



ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

Proudly funded by the Department of Communities and Justice, Department of Social Services, Brotherhood of St Lawrence, Indigenous Advancement Strategy and Hunter New England Primary Care.



Communities
& Justice



Australian Government

Department of Social Services

PRIMARY
HEALTH
NETWORK



Brotherhood of St Lawrence
Working for an Australia free of poverty



Premier
& Cabinet

ABOUT US

Port Stephens Family and Neighbourhood Services is an incorporated not for profit organisation providing community services in the Port Stephens LGA. We offer support and information services that include Child, Youth & Family Counselling and Casework, Homelessness Services, limited Transitional Accommodation, Neighbourhood Centre Drop In, Parent's & Carer's Groups, Children's and Young People's Groups, Domestic Violence Support including Safe Houses, Aboriginal Culture Groups, Playtime Groups, Outreach Programs, Financial Assistance, Financial Counsellor, Home to School Mentoring, Youth Centre and more.

Port Stephens Family and Neighbourhood Services is an amalgamation of Port Stephens Family Support Service and the Raymond Terrace Neighbourhood Centre; both centres delivering service to the Port Stephens Community for over 35 years. Proudly funded by the Department of Communities and Justice, Department of Social Services, Brotherhood of St Lawrence, Indigenous Advancement Strategy and Hunter New England Primary Care.

PSFaNS is a strong advocate for social wellbeing to our local community and has formed close partnerships with various government and non/government agencies with similar objectives. These partnerships give opportunity to enhance outcomes and social conditions in the community particularly in respect of vulnerable groups and individuals.

Building caring, healthy and inclusive communities across the Port Stephens Region



BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Every day we see high numbers of people without a home, and people struggling financially. In addition Domestic and Family violence numbers remain high in our community.

Our staff are passionate about their commitment to provide the best support that they can, every day that they can.

Our community partners and individual community members continue to support our work and we are grateful for this.

This year we will be continuing all our programs along with a few new ones for example, Free to be You - an LGBTQIA+ group for young people held at The Deck. We have also received some additional funding to do some more focused support in the two high schools in Raymond Terrace.

Thank you for your continued support of our organisation.

Robyn South
Chairperson

OUR COMMITTMENT TO COMMUNITIES

Port Stephens Family and Neighbourhood Services commitment is to know, understand and leverage off the strengths of the existing communities to eliminate social and economic disadvantage across the Port Stephens region. We will continue to work with the many communities across our region (Aboriginal, Women's, Families, Youth, Education, Business, Government etc) to ensure all people can live lives which are satisfying, meaningful and connected with their communities.

Chairperson
Robyn South

Vice Chairperson
Phiona Haire

Secretary
Helen Smyth

Treasurer
Richard South

Member
Tim Mizzi

Member
Chris Baguley

Our Vision

A just community that includes and acts

Our Purpose

Working with and for the communities of Port Stephens to eliminate social disadvantage

OUR VALUES

We believe in:

Community

We acknowledge that the Port Stephens area is made up of many communities. We believe that building communities in ways that acknowledge and respect differences is the key to building healthy and inclusive lifestyles. Creating opportunities to link up communities to address social and economic disadvantage is our focus.



Creativity

We encourage and value creativity. We are open to learning and like to encourage all of us to think out of the box. We are always aware of available resources and look to sharing what we have with others. We value new ideas and would like others to expand on ours.

Courage

We take risks. We believe all good things that we have come to value in our communities have been born out of courage and follow through. We won't ridicule ideas and like to encourage everyone to give it a go. Redressing social and economic disadvantage needs us all to be courageous.



Respect

For us, this means being honest. Empathic. Allowing time to listen and speaking and acting positively. We aim to “practice what we preach” and always follow through on what we have committed to. We support communities to accept each other's differences and work together at points of shared needs.

A look back...

HOW MUCH DID WE DO?

- 4 x Tuning in to Kids Programs
- 4 x Tuning in to Teens Programs
- 4 x Women Speak Programs
- 1 x Rent It to Keep It Programs
- 32 x Work & Development Orders with \$16,478.00 in credits applied
- 5 x Playtime groups weekly Oct to June (some offsite at Oakvale and Phoenix Farms)
- 2 x after school groups Oct to June
- 2 x Weekly Art Therapy groups (young people and adults) as well as weekly family group sessions
- Youth drop in once a week Oct to June
- Youth school holiday day camps
- 4 x Aboriginal traineeships in Community Services
- Weekly food provisions through Oz Harvest including extra hampers and Second Bite
- 20 full time staff & 17 part time staff (3-4 days per week)
- \$111,779.68 of Emergency Relief vouchers
- \$27,478 additional ERF for Covid
- \$27,478 for flood assistance
- \$10,600 for Energy account payment assistance scheme vouchers (with more available as needed)
- \$2,495 of Hunter Water PAS Vouchers
- \$839 of school uniforms from Lowes
- 10 x social work student placements

- 13 x visiting services regularly used our rooms for training, access visits, meeting clients with a total of 34 x individual uses of our rooms
- Child & Family Support - 676 children and families including 75 intensive support
- Child & family support (Tilligerry) - 126 children and families
- Youth & Family Support - 424 young people and families including 71 intensive support
- 542 engagements via our Tilligerry Family Network site which included groups, counselling / mentoring and food assistance
- 879 people accessed our service for Homelessness Services (389 Male, 488 female, 2 other), with 337 children under 18 within those families and an additional 276 people given information and/or referrals
- 900 people accessed ERF (some more than once)
- 1335 people accessed our Neighbourhood Centre (some more than once)
- 500 visits to The Deck Youth Venue
- 51 children and their families accessed HIPPY each week
- 802 clients (366 women, 364 children) accessing Staying Home Leaving Violence Program
- Implemented in-house Psychology Team with same day appointments available for urgent requests
- 39 x Wesnest Telstra Pre-Paid phones given out to families escaping DV
- 2 x Safe Houses for Families escaping DV
- Partnership with Hunter Water enabling us to negotiate reductions in rates for homeowners/mortgagees
- Partnership Friends with Dignity who furnish/stock homes for women leaving DV, school bags with school items, Christmas presents
- Partnership with Headspace for outreach at the Neighbourhood Centre
- Partnership with Lifeline for counselling services
- Partnership with Centrelink Community Outreach for payment support
- Partnership with St Johns Anglican Church for weekly food hampers
- Partnership with Raymond Terrace Rotary for food help and household donations
- Partnership with Hunter Womens Centre for counselling services
- Partnership with Hunter Valley Project for financial counselling
- Auspiced and chaired Port Stephens DV Committee
- Manage 4 Facebook and 3 Instagram pages to engage with community
- Facilitated some groups outdoors to adjust with restrictions (ie. walking groups)
- Playgroup excursions to Phoenix Farm and Oakvale Farm weekly during Term 2.
- Partnership with Health for onsite Pediatrician



HOW WELL DID WE DO IT?

PSFaNS is an evidence informed service. We deliver evidence based practice. In 2021-2022 staff were trained in IRespect, Trauma informed Practice, Shark Cage, Adults Introduction to Gender and Sexuality, Suicide Prevention, Child Protection, Child Development, Aboriginal Case Management Policy, Behaviour Management, and more. We adapted our operations in order to continue to offer our services during Covid-19. Staff participated in individual and group supervision and case reviews in keeping with our commitment to reflecting on and developing practice.

WHAT DIFFERENCE DID WE MAKE?

A snapshot of our evaluations

- **89%** of parents/caregivers reported that since attending Playtime they have learnt of a service, resource or activity in the community for children and families
- **91%** of families reported that they learnt new things about positive parenting in our parenting programs
- **86%** of families improved in parent/caregiver warmth and empathy towards their child/ren
- **88%** children at school entry age had participated in formal early childhood education at least two sessions a week for at least a year prior school
- **83%** of young people said their most important goal was achieved in counselling/ casework
- **93%** referring services reported that PSFaNS is responsive to community needs
- **96%** referring services found the staff at PSFaNS to be helpful, friendly and knowledgeable
- **98%** of Staying Home Leaving Violence clients said because of the service I feel safer
- **100%** of Staying Home Leaving Violence clients said because of the service I feel my children are safer
- At the start of Women Speak, **86%** of participants blamed themselves in various degrees for the abuse that happened to them. By completion of the program, this number reduced to **14%**.
- **100%** of Women Speak participants said they now knew the difference between a healthy and unhealthy relationship on completion of the program.

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COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Another round of lockdowns from July to September for our area didn't slow operations for PSFaNS. We were now in a well adapted position to be able to continue to provide our services remotely and/or in a Covid safe manner. We continued to prioritise a high online presence to ensure the community knew that while we were doing things a little differently, we were still here and our services were still available.

We were there for the men, women and children quarantined at Motto Farm Motel, the areas first hotspot. We even brought in some superheroes to boost the children's morale during that difficult time. Speaking of heros, we were contacted by so many local businesses and organisations wanting to help not only with the people at Motto Farm but the anyone needing support in lockdown.

Donations of fresh meals, food parcels, blankets and clothing, toys and more rolled in and our staff got them to where they needed to go.



*We are here
for you!*



*Could you use
a little food
help?*



**WE ARE STILL DOING OZ
HARVEST FOOD DROPS TO
THOSE IN NEED DURING
THIS LOCKDOWN.**

If you live anywhere in Port Stephens, please do not hesitate to reach out if you could use some food help.

To ensure we can help all who reach out, we are only taking names of those who haven't yet had a drop during this lockdown for now.



**DO YOU NEED A LITTLE HELP
WITH FOOD DURING
LOCKDOWN?**

We can help!



WE ARE STILL OPEN

**Our offices are still closed for walk in
service and will be by appointment only.**

Please continue to call us on our office lines for support:

4987 1331 - Jacaranda Ave

4987 4674 - Phillip St

SERVICE STAFF 2021-2022

Manager - Sue Pollock
Assistant Manager - Ann Fletcher

Aboriginal Programs / HIPPY	Child, Youth & Family	SHS	SHLV	Finance & Admin
Team Leader Rachel S Aboriginal Programs Emma Karen HIPPY Victoria Domaneca Katrina Sharnie	Senior Practitioner Andrew Caseworkers Amy Mardi Kelly Sarah W Rachel W Alison Parenting Programs Jill Psychology Timothy Maddie Tilligerry Family Network Danielle Connie Julianne Angelique Anne	Team Leader Ann Senior Practitioner Kylee Caseworkers Nichola Kayla Courtney Adrian Jess S Jess P Blake Alicia Julianne Robert Anna Katie	Senior Practitioner Barbara Caseworkers Ellen Sarah Q Camilla Rebecca DV Programs Barbara Julianne	Finance Manager / Team Leader Max Reception & Admin Jo (Phillip St) Clare (Jac Ave)



Our work would not be possible without the work of our dedicated volunteers. Volunteers have helped out in a great many ways; assisting our emergency relief team, preparing food for schools and groups, assisting in our children's / youth groups; assistance in running and maintaining office IT; gardening and so much more. Your ongoing commitment, dedication and time enable us to deliver exceptional service and support to our wider communities. Because of this invaluable contribution, we're eager to say a big public "Thank you volunteers! We salute you!".

