

Family Access Network Update

Spring 2019 : Volume 108



CEO Update

Welcome to the FAN Spring newsletter. It would be stating the obvious to comment on how cold this Winter has been, not only is this all the more concerning for those who don't have a place to call home, but for many trying to keep warm with increasingly high utility costs has become a significant challenge. For many of the young people we support, juggling high cost private rental, utility costs, food, medical, education, transport and other living costs is a constant battle - to do so on an income that is considered below the poverty line is not conducive to achieving life goals, all the more remarkable that so many in fact do successfully manage study, secure employment and achieve positive housing outcomes. It is undeniable that the support provided by the team at FAN, facilitate and enable these outcomes; please refer to the newsletter for more information on programs and services.

This newsletter also includes information on the FAN Annual General Meeting, to be held at the Whitehorse Room at the Box Hill Town Hall at 3.30pm on Wednesday 2 October, we look forward to your participation. The AGM has several functions, reporting to members, electing Board members and also acknowledging and encouraging the achievements of young people – which for many of them and indeed for us is a very powerful experience.

FAN was again actively involved in the Eastern Region “Homeward Bound” campaign to help raise awareness about homelessness in the community, on 30 July at Ringwood Lake, more than 200 participants, including local government councillors and other parliamentarians were present.

I am delighted to advise that the “Pathways to Resilience” Model in partnership with Uniting Wesley (Lead), Australian Childhood Foundation, EACH and Safe Futures, Family Violence Therapeutic Intervention tender was successful. FAN will be providing the LGBTIQ Therapeutic Group Work/Support for Young People component of the model.

We have also been advised of additional funding outcomes:

City of Whitehorse ongoing funding for our Life Skills Program, also again a further grant for “Keeping Connected”, and City of Whitehorse Youth Issues Network (YIN) small grant for first aid training for young mums.

Grant from the Alfred Felton bequest funding to assist clients with iVCAL.

Pride Foundation for a small grant for books for LGBTIQ properties.

Thanks on behalf of FAN for these outcomes and to all that help FAN support our clients and assist them to achieve their goals.

I look forward to seeing you at the Annual General Meeting.

Regards
Sue



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Board Update

This year I've been thinking a lot about gratitude, especially while I've been knee deep in the trenches of new motherhood.

The last twelve months held some significant ups and downs for me and having a gratitude practice has really helped me to focus on all that is good in my world.

Twelve months ago I was 28 weeks pregnant and was notified that my role was being made redundant. Great timing, huh? Needless to say, I was already feeling all of the feels and this news sent me into a vortex.

But, when I started to look for them, there were positives. I was able to negotiate an early finish from my job and had a luxurious eight weeks at home before Patrick arrived. Not many people get that opportunity.

It also afforded me some financial space to not have to rush back to work, which again, has been a lovely luxury. So, while I also feel uncertain about my career and what's next, I'm incredibly grateful for the time at home with my son. There's only one chance to spend this time with him and I am grateful to be fully present in it.

To get a bit more specific for you, my gratitude practice looks like this...

Each day I consciously think of three things that I am grateful for – today one of them is most definitely the sunshine (bring on Spring!) They can be small things like this, or they might be big, grand things. The research states that by doing this, we can slowly change the way we perceive situations, which in turn helps us to experience more positive emotions.

It's such a simple way to reframe our focus. I encourage you to give gratitude a go. Start simply and enjoy the benefits.

Regards
Kelly Rafferty
(Treasurer)



12 September 2019

Children's Program

Talking with your child about mental health

If you're concerned about your child's mental health, start by talking to your child. This might feel uncomfortable – you might even be waiting for the problem to go away. But talking to your child about how she's feeling shows her she's not alone and that you care. Also, your child might need your help to get professional support.

Here are some ideas to encourage your child to talk to you about how they are feeling:

- Say that even adults have problems they can't sort out on their own. Point out that it's easier to get help when you have someone else's support.
- Tell your child that it's not unusual for young people to feel worried, stressed or sad. Also tell them that opening up about personal thoughts and feelings can be scary.
- Tell your child that talking about a problem can often help put things into perspective and make feelings clearer. Someone with more or different experience – like an adult – might be able to suggest options your child hasn't thought of.
- Suggest some other people your child could talk to if he doesn't want to talk to you – for example, aunts or uncles, close family friends, a trusted sports coach or religious leader, or your GP.
- Let your child know that talking with a GP or other health professional is confidential. They can't tell anyone else, unless they're worried about your child's safety or someone else's safety.

Emphasise that your child isn't alone. You'll be there whenever they are ready to talk.

(Resourced from Raising Children's Network website)

Homeless Support Services

Homelessness and Mental Health:

Research demonstrates there is a complex relationship between mental illness and homelessness. It is however, not simply a case of cause and effect. There are often many inter-related contributing factors and the complex interplay of major life events and changes in personal circumstances that can act as a precursor or trigger for mental illness.

Throughout our life trajectory it is safe to assume that all of us will be impacted by mental health, either directly or through close association within our family, friends, colleagues and community networks. Mental health in no way discriminates, not for age, intelligence, wealth or success.

Mental illness often appears invisible. You can present as confident and experience anxiety. You can be engaged in employment and/or school and experience suicidal thoughts and self-harm. You can present outwardly happy to society and be miserable inside. You can be described as beautiful, however feel ugly on the inside. You can smile and make jokes and still experience debilitating depression.

Due to the very nature of being human, mental illness is uniquely individual. Whilst you may feel alone it is more than likely someone else has been where you are. If you are experiencing psychological distress and feelings of hopelessness, it is paramount to access professional support and/or confide in a trusted friend, family or community member.

If you are supporting a friend or family member with mental illness, remember to be kind, non-judgemental, listen and validate their experience and support them to seek professional help. It can be challenging to support someone during episodes of mental illness and therefore it is important you look after yourself.

The following are some useful contacts:

Websites and APPS:

Anxiety and Depression:

Lifeline: 13 11 14 (7 days a week / 24 hrs a day)

www.mentalhealthonline.org.au (free access to evidence-based treatment programs)

Beyondblue – www.beyondblue.org.au Beyond Blue Support Service: 1300 224636 (7 days a week / 24 hrs a day)

Black Dog Institute – www.blackdoginstitute.org.au

MoodGYM www.moodgym.anu.edu.au

Suicide:

Reach Out www.reachout.com.au

LGBTIQ

Switchboard www.switchboard.org.au/ 1800 184 527 speak to a LGBTIQA+ peer worker (7 days a week / 3pm -12pm)

APPS:

Smiling Mind: app-based mindfulness and meditation program

Headspace: app-based mindfulness and meditation program

Beyond now: a suicide safety planning app

Calm Harm: Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) to help you resist or manage the urge to self harm

Mood Mission: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) for anxiety and depression

National Child Protection Week

2019 THEME

In 2019 National Child Protection Week focus on introducing a 'child development' communication frame to promote the messages that:

- Kids do well when parents are supported
- To raise thriving kids, parents need support to navigate life's choppy waters
- Focuses on children and what they need to thrive, rather than blaming or evaluating parenting
- Establishes the importance of interaction with parents and caregivers to child development, rather than assuming that young children simply grow
- Helps people see that circumstances shape options, rather than assuming that good parenting comes naturally to individuals
- Uses a 'navigating waters' metaphor where boats represent families/parenting, weather/hazards represents the circumstances that can affect us all, and lighthouses and safe harbours represent the support that we all need.

Creating Connections Private Rental Brokerage Program

R U OK Day

Having a secure and safe home is essential to a young person's wellbeing. A secure and safe roof over your head is the essential building block in a young person's life whereby other aspects of their life can flourish. The link between mental health and homelessness is undeniable which is why it is important for programs such as the Private Rental Brokerage Program to support young people, who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness, in securing and sustaining private rental housing. The PRBP offers a range of services to young people through including skills based education around the private rental market and flexible brokerage packages. These supports have proven crucial in assisting young people with accessing and maintaining housing in the private rental market and ending the cycle of youth homelessness. The program enables young people to be more competitive when applying for private rental as well as improving budgeting skills and education on tenants' rights and responsibilities.

A client of the Private Rental Brokerage Program shares their experience below:

"My partner and I were homeless for months since December 2017 since coming out to our families. We have been going from one hostel to another and finally came across Family Access Network and moved in to a THM property supported by FAN. From then we were referred to the Private rental brokerage Program. The program helped us get into a private Rental property. Not only they helped us with the Bond and couple months' rent but also with groceries so we didn't have to worry about it at the start and got used to keeping up to date with the rent and bills"

February 2019

For more information you can contact the contact the Private Rental Brokerage Worker at FAN on 9890 2673.

LGBTIQ+ Capacity Building Project

This 12-month project offers tailored support, including consultation, workshops and training, to any organisation providing services and/or support to people who are at risk of homelessness. The project aims to increase the awareness, and undertaking of LGBTIQ+ inclusivity in services. It builds on the LGBTIQ+ inclusivity work that Family Access Network have been undertaking since 2005, and is supported by funding from the Department of Health and Human Services.

For more information or to arrange support for your organisation, contact the project worker, Jordi Kerr, on 9890 2673.

The Whole Package (Engage Grant)

The Whole Package is a program developed by FAN to address the issues of employability amongst young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and/or disadvantage within the LGBTIQ (Lesbian Gay Bi Transgender Intersex Questioning) community. The program aims to break the cycle of disadvantage by assisting young people with the skills needed to effectively obtain and sustain employment. These skills are often a natural part of development, such as developing a sense of self, resilience and teamwork but if a young person has been isolated from their community and has experienced transience at a young age these invaluable skills can often be missed. If you are aged from 15-25 years and identify as part of the LGBTIQ community, call the office to get involved - 9890 2673.



**Our AGM is being held on
2nd October at 3.30pm
Box Hill Town Hall —
Whitehorse Room**

**We would love to see you
there!**

Life Skills Program

Young Mums Group (YMG)

The YMG was established in 1997 and has been running continuously since then, predominantly funded through City of Whitehorse grants. Due to the increasing numbers of young families presenting to FAN, and the age of the young families being very different from the mainstream community, it became evident that young families were missing out on important social and parenting connections, which led to the establishment of the group.

YMG provides a safe space for young mothers to meet weekly with its core purpose to enable them to develop friendships, self-esteem and connectedness; this is achieved through peer interaction and participation in the weekly planned activities.

The YMG is held at the Mitcham Family Centre on a Tuesday 12pm—2pm. If you are interested in joining or would like more information you can contact the office on 9890 2673

Eastern Diversity Group

EDG provides an inclusive fun space for young LGBTIQ+ people to hang out, make friends and be themselves! There's always fun activities, friendly faces and food.

So far this term we've had a Steven Universe Marathon; a cooking activity resulting in delicious slices; made decorative boxes; crafty artsy creations and an excursion. The excursion took us to Hares and Hyenas (the queer bookstore) and places in Smith Street Collingwood to see some of great queer spaces and check out interesting events that are often advertised in those spaces. Joining a knitting group, book club or attending a free games night or drag show is a great way to enjoy inclusive spaces and feel more connected to the wider LGBTIQ+ community.

Coming up with EDG are jewellery making, board games and painting rainbow masterpiece activities with a chill out movie session to finish up the term. The activities at EDG are developed with the EDG members that attend so if you're keen for a certain type of activity make sure you come along to help make Term 4 awesome!

We meet every Thursday from 3pm to 5pm, in the back space at Youth ConneXions, Level 2 Box Hill Centro. Give us a call on 9890 2673 or send an email to fan@fan.org.au if you're interested in joining the group, we love to welcome new EDG peeps!





We need your HELP!

You never know who might be interested in giving back to their community so it's worth spreading the word; we would like to bring to your attention the current Volunteer Vacancies;

LEAD TENANT

FAN is currently seeking to engage a Lead Tenants aged 21 or over to assist us to support three young people in a shared living house. This is a voluntary live-in position that involves a 12 month commitment in exchange for rent free accommodation. You will have your own bedroom and bathroom.

The Lead Tenant is required, in liaison with the agency, to ensure that house rules are maintained. The Lead Tenant is not a professional support role but rather a positive role model living in a shared property. The Lead Tenant would pay for their own food and cleaning products, utility bills are approx. \$27.00 per week.

Ideally suited to someone who is interested in, or actively studying, in the Human Services Field. This position offers ongoing training and support. The purpose of the position is to act as a role model for young people to help them to live and share in independent accommodation.

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a Volunteer at Family Access

Network please call the office on 9890 2673 and speak to the Manager - Client Services

CHILD PLAY SUPERVISORS

Child Play Supervisors engage in a range of child friendly, age appropriate activities with children while their parents attend appointments, meet with Support Workers or participate in workshops attached to various FAN Programs.

VOLUNTEER MENTORS

The aim of the Volunteer Mentor is to act as a neutral and consistent role model and provide friendship and support (on a one to one basis) to a young person between the ages of 15-25 years. Mentors and young people meet on a weekly basis – at a time and place that is mutually agreed - and engage in a range of low cost activities that build positive adult relationships and community connection.

IVCAL

PROVIDING EDUCATION PATHWAYS FOR YOUNG MOTHERS

A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY ACCESS NETWORK,
GATEWAY LLEN AND BOX HILL INSTITUTE

IVCAL is a new and innovative approach to learning at Box Hill Tafe.

Offered at foundation, intermediate and senior VCAL levels, IVCAL can be completed 100% online or as a combination of online and class time.

Specifically relevant to young parents, IVCAL can be tailored to each students needs.

The partnership provides young parents already accessing FAN's services to re-engage in an educational program in a flexible, supportive and non-traditional environment through an online model developed by Box Hill Hill Tafe.

If you are interested or want more information contact Michelle at Family Access Network on 9890 2673





Alfred Felton Bequest

Anglican Parish of Box Hill

Austbrokers Countrywide (Staff)

Australian Government DHS (Staff)

Canterbury Council of Churches

City of Whitehorse

Department of Health and Human Services

Department of Health & Human Services (Youth Affairs)

Eastern Relief

Family Planning

Good 360

Kevcom

Kogo

Linc

Melbourne Inclusive Church

Orcadia Foundation - Caroline and Derek Young

PostNet Hawthorn

Pride Foundation

Ringwood Magistrates Court

Rotary Club of Box Hill

Salvocare Eastern

Share the Dignity

St Dominic's Parish, East Camberwell

St Kilda Mums

St Peter's Mothers Union, Box Hill

StreetSmart

Wyndham Youth Services —HEY Grant

Youth ConneXions—Whitehorse City Council

Allan Rogerson

Brett Philipp and Band (5 Shades of Grey)

Brian Waldron

Carmel, Georgia and Christina Theodoris

Colin Bellis

Darren Zappa of Red IT

David Burlew and Band (Max Zero)

Debby Blakey

Irene Kay

Kelly Rafferty

Liz Toffoletti

Malcom Romano of DesignsenseWeb

Paul Linossier

Richard Scott

Students of Thornbury High School

Contact Us

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W: www.fan.org.au



Useful Contact Numbers

Housing Assistance		
Eastern Region Opening Doors		1800 825 955
Melbourne City Mission Youth Support		9614 3688
Crisis Counselling		
Lifeline – 24hrs		13 11 14
Suicide Helpline- 24hrs		1300 651 251
Kids Help Line – 24hrs		1800 551 800
Mens Line		1300 789 978
Parentline		13 22 89
Sexual Assault		
Eastern CASA		9895 3281
Sexual Assault Crisis Line		1800 806 292
Health		
Family Planning Victoria		9257 0100
Maternal & Child Health line		13 22 29
Nurse On Call – 24hrs		1300 60 60 24
Domestic Violence		
Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre		1800 015 188
Eastern Domestic Violence Service (EDVOS)		9259 4200
Child Abuse		
Child Protection Crisis Line		13 12 78
Child Abuse Prevention Services		1800 688 009
Legal Aid		
Eastern Community Legal Centre	Box Hill	9285 4822
	Boronia	9762 6235
Alcohol & Drugs		
Direct Line 24hrs		1800 888 236
Youth Substance Abuse Services – 24hrs		1800 458 685
Eastern Drug & Alcohol Services		1300 650 705
Sexuality & Gender Identity		
Gay and Lesbian Switchboard		9663 2939
Transgender Victoria		9517 6613