedication that the team constantly offers to their clients and each other. I am delighted to be a part of FAN, and I look forward to being part of such a great team for many years to come.



Thank you to the following contributors...

Margaret Oglivie

Thelma Oliver

Frederick Fahey

Felton Bequest Committee

Olive Clark

Harrison Community Services

The ALSO Foundation

City of Whitehorse

Canterbury Council of Churches

Caroline & Derek Young -

Orcadia Foundation

St Peter's Anglican Church

The William Buckland Foundation

Lord Mayor's Fund

St George Bank Foundation

City of Maroondah





Family Access Network Update

If undeliverable please return to
Family Access Network Inc
PO Box 141
BOX HILL VIC 3128