



Family Access Network Summer Newsletter 2022 - Volume 120

CEO UPDATE

Welcome to the FAN Summer newsletter – well it was warm yesterday, but its back to rain today.

Since our last newsletter we have held our first in person Annual General Meeting since 2019, it was wonderful to meet with colleagues in person, present awards to clients and volunteers and to welcome everyone to an office we moved to in December 2019. At the AGM two longstanding Board members retired, Jose Abalo and Kelly Rafferty, on behalf of all at FAN, I would like to extend our appreciation for their contribution. Julieanne Darling was elected to the Board and Annerliegh Pappos co-opted from June, was ratified as an elected Board member at the AGM. I look forward to working with them and their fellow Board members, Di Godfrey, Bronwen Henry, Hannah Hodges and Ange Morgan (currently on leave of absence). The following awards were presented at the AGM, congratulations to all: **Rhys Fox Achievement Award:** Amber Hawker and Piper Harrington, **Stephen B McLoghlin Encouragement Award:** Lance Buesa and Estevan Pena, **Leo Clarebrough Volunteer Recognition Award:** Caitlin Frost and Ray Adcock. Copy of the Annual Report is available on the website

<https://www.fan.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Annual-report-2022-FINAL.pdf>



As advised in the last newsletter the establishment of “Pride in Place provides comprehensive, safe and inclusive recovery pathways for LGBTQIA+ people who are experiencing homelessness. Pride in Place consortium partners include Drummond Street Services Queerspace, VincentCare Victoria, Uniting, and Family Access Network (FAN). This is a pilot project, funded until June 2024 and services LGBTQIA+ people in the Hume Moreland, Inner Western Metro, Outer Eastern Metro and Central Highlands Regions.” I am pleased to advise that Pride in Place was launched on 23 November at Ozanam House, and Daniel Ip commenced the following week at FAN in the LGBTQIA+ Specialist Homeless & Housing Service Navigator position, with the ‘Pride in Place’ Program.



I would like to acknowledge and thank the following for their support to FAN in recent months, thank you, your support goes directly to our clients and assists them to achieve their goals:

- Austbrokers Countrywide
- Centrelink
- Melbourne Inclusive Church
- Shoes for Planet Earth
- GiveOUT Day
- The Generosity Collective

The newsletter contains lots of important updates on what has been happening at FAN, please do take the time to read.

I would like to take this opportunity to also advise that I presented my Transition to Retirement to the Board, effective 31 March 2023 – by then I will have been an employee for 38 years, which seems astonishing even to me ☺ I am pleased to advise that Michelle Thompson will then take on Acting CEO role for 12 months. I will reflect more on my 4 decades at FAN in the March 2023 Newsletter.

On behalf of the team at FAN, please have a safe and happy festive period and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible over these coming month.

Regards,

Sue



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Board update - Introducing our newest board member Julianne Darling

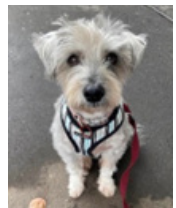
Hi everyone

It's a pleasure to be a member of the Family Access Network Board. I have admired the great work done by the team at FAN, for over a decade, and was excited by the opportunity to support that work in any way I can.

I am a career public servant with nearly 30 years working in State Government in Tasmania and Victoria. During this time I have been exposed to a lot of different service systems and organisations, but the work of homelessness services and, in particular FAN, where the team show so much so much passion, dedication and hard work - has become very dear to my heart. So I am thrilled to have the opportunity to volunteer my time to support this great organisation.

My professional experience enables me to bring together operational knowledge and experience to social policy design and business process improvement and I plan to provide a valued contribution to the FAN Board. I look forward to supporting FAN in any way I can.

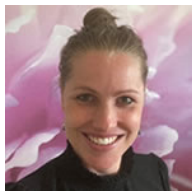
Outside of work, I am busy responding to my 5 year old daughters social life and providing as many cuddles to my first born (my dog) who is a 12 year old schnoodle.



Myself, like many others, found themselves finding additional interests throughout the COVID lockdowns - to my surprise (for an arachnophobe), I developed a strange and unexpected interest in learning all about the different types of Australian spiders. Whilst I can't admit to being over my fear, becoming familiar with spiders is certainly helping as I replace fear with fascination.

I've chosen to wrap up my introduction by quoting an encouraging statement that I distinctly recall my father saying to me when I was in year seven - *"Don't let your worry stop you - give it a go - otherwise you will never know"*. It certainly resonates with me and has replayed in my head on many occasions in the many years since. I hope you find it useful too.

Julianne Darling



Homeless Support Services

Activities for Summer

Grown a herb garden

Herbs are a great way to add flavour and aroma to your everyday meals, unfortunately they can be very expensive. So why not grow your own this summer, in addition to saving money, growing your herbs can be a great way to get into gardening. Growing your own herbs can also be incredibly satisfying, from planting a tiny seed into the dirt to watching it sprout in a vibrant green edible plant. All you need to get started is some seeds, pots, and dirt. Summer is a great time to start your own herb garden below are the herbs that absolutely love the warmer months

- Basil
- Mint
- Rosemary
- Thyme
- Oregano
- Chives
- Parsley

Make your own Popsicles

Popsicles are a refreshing treat that appeases our taste buds all the way through summer. Not only are they tasty but they can be really fun to make. Another awesome thing about making your own popsicles is that they don't require a lot of ingredients, time or supplies, they're also a really good way to save those aging pieces of fruit from going to waste.

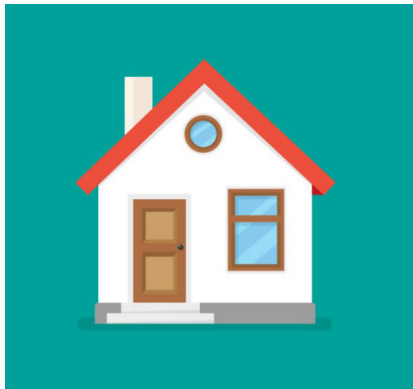
- 1.) Buy a popsicle mould or you could make them yourself by getting a paper cup, foil and pop stick. Put your popsicle mix in the cup, cover the top with foil then pierce the pop stick through the foil
- 2.) To make your popsicle mix simply grab your favourite fruits cut them up and put them in the blender with ice. There are no limits to which fruits you can blend, here are some other additions that can take your popsicles to the next level fruit juice, yogurt, mangos, mint, honey & avocados.
- 3.) Pour the mixture into the popsicle mould and freeze! Once frozen, I assure you these frozen treats will be a hit with all your friends and family.



Creating Connections - Private Rental Brokerage Program

2022 Refelections

With the Christmas period and end of 2022 now approaching it is time to reflect on the past year. This year has had additional hardships for young people who we support through the PRBP. With the rising cost of living and increase in rental prices it becomes more apparent how important a stable, secure, and affordable home is to young people's wellbeing. Young people who are part of the PRBP have continue to access private rental housing, with 75% of participants accessing rentals housing in 2022. Also, some positives came with the new Residential Tenancy Law changes which have put in to place several improvements for young people including minimum property standards, no more bidding on rentals and no discrimination based on age or identify on rental applications. If you are a young person interested in the PRBP please contact a Youth Support Worker at FAN on 9890 2673.



Children's Program

The Children's Program - Early Years provides timely support to young pregnant /parenting families and their accompanying children, providing them with appropriate services and therapeutic interventions. The Children's Program - Early Years provides the framework to ensure FAN's physical space, resources, work practice and policies are consistent with and operating at best practice to support a child safe environment.

The Children and Young Families Support Worker is committed to providing a range of early interventions for children and to act as a resource for parent's staff and volunteers by conducting educational workshops and information sessions on current underlying issues regarding children.

For information on the current or future programs please contact FAN on 9890 2673

Pathways to Resilience - Talking With Pride

Talking with Pride is an arts-based group for LGBTIQ+ young people (ages 15-25) who have experienced family violence. Experiences of family violence includes having their identity and/or appearance being dismissed, controlled or put down by parents, siblings, and/or partners. Talking with Pride is offered under the Pathway to Resilience partnership between FAN, Uniting, Australian Childhood Foundation, Safe Futures and EACH.

Since our last update, the program has been in full swing with a busy few weeks! Term 4 has seen us relocate up to Box Hill Community Arts Centre which has given us greater access to a large creative space each week. Using a range of materials from the art kits, we have been exploring painting and drawing activities. We also discovered how to make slime which was very popular among the young people while our attempt at making playdough has sent us back to the drawing board to try again! Work made by TWP participants was on display at our recent Annual General Meeting which brought a real vibrancy to the office, and we were honoured to be able to exhibit this.

In the past three months, TWP has also been fortunate to be supported by our 2022 placement students, Kate and Grace. As the year begins to draw to a close and they finish up their time at FAN, I'd like to take a moment and thank both Kate and Grace for their contributions to our group this year. I know everyone in TWP wishes them all the very best for their next chapters.

If you or someone you know would like to join the group, we are currently accepting referrals for the program including for 2023. The group meets weekly on Tuesday afternoons during school terms.

If you have any questions or would like to know more about the program please contact Jess on 9890 2673 or jinnes-irons@fan.org.au

Life Skills

Young Mum's Group

Young Mums group is a social support group for young mums aged 15-25. We facilitate activities through the school terms every year. We run YMG on a Wednesday from 12-2pm and we are near the end of Term 4. This Term is the first Term since lockdown, we currently run our program from the Burgess Family Centre. The activities for this Term are, Scrunchie making, Sip and Paint, Body Scrubs, Modge Podge Canvas', Belly Dancing, Vision Boards, and an outing.

If you are interested in joining the group, please contact Oriana on 9890 2673 or ophutully@fan.org.au

Eastern Diversity Group

Eastern Diversity Group is a social support group for young people aged 15-25 who are of diverse gender identities, expressions, sexualities, and/or sex characteristics that are, or at risk of becoming homeless. EDG is running for the third term and will be occurring between 6.10.2022- 15.12.2022 in Box Hill.

With summer on the horizon and the weather slowly warming up, participants will be invited to be involved in more outdoor activities that allow them to be in touch with nature. These activities will include picnics, nature walks and a trip to the Royal Botanical Gardens. For those that are not able to attend EDG, but are interested in participating in nature activities particularly clients in the transitional properties, gardening is encouraged as a means to connect with the environment. Gardening does provide many health and therapeutic benefits. Such benefits include physical exercise, provision of nutritious food, and a sense of achievement from tending to one's garden. The greatest aspect of gardening is that it does not require much. It can be as simple as buying some pot plants and tending to them, or building a small garden bed, raking the leaves, doing some weeding, etc

Volunteers

With International Volunteering Day approaching we would like to say a big thank you to all our past and current volunteers for their dedication, commitment, and support. Volunteers at FAN are an integral part of our work and add so much value to the young people's lives. The theme for 2022 is Solidarity through Volunteering and asks people to Volunteer now for our common future, it inspires people to act now for people and the planet. To show our appreciation we would like to take our volunteers out for coffee and cake – please see below invite.



Volunteer Opportunities

We currently have 3 Volunteers positions available!!!

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.

Lead Tenants

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 in Chadstone. 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. \$30 per week. This position is ideally suited to someone who is interested in, or actively studying, in the Human Service 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.

Young Mums Group Volunteer

We currently have a Group Volunteer Position available at our young Mums Group (YMG). YMG runs on Wednesdays 12 – 2 pm in Box Hill. The YMG Volunteer role involves engaging with the participants, assisting the group facilitator with weekly activities for the young mums and children who attend group.

If you are interested in any opportunities, please call Oriana or Michelle at Family Access Network on 9890 2673



Environmental & Sustainability

As part of FAN's commitment to innovation, staff at FAN are involved in a number of portfolios each year to share knowledge and facilitate good practices.

The Environmental & Sustainability portfolio was formed in 2020 with the goal of reducing all possible waste, changing to sustainable and ethically sourced materials, ecofriendly alternatives and by continually furthering our understanding of environmental protection.

As we start to look back on 2022, it felt timely to highlight some of the key achievements that have come out of FAN's Environmental and Sustainability Portfolio in the past 12 months.

FAN adopts a model of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle and as a result we have been able to:

- Encourage recycling and sustainability in the office through good waste practices and signage to inform waste disposal choices
- Reduce paper consumption by switching to digital files- FAN recently reached a milestone of not having ordered paper for over 12 months!
- Promote the use environmentally friendly products in the transitional housing program through the development of a sustainably living guide for young people
- Offer reusable products to clients including reusable nappies and period underwear
- Support the installation of garden beds at one of the property's so young people can grow their own food and reduce plastic waste from supermarket purchases

In addition to these changes, FAN has recently been supported by Underwear for Humanity. In September 2022, Underwear for Humanity generously donated 100 pairs of brand-new underwear to FAN for distribution to clients in our transitional housing program. Underwear for Humanity run a one-for-one donation initiative which helps divert leftover fabric and elastic from landfill. FAN wishes to thank Underwear for Humanity for their support!

FAN has also recently partnered with The Generosity Collective which is run out of Mitcham by the amazing Nat and Elise. TGC provides essential clothing and items such as shoes and blankets to people facing hardship. TGC have supported a number of FAN clients in the past 3 months through the provision of brand new and second hand items. This program has helped keep textile waste out of landfill while also supporting LGBTIQ young people to express their identities and provide some much needed support for additional clothes. FAN would like to thank Nat and Elise for their amazing support and their always bright can-do attitudes!



Photos from FAN's 41st AGM



Useful Contacts

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
First Nations Support 13YARN - 13 92 76

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
Health Ability After Hours Mental Health Nursing Service 1300 003 509

Domestic Violence

1800RESPECT 1800 737 732 Sexual Assault, Domestic & Family Violence Counselling Service
Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre 1800 015 188
The Orange Door - Inner Eastern Melbourne 1800 354 322
The Orange Door - Outer Eastern Melbourne 1800 271 150
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
South Eastern Community Legal Centre 9545 7400 or 9038 8002

Alcohol & Drugs

Direct Line 24hrs 1800 888 236
Youth drug and alcohol advice (YoDDA) - 24hrs 1800 458 685
Eastern Consortium of Alcohol and Drug Services (ECADS) 1800 778 278

Sexuality & Gender Identity

Rainbow Door Switchboard call 1800 729 367 or text 0480 017 246
Q-Life 1800 184 527
Transgender Victoria 9517 6613

Thank you for your support!

City of Whitehorse
Department of Premier & Cabinet (Home Affairs)
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
Eastern Emergency Relief Network
Centrelink (Box Hill)
KevCom
Melbourne Inclusive Church
Orcadia Foundation - Caroline & Derek Young
Share the Dignity
St Kilda Mum's
Street Smart
Youth Connexions - Whitehorse City Council
Malcolm Romano of Designsense Web
Lions Club - Box Hill
All donations from GiveOUT Day
Austbrokers Countrywide
Shoes for Planet Earth
The Generosity Collective



Centrelink staff generously donated food packages to families who are doing it tough this Christmas