



**FAN**

# Family Access Network Update

June 2008

Volume 64

## Walking in a Winter Wonderland



### UPDATE FROM THE MANAGER

Dear Readers,

I am writing this on a lovely sunny early winter's day, and hoping that you are warm and snug as you read the latest updates from the team at Family Access Network (FAN). If you are a supporter, volunteer, client, past or present at FAN your thoughts on the newsletter are most welcome as are any items you may wish to contribute for inclusion to the next or subsequent newsletters.

As noted in previous newsletters FAN is contributing to and participating in areas of sector enhancement, sector reform and research in a number of ways, current activities include:

- "Creating a Culture of Quality" report, funded by DHS, is now available on the Council to Homeless Persons and DHS websites, with limited hard copies also available at FAN directly. If you require further information about accessing the electronic or hard copy please enquire through [fan@fan.org.au](mailto:fan@fan.org.au)
- Best Practice demonstration report on the introduction of the alsorts Same Sex Attracted Transgender Intersex (SSATI) pilot, in partnership with the ALSO Foundation. It is anticipated the project report will be available by the end of June to support sector replication of the model in some or all of the elements. The demonstration project is funded by DHS, and both this and the Creating a Culture of Quality report are facilitated by Kathy Desmond Consulting.
- FAN's Staff Induction and Orientation three month module has been developed into a framework for broader sector application. Since April 10 organisations have applied for a copy.
- National Roundtable Consultation in Sydney in March for the Green Paper on Homelessness. In addition participation in further consultations with local Federal MP Anna Burke, State Peak Body level and attendance at the 5<sup>th</sup> National Homelessness Conference in May, where the Green Paper was launched by the Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd. FAN will be presenting a written response to the Green Paper by the 20 June deadline.
- The National Youth Commission report, "Australia's Homeless Youth" was launched in April. FAN participated in the inquiry through the presentation of evidence, and written submission.
- Participation in the Australian Council of Social Services "Social Inclusion" Conference in April. FAN received a sponsored place from ACOSS to attend, which is greatly appreciated.
- A number of programs are provided in collaboration with other services, some of these include: Creating Connections Youth Homelessness Action Plan 2; Alsorts SSATI pilot with ALSO Foundation; Footsteps Program with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and Resilient Kids, and a new Young Dad's Group with a range of other community services are just some of the current partnership developments
- FAN to provide youth counselling and family mediation component of the Whitehorse Counselling

- Services Alliance in partnership with Reach Out for Kids (ROK) and East Burwood Counselling Service, commencing 1 July.
- Participation in the Whitehorse Municipal Youth Plan.
- FAN's Strategic Plan supports best practice and innovation, offering reflective practice for staff guided through the portfolio system as well as offering young people an opportunity to contribute their own voice and experience to the broader service system. Many of the partnership research projects have emerged through the successful working relationship with Dr Deb Keys, Melbourne University Key Centre for Women's Health in Society, and as such go through a rigorous ethics process, with the ultimate aim to contribute to sector learning. The following are completed, recent or about to commence:

- "Opportunity For Change – Young Mothers and Homelessness" in partnership with Melbourne University Key Centre for Women's Health, limited hard copies available.
- "Making it Real" Sexual Health research is nearing completion and FAN is about to embark in research on "Children and Homelessness" with other service providers, and the peak body, Council to Homeless Persons.
- International research as community partner on "Creating Empowerment and Young Mothers" has just been

- approved.
- Impact on homelessness The Australian Government Department of Families Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) currently involving 10 clients in a focus group.

Many of the new and innovative projects are made possible through various community supporters, philanthropic trusts, local and state government funding and others, one to note is RESULTS Mentoring and Active Property Network who donated \$5,442 for financial education workshops in the Life Skills Program. Please note the range of community supporters acknowledged in the newsletter.

The activities noted above are in addition to the core work of providing services to young people, young families and children experiencing homelessness, through case managed response in the Homeless Support Services incorporating the Children's Program Early Years, skill development and community connection through the Life Skills and Volunteer Programs. I encourage you to read in more detail the activities of these programs as reported by the dedicated FAN team.

It is with delight that I offer congratulations to FAN's Homeless Support Services team leader Jemmah Drew on her marriage to Matthew. Jemmah and Matt are having a wonderful time holidaying in Europe, as Victoria Sobh is doing a find job in the Acting Team Leader role. Mollie Kerby has joined the team in a locum role providing support across three program areas.

FAN staff and board continue to actively work towards the goals of the Strategic Plan, reviewing objectives and finalising preparations for the Homeless Assistance Service Standards (HASS) Accreditation through QICSA.

It has been as ever a busy time. On behalf of the board and team I thank you for the contribution you have made to the work, vision and values of FAN.

Regards,

Sue Carlile  
Manager



## PROGRAM UPDATES

### Homeless Support Services

Welcome to the winter edition of our newsletter. There have been a few changes in recent months within the Homeless Support Services program and team. The first and foremost being the marriage of Jemmah Drew – Team Leader / Youth Support Worker in April. The team is delighted and would like to extend congratulations to Jemmah and Matt Mckie on their marriage and wish them both a long and fulfilling life.

Victoria Sobh commenced the role of Acting Team Leader in Jemmah's absence and has transitioned into the role with ease. FAN employed a Locum Worker, Mollie Kerby. Mollie has worked in the sector for the past five years including; Australia's remote Indigenous communities in Western Australia and the Northern Territory; worked at Youth Projects Inc. throughout Melbourne and with North East support & Action for Youth. (NESAY) in North East Victoria. Mollie brings an array of experience and we are pleased to welcome her to the team.



HSS staff had the opportunity to attend the Third Annual FRMP Statewide Forum which was a great opportunity to network with other organisations throughout Victoria. The forum offered great discussion about the impacts of homelessness and mental health for young people, this was highlighted through the various keynote speakers some of which included; David MacKenzie, Dr. Deborah Keys and the Hon. Richard Wynne MP.

The HSS team continues to access brokerage from The Family Reconciliation and Mediation Program (FRMP) for positive outcomes through counselling and family mediation; Creating Connections Education Employment Pathways Program (CCEEP) assisting young people with their education costs and the Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA) an early preventative approach assisting young people's exits from care to Independent living.

## Children's Program - Early Years



The Children's Program – Early Years in the last three months has been delivering some very exciting programs and workshops a number of which were carried out in partnership collaborations, these included;

- *Footsteps* – in collaboration with Resilient Kids and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service offered an intensive group work time limited program for young women and children up to 2 years, who may have witnessed or experienced trauma
- *Parenting Program* – in partnership with Reach out For Kids
- *Baby Massage* – providing massage therapy with an emphasis on bond/attachment and relaxation techniques
- *The Swimming Program* in partnership with Surrey Park Swim proved to be very successful program which led to a further 12 week program for mothers and accompanying children.

## Lifeskills Program

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Commencing in July 2008 two new programs will be delivered. The first is a post natal depression therapeutic group in collaboration with Whitehorse Community Health Service, ROK and play/arts therapist. FAN in partnership with a Youth Connexions, Wesley and Mitcham Baptist Church will deliver a Young Dads Group with an emphasis on parenting skills and child focussed activities.

### Private Rental Brokerage Program

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The Private Rental Brokerage Program has certainly had some challenges with the continuous rising of rental prices and the increased competition for rental properties but we are soldiering on. We continue to build on strengthening our relationships with local Real Estate providers some of who have been extremely helpful with assisting young people into the private rental market. The program has put together several starter packs that consist of laundry items such as an iron, washing powder, dust pan, clothes pegs, etc. and others that contain kitchen appliances and serving ware.



#### Young Mums Group:

The Group continues to grow and develop and has seen consistent numbers over the past three months, thanks to a number of referrals from staff and local agencies. In partnership with FAN's Children and Young Families Support Worker, a range of child friendly activities are conducted each week with a focus on bonding, communication and learning.



#### Young Dads Group

FAN is soon to launch the Young Dad's Group and draws on the expertise of our Children and Young Families Support Worker together with a range of workers from agencies including Mitcham Baptist Church, City of Whitehorse ROK and Wesley, with the aim of young dads and accompanying children coming together to increase knowledge of parenting skills, support and social connectedness.

#### Community Kitchen

This workshop is designed specifically for young people and includes practical, easy to cook meals, while sharing recipes and ideas in a community environment. Each meal will cost approximately \$2-\$3 a serve and includes take home meals and recipes – all welcome!



#### Scrapbooking Workshop

Regardless of skill level, this workshop is ideal for anyone who wants to learn cost effective skills that highlights the stories behind photographs so participants will have ever lasting memories.

#### Song Writing Group

In partnership with Youth ConneXions, this 7 week workshop shows participants how to turn words into songs with accompanying music. All equipment provided and this workshop caters to anyone who has an interest in music – whether that be song writing, acoustics, sound or budding singers and no reading of music or musical instruments required.



### Money Matters

Have you ever noticed how the bills always seem to arrive at the same time or perhaps you may be struggling from one pay period to another, or maybe you want to save for something but there never seems to be enough money to make ends meet. This workshop is personalised to your individual needs and offers hands on support tailored to your goals.



### Driver Education Program

This workshop is tailored to young people who are interested in getting their Learners Licences and includes driver education, support in learning the road rules and assistance with obtaining licences. This is a practical, hands-on workshop and numbers are limited.

*For further information, please contact Carol Martyn, Co-ordinator, Life Skills Program*



## Volunteer Program

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There have been some exciting changes to the Volunteer Program and we are pleased to report that Volunteer Support Teams were rolled out this month. A team of skilled and enthusiastic volunteers are now attached to individual houses and meet with clients every Monday evening during "Home Night" for up to 3 hours each week. While there is no typical evening, the volunteers and clients may choose to cook meals together, assist with homework, or even go to the movies – depending on what's happening at the time. Feedback from both clients and volunteers indicate that it's a resounding success and FAN is currently in the process of recruiting more volunteers to meet the need.

There are also a number of volunteers who continue to mentor clients on a one-on-one basis, with some clients having both a mentor and being attached to a house with a Volunteer Support Team with great success.

Amanda, the Lead Tenant in FAN's female student house has given notice after more than 12 months in this position and we take this opportunity to wish her the very best of luck for the great things she has planned for the future.

Vacancies have been listed for Volunteer Support Teams, Child Play Supervisors and a female Lead Tenant and the Co-ordinator is in the process of interviewing for these positions, with next Volunteer Induction Training scheduled for June.

*For more information please contact Carol Martyn, Co-ordinator, Volunteer Programs*



## THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING CONTRIBUTORS



- Acorn Developments Pty Ltd
- Alfred Felton Bequest
- Anglicare, Box Hill
- Box Hill Library
- Box Hill Lions
- Canterbury Council of Churches
- Caroline and Derek - Orcadia Foundation
- Chicko Enterprises Pty Ltd
- City of Whitehorse
- Council to Homeless Persons
- Dr Mark R Kelman
- Department of Human Services
- Haffer Roofing Pty Ltd
- Highfield Road Uniting Tennis Club
- Lord Mayors Charitable Fund
- Lord Mayors Youth in Philanthropy Program
- M A Wilson
- Margaret Ogilvie - Disadvantaged Youth Fund
- Olive Clark
- R.E.S.U.L.T.S. Mentoring (and) Active Property Network
- Rizzo's Bedding
- Rotary Club of Box Hill
- Rossvale Holdings Pty Ltd
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- St George Bank Foundation
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# Family Access Network Update

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