

# THE CANOPY

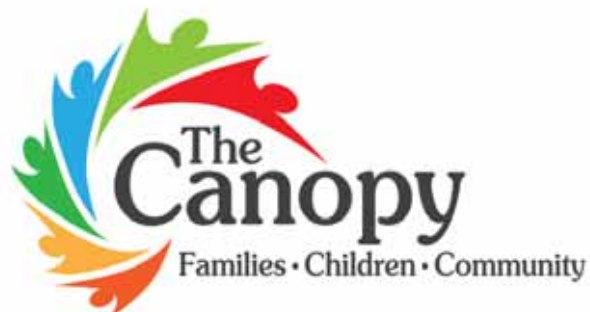


## ANNUAL REPORTS

## 2014



## VISION STATEMENT



### VISION

Providing safe and welcoming environments for families, children and communities to grow.

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## The Canopy Annual General Meeting

### AGENDA

**30th October 2014**

1. Welcome
2. Acknowledgement Of Country
3. Attendance
4. Apologies
5. Minutes of 2012- 2013 Annual General Meeting
6. Business Arising from Previous minutes
7. Reports
  - President's Report
  - Manager's Report
  - Team and Project Reports
    - Office Manager
    - Senior Clinical Practitioner
    - Child and Family Team
    - Intensive Family Support / Preservation team
    - Cameron Park Community Centre
    - Communications and Special Projects
  - Auditor's Report
8. Introduction of the Returning Officer
9. Nominations and Election of the Committee
  - President
  - Vice Chairperson
  - Secretary
  - Public Officer
  - Treasurer
  - Committee members
- General Business
- Close

*Please join us for light refreshments and to meet the staff.*

## MINUTES of the 2012-13 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Canopy Incorporated

VENUE: 107 Northlakes Drive, Cameron Park NSW 2285

**DATE:** 29<sup>th</sup> October 2013

**Meeting Commenced:** 11.23 am

**WELCOME** was extended to all present by Susan Jenkins

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY** - acknowledged that the meeting was being held on Awabakal land and paid respects to past and present elders.

**ATTENDANCE:** Janelle Hope, Sally Pontifex, Julie Pearson, Lynda Little, Glen Crisp, Chris Murphy, Ruth Burke, Kirsty Porteous, Marie Incze, Betty Givney, Cat Albert, Alex Sullivan, Lyn Wickham, Jess Salvador, Anna Dowley, Jenny Bridge, Jacqui Bently-Borg, Ray Austin, Doreen Herron, Veronique Moseley, Lisa Standen, Lee-Anne Holmes, Susan Jenkins, Danielle Black

**Apologies:** Shane Reed, Marette Gale, Tim Keogh, Deborah Moore, Carolyn Ellis

### 1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the 2011-2012 Annual General Meeting were tabled.

**Motion:** That the minutes be approved as a true and correct record of the meeting.

**Moved** : Ray Austin      **Seconded:** Rosemary Heppell

### 2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

There was no business arising from the previous meeting.

### 3. REPORTS

The following reports were read and tabled by the following people:

President's Report – Meredith Daniel (read by Susan Jenkins)

Manager's Report – Lee-Anne Holmes

Senior Clinical Practitioner, Child & Family Team & IFS/IFP Reports – Ruth Burke

Marketing, Communications and Special Projects Report – Veronique Moseley

Cameron Park Community Centre Report – Anna Dowley

Lake Macquarie Child, Youth and Family Alliance Report – Nicola Hirschhorn

Auditors Report – Kirsty Porteous (Crosbie Warren Sinclair)

**Motion:** That the reports as tabled be approved and accepted.

**Moved:** Ray Austin

**Seconded:** Janelle Hope

**4. THE RETURNING OFFICER:** Jess Salvador was introduced and took the Chair.

All positions were declared vacant and nominations for the incoming board were read.

As there were sufficient numbers to fill positions the nominees were declared as being duly elected.

The following people were nominated and accepted as board members:-

Position	Elected	Moved	Seconded
<b>President</b>	Susan Jenkins	Ray Austin	Doreen Herron
<b>Vice President</b>	Rosemary Heppell	Susan Jenkins	Ray Austin
<b>Secretary/Publicity Officer</b>	Janelle Hope	Ray Austin	Susan Jenkins
<b>Treasurer</b>	Ray Austin	Doreen Herron	Janelle Hope
<b>Board Member</b>	Glenn Crisp	Ray Austin	Susan Jenkins
<b>Board Member</b>	Doreen Herron	Ray Austin	Susan Jenkins
<b>Board Member</b>	Meredith Daniel	Susan Jenkins	Doreen Herron
<b>Board Member</b>	Lynda Little	Ray Austin	Susan Jenkins
<b>Board Member</b>	Sue Jenkins	Susan Jenkins	Ray Austin

The Returning Officer handed the meeting over to the incoming President

## **5. GENERAL BUSINESS**

Appointment of Auditor

**Motion:** Kirsty Porteous from Crosbie Warren Sinclair as the appointed Auditor

**Moved:** Ray Austin

**Seconded:** Rosemary Heppell

The meeting was declared closed at 11.48am

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It has been my pleasure to be the President of the Canopy for the last financial year. Over the year the services offered by The Cameron Park Community Centre and the Canopy have expanded to a wider community, reaching many more children and families to address their needs and to meet community gaps in service provision. Our commitment to supporting families, advocating for the needs of children and to developing communities is still strong and this is evident in the opportunities we are providing to the community.

Our Family Team's professional, compassionate work with families has achieved a benchmark we are very proud of in the Community Services Sector. This team will soon relocate to Cardiff due to the current and future growth of the team itself and the services they provide.

The challenges of managing the Cameron Park Community Centre and the Canopy have been met by our very capable staff and volunteers. Thank you also for a supportive relationship with Lake Macquarie City Council and their Staff from whom we lease the building and grounds. The achievements of the past



twelve months would not have been possible without these many people who contribute to and support the services we offer.

I want to say a special thank you to the Board for its considered guidance, support and for their generous contribution which makes our work in the community possible and to the staff of our organisation for their tireless dedication and passion to working with each other and with other services so we can continue to provide every opportunity to the community and families that we are fortunate to be involved with.

Finally, I thank our Manager Lee-Anne Holmes for her outstanding leadership and tireless efforts in working to achieve our vision, your unfailing commitment to providing the services and opportunities we achieve is greatly appreciated.

The Canopy is proving to be a dynamic and innovative organisation which I am proud to be a part of. I look forward to another year of challenges and achievements with enthusiasm and the continuing support throughout a busy year of change, achievement and growth.

Susan Jenkins

# MANAGER'S REPORT

At the end of last year's annual report I acknowledged that the coming year would bring a shift in the key focus of the role of Manager from operational and process issues towards strong leadership focus. I reflected on the year ahead with excitement at the prospect of providing leadership to encourage experimentation and innovation to develop and create opportunities that would be realised through strong collaboration and result in growth.

It is with a great sense of satisfaction that I reflect on the past year knowing that several key partnerships and successful collaborations have been developed with other organisations as evidenced in the attached reports. Notably the existing partnership with the Maryland Activities Group Inc. resulted in The Canopy taking on the management and supervision MAGIs funded programs. This arrangement is in place as we await approval by Family and Community Services for amalgamation.

The key factors that have led to the successful collaboration between MAGI and The Canopy have been the quality of the relationships that have developed between the management committee and the board of management of the two organisations as well as the strong commitment to the shared vision of *"providing safe and welcoming environments for families children and communities to grow"*. In fact, it is the vision that has been the critical factor in decisions made at all levels of the organisation and that has provided the focus and direction of the organisation.

In August 2013 a staff retreat was held and all staff participated in the development of a set of organisational values. These were developed to inform practice going forward. In addition we discussed and clarified the various key activities and programs within the organisation. As a result this year has marked a new era in which we have been able to effectively articulate, and are being recognised for, our expertise across the range of activities

including Family Work, Community Development, Facilities Management and emerging Social Enterprise activities.

The values adopted are:

Integrity and professionalism

Inclusiveness

Innovation, collaboration growth and change

Connectedness with our clients, our communities and each other

It is evident from the many examples of innovation in each and every report in this document that these values have been implemented effectively. The examples are the product of patience, commitment, resilience and most importantly a sense of humour. Innovation such as this can only occur when people are trying new things, sharing ideas, creativity, being open to opportunities, solving problems together and communicating and respecting others skills, knowledge and expertise. The families, children and communities that we work with are the beneficiaries of the innovation that is occurring and that will continue to gain momentum in the coming year.

I would sincerely like to thank each and every member of the board, staff and the wonderful team of volunteers who all participate in making the vision a reality.





# OFFICE MANAGER'S REPORT

The last 12 months have once again seen growth in the organisation, posing interesting challenges from an administrative perspective. Whilst the Canopy is one organisation and many of the administrative tasks are now streamlined, every section (family services, community development and facilities management) has varying human resources, inventory and reporting requirements. With growth comes change and with the addition of the administrative management of Maryland Neighbourhood Centre, a need to review and/or implement new administration strategies was identified. In conjunction with the Management Team, these changes have been successfully implemented across all sections of both organisations, for example the introduction and implementation of the Reckon Accounts system at Maryland, which aligned with the accounting system that was implemented at The Canopy in March 2013.

My tasks over the year have included:

- Active part of the Management Team
- Accounts payable
- Accounts receivable
- Bank reconciliation (multiple accounts)
- Monthly reconciliation of general ledger accounts
- Prepare monthly and periodic financial reports for review by Board of Management and Manager
- Monthly BAS preparation and reconciliation
- Payroll for all sections, including time sheets, plus all human resources enquiries
- Assistance with recruitment
- Calculate and invoice permanent hirer charges
- Process payments for permanent hire and casual hall hire
- Administration and reconciliation of brokerage for the Family Team
- Petty cash
- Journal entries as required
- Monitoring all of the organisational legal requirements such as insurances etc.
- Monitoring and maintaining of all documentation relating to organisational policy
- Minutes for the Board of Management
- All organisational ordering of stock and supplies
- Answering organisational enquiries and directing to appropriate section or manager



While 2013-2014 has been an extremely busy year, it is with a sense of personal satisfaction that I can identify and reflect upon how far the organisation has come.

# SENIOR CLINICAL PRACTITIONER'S REPORT

I have been with The Canopy for the past 2 ½ years and I have seen incredible growth within the family work team. My passion has been in creating a supportive and professional culture within the team and focusing on the joint work we do with FaCS and other services in addressing the safety and wellbeing of children, primarily those who are at risk of significant harm. The exceptional work that is done by the family work team continues to be supported by the organisation as a whole. It is with this backing our team can continue to deliver a strong Signs of Safety approach in all our work with families, staff and other services.

This approach in working together to make a difference in addressing child protection issues is reflected in feedback as below:

*I would like to say that the feedback by Caseworkers working with the service has been overwhelmingly positive. They have articulated how professional, supportive and effective the service is with all parties from the engagement through to the intervention and exit of families involved. If only we could clone you all.*

*Lynn Barnett. Snr Caseworker,  
Metro Assessment and Referral Team (Metro ART)*

*I think that as leaders of practice in this work, you have set the benchmark in terms of engagement, collaboration with other agencies, inclusive of CS, management of capacity and vacancies and outcomes with high end complex families.*

*Whilst the IFP program overall has led to changes in the way CS work, I believe the way you have completed your work has changed the landscape for NGO / CS collaboration.*

*Shane Reed, Manager Client Services Edgeworth CSC.*

Meeting IFP and IFS target numbers has been a challenge absorbed positively by the family work team. This has been parallel to developing further expertise in trauma informed practice and appreciative inquiry.

The Child and Family team are often utilised as a reference point for many other services in regards to parenting programs and short term case management. Our group supervision and case review model across the teams has continued to evolve, with a strong focus on critical reflection and how our work can resonate down generations.

The transition for amalgamation of the MAGI Child and Family Worker has been a very positive addition to the family work team. Feona has connected with the team and brings a wealth of knowledge and true sense of partnership. Parenting programs have been successfully facilitated across services and the collaboration between staff has been unlimited.

I would like to thank Angela, Alex, Feona, Julie, Lee and Marie for their willingness to stand up and be proactive for the children and families we come into contact every day. The diversity of skills they share and case collaboration enables our team to stay true to the voice of every child and continue to tackle the challenging and complex situations in the aim of keeping children safe.

**Ruth Burke**



# FAMILY TEAM STATISTICS

**INFORMATION AND REFERRALS: 353**

**HOME VISITS MADE : 287**

**OFFICE VISIT: 4**

## REFERRAL SOURCES

CALM, Mums Cottage, Sugar Valley Neighbourhood Centre, Self-referrals, Domestic Violence officers, Social worker at John Hunter Hospital, Nurse at West Wallsend Doctors, Glendale Medical Centre, Family Referral Service, Cameron Park Early Learning Centre, Holmesville Playhouse Preschool, Newcastle Family Support, Brighter Futures, Lake Macquarie Mental Health Team, Barnsley, Edgeworth Heights, Edgeworth and West Wallsend Public Schools, NDIS

*"Thank you, Circle of Security has helped me be a better mother and has helped me understand my children's emotions and signals better."*

*"It has helped so much to be given the right links to services in our community"*

*"I loved 123 Magic it really made me stop and think about my own reaction when parenting"*

*"Everyone I have had contact with from The Canopy has been so pleasant and helpful, this is an excellent family based support service"*

**ABORIGINAL FAMILIES CURRENTLY ENGAGED WITH THE SERVICE : 12**

**CASE MANAGEMENT  
TOTAL NUMBER OF FAMILIES : 34**

## MAIN PRESENTING CLIENT ISSUES

Child Protection, Drug and Alcohol issues in the household, managing behaviours, Parental separation, ADD/ODD Autism or on the spectrum, housing and lack of affordable housing options, needing to access mental health bulk billed services, referrals and linking client's into the community, accessing food and petrol and EAPA Vouchers, lack of family support for parents, parents and children with disabilities

## PARENTING PROGRAMS ATTENDANCE

Parents As Teachers Playgroup—25

Circle of Security—11

2 123 Magic Courses—22

Dina Preschool Program—9

Keeping Children Safe—6

Incredible Years— 8

## STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Triple P Training Group, Seminar and Indigenous, Advanced Group Training, Connecting Families Conference, Child Protection Dynamics, The Canopy Staff Retreat



# CHILD AND FAMILY TEAM REPORT

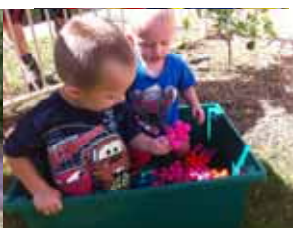
## THINGS THAT ARE GOING WELL

- Parenting groups were run such as: Circle of Security, 123 Magic, Keeping Children Safe, Dina Program for preschool children.
- Partnerships were formed with Family Action Centre, Windale Schools as Communities, West Wallsend Public School, Maryland Neighbourhood Centre, Creative Times and Samaritan Brighter Futures, Child & Family Team and Intensive Team, Sugar Valley Neighbourhood Centre.



## WORRIES

- Meeting the demand of request for parenting groups.
- Case Management roles have increased and are in demand
- When we have families in crisis it is really difficult to get food vouchers and crisis assistance
- Funding for playgroup and parenting group resources
- Resources to upgrade our branding and transport clients with multiple children.



- Positive Feedback from Evaluation from case management and parenting groups.
- Our number of families have increased for both Parenting Programs and Case Management
- The culture of the workplace has positively impacted on how we function as a team
- The merge with Maryland Neighbourhood Service and addition to our team
- More staff being trained in parenting programs which gives the services the availability to offer more parenting groups to the community.
- The Parents as Teachers playgroup has moved to the Sugar Valley Neighbourhood Centre and has doubled in numbers of families in partnership with Brighter Futures Samaritans
- Sing N Grow in term 3 was very successful and lots of fun!!!!
- Consistent support from Ruth, our Clinical Supervisor and ongoing regular supervision
- The clothing exchange is going well and is accessed by families needing clothing for their children and smart clothes to appear in court. Our donations have increased allowing more families to use this wonderful community resource

## WISHES

- For the service to be closed over the Christmas week between Christmas and January which is our quietest period.
- To have a engaging space for clients to feel welcome and comfortable with lounges at the Cardiff space.
- Continue to develop and extend on partnerships and working collaboratively with other services.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

- NAIDOC Day
- Schools forums
- You're Kidding Me Expo
- Family Inclusion Forum
- D/V Forums



### HOUSE of GOOD THINGS

- Again this year, we have been implementing the 'Signs of Safety' model to assist children in the families we work with to have a voice about their life experiences and desires. We have again modelled our report to follow in the '3 Houses' approach as it is such an integral part of our practice with families. We assist the children to reflect and draw or write about the good things in their lives, their worries and their hopes and dreams for the future.
- The team have had a number of positive outcomes with families involved in the service this year. Some examples will be provided as an appendix – 'case studies'.
- We have utilised the strengths of the whole team to provide the best possible support to the families involved in the service. Staff have been flexible around sharing their time and expertise with other workers to provide support to families.
- The current IFP/S team as well as the larger team are working cohesively. All staff have made comment on the supportive and productive atmosphere amongst the family work team.
- This year we have been able to engage with and provide service to a number of fathers in the program. This has been both in a two parent family and single fathers.
- Our engagement with families has been very successful with a number of families this year. The team have worked very hard on engagement with clients and as such have been a part of very open and honest working relationships with families.
- Families are recognising the value of the support that we can offer to them. A client that previously worked with the service and had a child removed, then had that child restored and requested that she access the program again to support her with her parenting.
- We have partnered with the Sugar Valley Neighbourhood Centre's Work Development Order program which has enabled our clients to work to reduce their State Debt Recovery fines by participating in the IFP/S program.
- IFP/S clients have been accessing the free clothing exchange at The Canopy. They have both donated to and received support from the program accessing items such as clothing, curtains, baby items and other household items.
- The support we have received from Ruth again this year has enabled us to develop our skills as workers, reflect on our practice and work cohesively as a team. All of us consider Ruth's support to be invaluable to our workplace and work practices.
- The concessional leave over the Christmas period was very much appreciated by the whole team. We really felt that it was an acknowledgement that the work that we put in throughout the year is noticed and appreciated.
- The whole team have been approved to go the Childhood Trauma Conference later in the year. We are very much looking forward to having the opportunity to hear from key industry speakers about the most recent research and best practice to keep utilising best practice in our work. We are looking forward to this being a positive team building exercise as well.
- The IFP/S team ran a 'Keeping Children Safe' course for parents in conjunction with the Child and Family team. A number of IFP/IFS clients attended this course and reported that they had significant learnings around child protection concepts, the role of Community Services and protecting their children from abuse in their homes and communities.

### HOUSE of WORRIES

- The team have had ongoing issues with the computers and computer system. At times this has meant that we did not have access to a computer to complete our work. While the team were able to be creative and flexible around getting work done the difficulties at times caused frustrations.
- There were a number of changes within the wider Family Work team with Alison and Rebecca resigning from their roles which was somewhat unsettling for the team. We are fortunate that the workers who stepped into these roles have integrated well into the team and formed a supportive and cohesive team.
- The intensive team supervised a social work student this year which brought with it some challenges for the team. We worked together as a whole team to provide both formal and informal support to the student, however unfortunately he was unable to finish his placement due to health concerns. As a part of this process we developed a close relationship with the university staff who reported back to us that they felt that we had supported the student past their expectations of us.
- This year we have had some issues around worker safety. A staff member was threatened verbally and had her car vandalised on separate home visits. We have revisited the home visiting policy and vehicle policy as a result of this and these incidents have prompted conversation around worker safety and self care.

### HOUSE of HOPES and DREAMS

- We would have a larger office building which would provide enough space for all workers to have their own desk and storage space. This office would be in a more accessible location for our clients to access the building.
- We would have opportunities to do more team building exercises to strengthen the relationships within the team and focus on team strengths and abilities.
- The family work team would like to write a paper to present at a conference.
- We would have the opportunity to attend future training to keep our skills and practice in line with current best practice and continue to provide our clients with a quality service.
- We would like to have the opportunity to supervise a social work student again. While we understand that the first student for the IFP/S team was difficult for unforeseeable reasons, we acknowledge that this was a unique case and would like future opportunities to experience the reciprocal learning that would come with supervising a student.



# IFS/IFP TEAM CASE STUDIES

## CASE STUDY ONE

The IFP team were referred a young father with care of his 12 month old premature baby who was born at 26 weeks and had significant developmental delays and other serious health conditions as a result. Domestic violence was perpetrated by the mother of the child towards the father.

During the intervention we provided support to the father to secure his own accommodation and furnish it to have a safe environment to be able to focus on parenting the child. Intensive support was provided to this father to develop household management skills, manage the numerous appointments for the child, implement the necessary health care tasks and manage the relationships in his life.

Significant support was provided for the father to develop his parenting skills with a focus on attachment with the child. At the point of writing this report the family is still engaged in the program and the father and child have developed a secure attachment, the child has made improvements with her development beyond the health professional's expectations of her and the father has secured his own private rental property.



## CASE STUDY TWO

The IFP team were re-referred a family that had previously not engaged with any services. The family were referred for support around long-term drug use of both parents, while facing the risk of being evicted from their property due to hoarding and squalor. There are 4 children under the age of 16 living in the home who were at risk of being removed from the parents care by Community Services.

The Intensive Family Preservation team provided emotional and practical support to the family to address the living conditions by clearing and cleaning the property and teaching the skills for the family to maintain progress. The Canopy negotiated with Community Services to share the cost of the necessary five 10 metre skip bins and other cleaning items necessary to improve the state of the home.

The children were involved in the process of cleaning up the property and supported to learn skills and take responsibility for their own bedrooms. The Canopy used brokerage to purchase the children beds and chests of drawers for the children's bedrooms. One of the children identified that she would like somewhere to do her homework so a desk and chair was purchased as well.

The family have engaged with a drug treatment program and are waiting on the Whole Family Team to process a referral for the parents to address their addictions, which will work well in conjunction with the support provided through IFP. This is the first time that this family have actively engaged with any support services to assist them with their parenting.

## FACILITY MANAGEMENT

Both the casual and permanent hires of the community centre have continued to increase with twenty one permanent hirers over the last financial year for an average of 20 permanent hire sessions per week. Further details about usage of the centre by permanent hirers is attached.

In addition we were received 92 casual hirer bookings with monthly usage rising around 30% from an average of 37 hours per month in 2012-13 to 48 hours per month in 2013-14. We are seeing a greater diversity in the communities booking the rooms on a casual basis with our regular usage by the Indian Association being joined by bookings by the Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Kenyan and Muslim Associations as well.

The 2013-14 year saw a number of larger bookings of interest and not only did we host the Higher School Certificate exams for West Wallsend High School but also acted as a Federal Election Polling Place, a Lake Macquarie Community Corrections morning tea for supervisory agencies and Yakka Day which was an opportunity for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island young people to try career related skills and learn more about different occupations.

Lake Macquarie City Council completed the refinishing of the timber flooring in Activity Rooms 1, 2 and 4 in late December 2013 and early January 2014. This was the only time of the year that this was able to take place due to the intensity of permanent bookings and, specifically, the daily bookings by the OOSH. We have been advised that the product that the flooring was finished with is highly durable and is fit for the usage of the space. Over the six months following the work we have monitored the condition of the flooring and are satisfied that it is not deteriorating as it was previously.



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The focus of all community development activities at the centre is linking of local residents with the community centre, with each other and with other services within the area. I believe that we are fulfilling this aim as evidenced not only by the increase in levels of engagement and participation but also by direct feedback from residents.

The Multicultural Food and Cooking Group, which commenced in April 2013, has continued to run on a monthly basis with the exception of January 2014. The structure of the group has remained unchanged with a community member or group providing an interactive cooking demonstration featuring a particular culture's food. One of the centre's volunteers has been co-facilitating the group and one of our other volunteers has been providing childcare for the group.

Featured cultural food over this time period has included Thai, Russian, Ethiopian, Indian, Pakistani and an end of year celebration was held in December where group members each brought a plate to share. In August of 2013 I was invited to Domain Macquarie Place to speak to the residents about the group as part of Multicultural Day celebrations that they were holding. Following on from this a group of ten residents plus carers have joined the group as of March 2014 and either watch the demonstration, assist with preparation or simply enjoy the lunch dependent on their interest and mobility. Other services that have engaged with the group have included AbilityLinks, Wallsend Community Health and Northern Settlement Services.



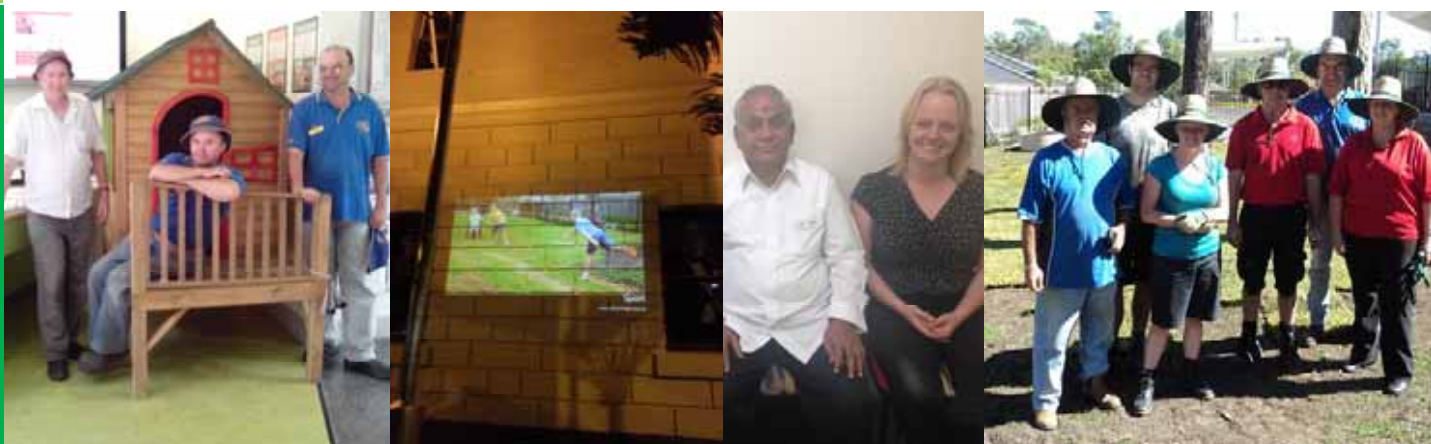
The community centre held a stall at the Northlakes Estate Open Day in August 2013 and used the opportunity to engage with local residents, meet future residents and distribute our New Residents kits. The Open Day was attended by a number of other community services, including the Cameron Park Rural Fire Brigade, and was attended by approximately 150 people.

The Cameron Park Pacers wrapped up in December 2013 due to decreased interest in the group however after renewed interest a community run group has restarted in its place.

In January of 2014 we were presented with the opportunity of being involved with the Newcastle City Council project called City Evolutions. This involved the collation of images which represented Summer in the Lake Macquarie area which were then projected onto buildings in Newcastle's CBD. We were the only group who focussed on Lake Macquarie and were extremely proud to have had this opportunity to represent our local community.

## STAFF AND VOLUNTEER SUPERVISION

Over the course of the year we were able to offer two new temporary positions through Axis Injury Management's Job Placement Program and I have provided supervision to both. Our General Assistant



commenced in September of 2013 with the role involving cleaning and maintenance of the community centre in addition to liaison with contractors and reporting of issues to Lake Macquarie City Council as appropriate.

Our Community Café worker commenced in January of 2014 and this role involves the day to day running of the Community Spot Café, procurement of items for the café, development of recordkeeping processes for the café and co-supervision of volunteers who are wishing to assist with the café.

I both recruited and supervised a total of nineteen volunteers over the 2013-14 financial year and of these twelve volunteered in an administration capacity, three as gardeners, two as child carers and one each as café assistant and computer tutor. As of the end of the financial year there were fourteen regular volunteers who had been volunteering at the community centre for as long as twenty months.

We had a voluntary retention rate of 74% over the financial year. Of those who left one did so as they had gained full time employment, three due to changed personal commitments and one due to moving out of the area.



In addition to this we also hosted Tax Help which is run by volunteers who have been trained by the ATO. Tax Help appointments were held on Mondays and Fridays and community centre volunteers were responsible for making the appointments, confirming them prior to the date and contacting the Tax Help volunteer to let them know of the bookings.

Management of the volunteer team involves initially interviewing volunteers, matching individuals with roles according to their skills and interests, rostering, supervision, development of support materials such as manuals and provision of on the job training. The skills of our volunteers have continued to broaden and develop over time and we are now in a position where the team have demonstrated that when required they are able to run the day to day operations of the community centre with minimal preplanning and support.

I organised an afternoon tea to celebrate National Volunteer Week on Tuesday May 13<sup>th</sup> in collaboration with a fourth year Social Work student on placement at the time. The day was designed to celebrate the substantial contribution that volunteers make to our organisation and our community more broadly. As well as the afternoon tea it featured a guest speech by a representative from Pat Conroy's office, presentation of all volunteers with a Certificate of Appreciation and National Volunteer Week badge, communication games and the launch of the volunteers board which recognised specific strengths of our volunteer team.

Our voluntary staff joined paid staff for the organisation's Christmas Party in December of 2013 and this was a further opportunity to thank them for their contribution and give back to them.



## HIGHLIGHTS

Over the year a number of positive relationships have been developed and built upon with local community groups. Our relationship with the Cameron Park Rural Fire Brigade (RFB) has stood out as being an extremely positive partnership. In addition to the community centre providing support to the 2013 fundraising day that the Cameron Park RFB held for a local family we worked together to sell candles at Carols by Candlelight and have since commenced planning of the inaugural Cameron Park Family Fun Day to be held at the community centre. The Cameron Park RFB have supported us previously in other community activities and I am looking forward to working further with them on other projects in the future.

In addition to the positive relationships being built with community groups the relationships with individual community members are also continuing to grow. We are now in a position where the majority of the voluntary staff at the community centre live either in Cameron Park or surrounding suburbs and although we continue to receive referrals from the Hunter Volunteer Centre we are increasingly receiving enquiries directly from local community members. As well as assisting us to further understand our local community this is also helping to build deeper connections and increase community participation within the Cameron Park area.

## ROOM 1

### Northlakes Christian Church

Sundays 52 sessions, average 50 attendees.

### Northlakes Christian Church Youth Group

Fridays during school term. 43 sessions, average 20 attendees.

### Ready Steady Go Kids

Tuesdays and Thursdays during school term. 42 sessions, average 4 attendees.

### Cameron Park Community OOSH & Vacation

Care Monday – Friday each week 448 sessions, average 83 attendees.

### Cameron Park Fellowship

Second Saturday of each month 3 sessions.

### Casual Hirers

Various days and times, 39 sessions, various numbers of attendees.

## ROOM 2

### Bunn Patchwork

Mondays, 47 sessions, average 8 attendees.

### Cameron Park Mixed Probus

Wednesdays monthly 10 sessions, average 45 attendees.

### Montgomery Homes

Wednesdays casually 1 session, average 12 attendees.

### Indian Dance Lessons

Tuesdays, Saturdays and Sundays during school term. 20 sessions, average 5 attendees.

### ADHD Support Group

Wednesdays 5 sessions, average 8 attendees.

### Tippie Toes School of Dance

Tuesdays during school term. 29 sessions, average 5 attendees.

### Back to Balance Yoga

Wednesdays 16 sessions, average 10 attendees.

### Casual Hirers

Various days and times. 40 sessions, various numbers of attendees.

## ROOM 3

### Cameron Park Community Association

Wednesdays monthly 9 sessions, average 9 per meeting

### Jobquest

Thursdays during school term. 20 sessions, 10 attendees.

### Band Practice

Fridays casually 15 sessions, 4 attendees.

### The Smith Family

Fridays casually 4 sessions.

### Goodstart Early Learning

Wednesdays casually 9 sessions, 13-25 attendees.

### Northlakes Christian Church

Sundays 52 sessions, average 8 attendees.

### Cameron Park Fellowship

Second Saturday of each month 3 sessions.

### Casual Hirers

Various days and times. 9 sessions, various numbers of attendees.

## ROOM 4

### Cameron Park Christian Church

Sundays 52 sessions, average 12 attendees.

### Mini Munchkins Playgroup

Mondays and Fridays during school term. 89 sessions

### Hunter Christian Fellowship

Wednesdays 7 sessions

### Northlakes Salvation Army

Second and fourth Tuesdays of each month. 4 sessions.

### Indian Dance Lessons

Wednesdays and Fridays casually during school term. 17 sessions, average 5 attendees.

### Cameron Park Community OOSH & Vacation Care

Monday – Friday each week.. 13 sessions, average 83 attendees.

### Casual Hirers

Various days and times. 18 sessions, various numbers of attendees.

# COMMUNICATIONS AND SPECIAL PROJECTS REPORT

This year the position of Communications and Special Projects Coordinator has involved working closely with members of the management team to ensure all services of the organisation are adequately promoted; to establish key communication strategies between the organisation and the community; to develop responses to community needs by way of initiating projects and to explore ways to fund prospective services.

The following is a summary of key achievements in Communications and Special Projects:

## MARKETING PLANS

From a marketing perspective, The Canopy has 3 distinct service types within its operations: Child and Family Services; Community Development and Venue Hire. Each section has its own unique marketing needs. An overall marketing plan is in place for each “section” so that it is clear what aspects of service need to be promoted, and what strategies need to be implemented.

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	VENUE HIRE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information and referral</li> <li>Parenting Programs</li> <li>Supported Playgroup</li> <li>Intensive Family Support and Preservation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Centre as a “Hub”</li> <li>Community Programs</li> <li>Community Initiatives</li> <li>Regional Initiatives and Collaborations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable space for community groups</li> <li>Corporate conference space</li> <li>Special events</li> </ul>

In developing the marketing plan, all Canopy Teams were consulted and The Canopy’s overall vision and values have been maintained. *“Providing safe and welcoming environments for families, children and communities to grow”*

## NEWSLETTERS

The Canopy Cameron Park Newsletter has developed into a quarterly edition with key Centre and community news. Local MP Pat Conroy has supported this venture by assisting with photocopying, allowing our content and distribution to grow.



## POSTERS AND OTHER COLLATERAL

Many posters and other collateral items were created over the year for the teams at the Canopy including reward charts, to hand out at events, program posters, event posters and revised brochures for services such as Child & Family Services, and the New Residents Brochure.



# COMMUNICATIONS AND SPECIAL PROJECTS REPORT



## 25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

To celebrate 25 years of supporting families it was decided to hold an event that involved other organisations in the community who provide family services. This project was organised in conjunction with 2 social work students from University of Newcastle and besides celebrating the achievements of the organisation over a 25 year period achieved the following outcomes:

Spread awareness of services among other organisations and community members; engaged with the community using an unconventional approach; showcased the focus and interests of the organisation; celebrated users of the service and the organisation's work with families; positively modelled relationships and family; promoted social inclusion and diversity; networked with other organisations who are also supporting families in the Lake Macquarie Area.

Janelle Hope was recognised for 25 years service to the organisation.



*This project has been very important as a way of parents, children, siblings and community coming together as family. We have had over 20 participants inclusive of children involved + 5 staff and 4 volunteers.*

Northern Settlement Services

*A lot of our tiles came from donations of staff and families old tiles which also added a special element of family and togetherness. Many wonderful conversations and reminiscing came with our "labour of love",*

Domain Macquarie Place

## FUNDRAISING

A large number of wax candles which were left over from Kidsafe Hunter's fundraising efforts last year were offered to us by Kidsafe Head Office. Partnerships were formed with the Cameron Park Rural Fire Brigade, Lake Macquarie Council and the Newcastle Herald to sell the candles at 2 Carols By Candlelight events. We raised \$10,000 through this venture and gained exposure in the community for The Canopy.

## FUNDING APPLICATIONS

Numerous funding applications were lodged and at this stage only one has been successful—\$4500 was received from Australia Post in September to assist with essential equipment for the cafeteria.

## PROFILES AND POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS

As more requests came in for management and the Family Team to give presentations about the organisation, powerpoints were developed for the Family Team and for a Service Overview. A Summary Profile of The Canopy was also developed to be included with packages such as funding applications, sponsorship requests and enquiries from other organisations.



# COMMUNICATIONS AND SPECIAL PROJECTS REPORT

## CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

In conjunction with the management team and as a result of community feedback, several project concepts were developed. Some of these have been implemented, some are awaiting funding support:

**Community Resilience Hub Concept** This was developed as a proposed coordinated response to identified community needs in our area, largely related to the rapidly developing nature of the community

**Community Cafe** In conjunction with the Cameron Park Community Centre Venue Coordinator and Sugar Valley Neighbourhood Centre, developed rationale/objectives guidelines and associated marketing materials for the community café.

**Parent Consultancy Concept** This concept was developed to address a gap in services to local families and will be implemented when funds are sourced.



## STUDENT SUPERVISION

3 University of Newcastle social work students and 6 Community Services students were on placement throughout the year and assisted with projects such as the 25th Anniversary, update to the New Resident Brochure, Volunteer Afternoon Tea, update to Volunteer Handbook, and community surveys.

## BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MANUAL

A comprehensive manual was created to ensure all current and new committee members have essential information about the organisation.



## VENUE PROMOTIONS

A collaborative effort between the community centre and M&M Weddings Parties and Event Hire resulted in a day of decorating so that we could promote the various uses of the facilities including weddings, christening and birthdays.

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE

The Canopy had two Facebook pages, one for the community centre and one for child and family services however it was decided this year to amalgamate the two in order to clarify that The Canopy is the governing organisation managing projects such as Cameron Park Community Centre and Child and Family Services. This has worked well to increase numbers of interested people and agencies on the page, although social media is one area we need to focus more on in the future. The websites serve an information base, with Facebook being the dynamic interactive space with options for community input.



# COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND STAFF



## BOARD MEMBERS

*Chairperson:* Susan Jenkins

*Treasurer:* Ray Austin until  
06/03/2014

*Secretary:* Janelle Hope

*Public Officer:* Janelle Hope

*Committee Members:*

Meredith Daniel

Rosemary Heppell

Doreen Herron

Susanne Jenkins

Glen Crisp

Lynda Little until  
06/03/2014

## VOLUNTEERS

Jenny, Helen, Paula, Barry, Mel, Ruth

Vicki, Wayne S, Philece, Tea, Jodie

Raman, Shalini, Sharnie, Anne, Patty

Colleen, Susan , Wayne K.

## STAFF

*Manager:* Lee-Anne Holmes

*Office Manager:* Lisa Standen

*Senior Clinical Practitioner:* Ruth Burke

*Venue Coordinator:* Anna Dowley

*Communications Coordinator:* Veronique Moseley

*Alliance Facilitator:* Nicola Hirschhorn until 26/06/2014

## Family Workers

Marie Incze

Rebecca Buckley until 23/04/2014

Angela Peck-Charlesworth

Alex Sullivan

Lee Wilton started 25/07/2013

Alison Davison until 02/08/2013

Feona Ray started 05/05/2014

Julie McQuire started 02/06/2014

## ANCILLIARY STAFF

Roslyn Hill started 20/01/2014

Michael Billings started 09/09/2013



### FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING JUNE 2014