



# ANNUAL REPORT 2015





## OUR VISION

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

**FAMILIES**

**CHILDREN**

**COMMUNITIES**

## OUR KEY VALUES

**INNOVATION,  
COLLABORATION,  
GROWTH AND  
CHANGE**

**INTEGRITY AND  
PROFESSIONALISM**

**INCLUSIVENESS**

**CONNECTEDNESS  
WITH OUR CLIENTS,  
OUR  
COMMUNITIES AND  
EACH OTHER**

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## AGENDA

### The Canopy Annual General Meeting AGENDA

29th October 2015

1. Welcome
2. Acknowledgement Of Country
3. Attendance
4. Apologies
5. Minutes of 2013- 2014 Annual General Meeting
6. Business Arising from Previous minutes
7. Reports

President's Report

Manager's Report

Team and Project Reports

Finance and Administration Manager

Senior Clinical Practitioner

Child and Family Team

Intensive Family Support / Preservation team

Cameron Park Community Centre Manager

Maryland Neighbourhood Centre Coordinator

Communications and Special Projects Coordinator

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.*





# AGM MINUTES 2014

## MINUTES of the 2013-2014 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING The Canopy Incorporated VENUE: 107 Northlakes Drive, Cameron Park NSW 2285

**DATE:** 30<sup>th</sup> October 2014

**Meeting Commenced:** 11.10am

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

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY** - Susan Jenkins

*"Acknowledgement that the meeting was being held on Awabakal land and paid respects to past and present elders".*

**ATTENDANCE:** Susan Jenkins, Meredith Daniel, Rosemary Heppell, Doreen Herron, Janelle Hope, Matt Crocker, Lee-Anne Holmes, Lisa Standen, Vicki Duffie, Kirsty Porteous, Sally Pontifex, Ruth Burke, Kate Barton, Alex Sullivan, Marie Incze, Lee Wilton, Angela Peck-Charlesworth, Jackie Horney, Anna Dowley, Jenny Bridge, Julie McQuire, Bronwyn White, Gay Sumiran, Alex Ross

**Apologies:** Glen Crisp, Andrew Cole, Fiona Cole, Marette Gale, Ann Hoyer, Chris Murphy, Karen Rose, Rob Branham, Shane Reed (with the following feedback provided)

*"I would like again to express the gratitude FACS has for The Canopy and the work the service does. Many families have benefitted from the engagement and work your staff do, from the admin who take the phone calls, to the Child and Family staff and IFP staff who make a difference, to the Senior Managers of Lee-Anne and Ruth who have collaborated with CS"*

### 1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the 2012-2013 Annual General Meeting were tabled.

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

**Moved:** Doreen Herron                      **Seconded:** Janelle Hope

### 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:

- a. President's Report – Susan Jenkins
- b. Manager's Report – Lee-Anne Holmes
- c. Senior Clinical Practitioner Report – Ruth Burke
- d. Child & Family Team Report – Lee Wilton
- e. Intensive Family Support Reports – Alex Sullivan
- f. Marketing and Special Projects Report – Ronnie Moseley
- g. Cameron Park Community Centre Report – Anna Dowley
- h. Office Manager – Lisa Standen
- i. Auditors Report – Kirsty Porteous (dfk Crosbie)

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

**Moved:** Meredith Daniel                      **Seconded:** Rosemary Heppell





## AGM MINUTES 2014

**THE RETURNING OFFICER:** Sally Pontifex 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	Meredith Daniel	Rosemary Heppell
<b>Vice President</b>	Rosemary Heppell	Susan Jenkins	Doreen Herron
<b>Secretary/Publicity Officer</b>	Janelle Hope	Rosemary Heppell	Doreen Herron
<b>Board Member</b>	Glen Crisp	Susan Jenkins	Meredith Daniel
<b>Board Member</b>	Doreen Herron	Janelle Hope	Rosemary Heppell
<b>Board Member</b>	Meredith Daniel	Susan Jenkins	Janelle Hope
<b>Board Member</b>	Matthew Crocker	Susan Jenkins	Meredith Daniel

The Returning Officer handed the meeting over to the incoming President.

### GENERAL BUSINESS

Appointment of Auditor

**Motion:** Kirsty Porteous from dfk Crosbie as the appointed Auditor

**Moved:** Meredith Daniel      **Seconded:** Doreen Herron

**The meeting was declared closed at:** 11.46am





## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2015 has been my second serving year as President of the Canopy incorporating the Cameron Park Community Centre. In the last twelve months the Canopy took the opportunity to focus on embedding our significantly expanded programs following the rapid growth of the organisation. This has included the relocation of our Child and Family Team Services to Cardiff and the amalgamation and management of The Maryland Community Centre. A key aspect of this growth stage has been the continued focus on the delivery of innovative, evidence based services to the families, children and communities we continue to assist.

Our continued ability to have a strong social impact in our community and to make a real difference in the lives of children, families and communities relies heavily on the very professional staff, volunteers and partners of our organisation. We look forward to continuing these relationships in the future.

The Board of the Canopy has worked hard to achieve outcomes in 2015 as the pressures of guidance, support and governance to Community organisations continues to put huge demands on volunteer members. I would like to thank my peers for everything you give to myself and to our organisation without complaint. The development of our Strategic Plan is an exciting, but challenging time ahead for us.

The Executive Officer, Lee-Anne Holmes very capably leads a dynamic team of management staff, who in turn lead staff, volunteers and supporters, a very big thank you, the success of the organisation is a credit to you all.

The Canopy continues 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 President**

## EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

During the past year The Canopy has yet again experienced growth and change in line with the vision and strategic plans set down by the board of management. This year the changes have meant that the organisation has a presence in and operates from three separate sites:

⇒ *Maryland Neighbourhood Centre*

Family and Community Services approved the transfer of auspice of the Maryland Neighbourhood Hub and Child and Family Worker positions From the Maryland Activities Group Inc to The Canopy. The new arrangements commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015. Under an interim agreement with Newcastle City Council The Canopy employs the Bookings Officer to take hall hire bookings.

⇒ *Cardiff Child and Family Centre*

A number of factors influenced the move from Cameron Park to Cardiff for the family work team. The growth of the team meant that the Cameron Park premises were no longer able to accommodate the team adequately. In addition the team had expressed a desire for premises that could be set up for families with children in a suitable location with good access to public transport. After some time the current location (the old Cardiff library) was located. The new location has meant that the service has a visible main street presence in a central location with good access to trains and buses. In the new location families drop in to the centre to access services and/or see workers.

⇒ *Cameron Park Community Centre*

The Finance and Administration Manager, Cameron Park Community Centre Manager, Communications and Special Projects Coordinator and myself are based at Cameron Park along with the General Assistant, Community Café Worker, students and volunteers.



### CHALLENGES AND CHANGE

With operations across three sites, the major challenge has been to ensure the development of resources, systems and communications strategies to maintain organisational cohesiveness and consistency across the sites, while also maintaining the individuality and strengths of each team. This has required, and will continue to require effort, patience and cooperation from all staff.

To enable electronic communication, a terminal server has been installed that links the sites and provides access to a central point for data. Phone systems have been trialled and revised along the way to get the best results possible with the current telecommunications infrastructure.

Administrative processes and a number of other systems and policies have been reviewed and standardised to meet the needs of the changing environments. I would like to acknowledge the challenges and frustrations that some of the changes have presented to staff as they have continued to meet the demands of their individual roles. I would also like to commend each of the members of the leadership team for their active participation and commitment to find ways to resolve the subsequent issues. That we have been able to move forward is a strong indicator of a well functioning and professional group of people with a clear vision.



## EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

I would like to thank the board for their participation throughout the year especially in the drafting of a new strategic plan and vision statement for the organisation. Over the coming year the sector will embark on a process of reform of the service system including service models, the way in which funding occurs, and the organisations that will subsequently be funded to provide those services. The strategic planning and visioning occurred within this context with a view to the organisation being in the best possible position through the reforms. The key drivers for the strategic plan are:

- ⇒ Build collaborative strategic partnerships that sustain but also provide growth opportunities
- ⇒ Strategically pursue funding streams for growth and sustainability
- ⇒ Sustain but also further develop a dynamic, focused, collaborative work environment
- ⇒ Promote and lead the best practice within family and community work in the local sector
- ⇒ Retain and enhance community connections and thus, remain a focused grass roots organisation
- ⇒ Lead the sector in embedding change and are at the forefront of influencing change
- ⇒ Quality work supported by quality systems and meaning, and useable qualitative data
- ⇒ Strategically market and promote organisational business

I would especially like to thank Susan, Glenn and Rosemary for their ongoing support through the MAGI transition process.

Our strategic partnerships and collaborative work with other organisations have continued to increase this year.

Notably we have entered into agreements with Family and Community Services and NOVA to provide staff members with specific expertise to provide services on a fee for service basis. This has meant that staff members have been able to work in roles that provide ongoing professional and skills development and to have the opportunity to be at the cutting edge of developing new ways of working collaboratively.

As I look forward to the coming year and the challenges that the reforms will bring, it is of

great significance that The Canopy has developed a very good reputation for its family work, its community development work and for providing leadership in the development of collaborative partnerships based on respect and integrity. Along with strong governance these factors will mean that The Canopy is in the best possible position through the reforms.

**LEE-ANNE HOLMES Executive Officer**



## FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION MANAGER'S REPORT

With continued growth of the services provided by The Canopy, including the formal amalgamation with Maryland Activities Group (Maryland Neighbourhood Centre) and the relocation of the Child and Family Services to more central premises in Cardiff, the position title of Office Manager has been reviewed and is now more appropriately referred to as Finance and Administration Manager.

The expansion of services across 3 locations posed a new set of challenges, affecting systems and procedures for a variety of administrative processes such as staff wages, brokerage, recruitment and induction procedures and insurances. Additionally, as staff numbers, venue bookings and the number of programs across the sites increase, the role of Finance and Administration Manager is becoming increasingly busy and complex.

This challenge has also in part been assisted by a review of the purpose of the Management Team, now called the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team conducts regular and structured meeting times to provide a forum for senior members of the organisation to discuss aspects of operational logistics such as policy changes, staff morale, training requirements and brokerage processes. This has assisted in initiating required changes in a more streamlined manner across the organisation and ensures adherence to the Board's strategic direction.

My tasks over the year have included:

- ◇ Active part of the Leadership Team
- ◇ Accounts payable
- ◇ Accounts receivable
- ◇ Bank reconciliation (multiple accounts)
- ◇ Monthly reconciliation of general ledger accounts
- ◇ Preparation of monthly and periodic financial reports for review by Board of Management and Executive Officer
- ◇ Monthly BAS preparation and reconciliation
- ◇ Payroll for all sections, including time sheets and all human resources enquiries
- ◇ Assistance with recruitment
- ◇ Calculate and invoice permanent hirer charge
- ◇ Process payments for permanent hire and casual hall hire
- ◇ Reconciliation of Cameron Park and Maryland holding bond accounts
- ◇ 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 2014-2015 has once again been an extremely busy and challenging time from an administrative perspective, on reflection I view the organisation, the dedicated team and all of the past years achievements with a sense of pride and accomplishment.

**LISA STANDEN Finance and Administration Manager**

## COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL PROJECTS REPORT

This year the position of Communications and Special Projects Coordinator has been particularly challenging with the growth of the organisation requiring development of new and updated versions of marketing material, review of the marketing plan, and a review of websites to ensure all services are in alignment in terms of branding and values. The position has involved working as part of the leadership 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:

### OVERALL MARKETING

From a marketing perspective, the challenge has been to consistently ensure that The Canopy is presented as one entity which manages an increasing number of services from various venues.

The organisation continues to have 3 distinct service types within its operations: Child and Family Services, Community Development and Venue Hire but now has 3 locations of operation. 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.

A short marketing guide was developed this year for staff as part of a presentation to improve understanding of marketing as an integral part of the organisation’s business practices.



#### CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

BASED IN  
CARDIFF AND MARYLAND

- Information and referral
- Parenting Programs
- Supported Playgroup
- Intensive Family Support and Preservation



#### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ACROSS ALL CANOPY  
SERVICES INCLUDING SMALL  
PROJECTS

- Community Centres as a “Hub”
- Community Programs
- Community Initiatives
- Regional Initiatives and Collaborations



#### VENUE HIRE

CAMERON PARK  
COMMUNITY CENTRE  
  
MARYLAND  
NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

- Affordable space for community groups
- Corporate conference space
- Special events

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

### MARYLAND MARKETING

With the amalgamation of Maryland Neighbourhood Centre, work has started on incorporating this service into The Canopy’s overall marketing plan. This will mean a revision of all marketing material such as brochures, flyers, letterheads etc to fit into The Canopy branding guidelines and to ensure Maryland Neighbourhood Centre is identified as a project of The Canopy. Additionally, a marketing plan will be developed specifically for Maryland Neighbourhood Centre’s programs and venue hire.



# COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL PROJECTS REPORT

## NEWSLETTERS

The Canopy Cameron Park Newsletter is continuing to be published quarterly, and is growing in content and distribution. Copies are now letterbox dropped throughout different parts of Cameron Park every issue, in addition to pick up points around Cardiff, Glendale and Maryland. Local MP Pat Conroy has supported this venture by assisting with photocopying, allowing our content and distribution to grow. Regular advertisers are assisting in covering some of the costs associated with the printing and distribution, and this is an area we will endeavour to increase in the next year. With the inclusion of Maryland Neighbourhood Centre, we will also be assessing the possibility of having the newsletter professionally printed.



## NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME



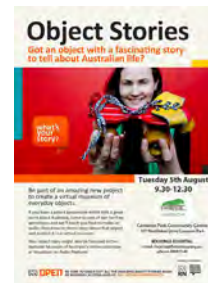
In July, an application was lodged with National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) for the Canopy to be registered as a provider under this scheme. This was a lengthy process with our application providing evidence of capacity for 7 clusters. In the initial phase we were approved for 1 cluster—*Early Intervention Supports for Early Childhood* with more information requested prior to approval for any others. Unfortunately a lengthy delay followed as we needed an Auskey to proceed. With assistance from the auditors, this process took nearly 12 months. The NDIS situation is therefore currently still in progress.

## ABC OPEN OBJECT STORIES WORKSHOP

In August The Canopy partnered with ABC Open to give locals the opportunity to talk about objects



which tell a story about Australian life. Anthony Scully facilitated the workshop, encouraging participants to tell their stories and explaining ways in which they could get stories published. ABCOpen is collecting stories for a virtual museum.



## INTERNATIONAL CHILDRENS GAMES AND CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT



This year Lake Macquarie Council combined Carols by Candlelight with the International Children's Games. We partnered with Cameron Park Rural Fire Brigades selling battery operated candles, badges and soft drinks. Unfortunately, the rain closed proceedings early and we were left with quite a lot of unsold candles which we will hopefully sell at this year's Carols by Candlelight.



# COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL PROJECTS REPORT

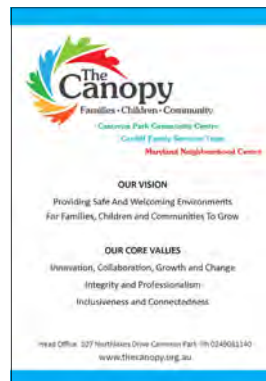
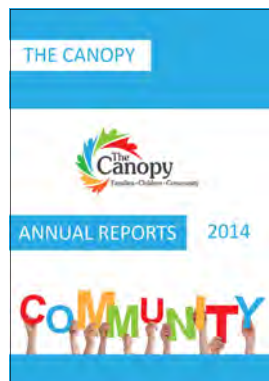
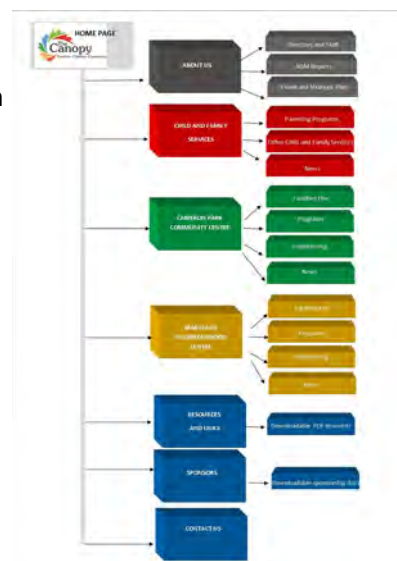
## ONLINE PRESENCE

With the amalgamation of Maryland, we have had to review our online presence . With 3 websites running at once this was not only cost prohibitive, but confusing to the public. SOS have been contracted to build the new website incorporating booking systems for both Cameron Park and Maryland venues.

Last year we amalgamated the 2 facebook pages to just one. This has worked well to increase numbers of visitors to the site, however this page is quite focussed on Cameron Park residents, so it will be more practical for Maryland Neighbourhood Centre to maintain their current facebook site.

## POSTERS, BROCHURES, FLYERS

There have been a variety of flyers, brochures and documents created over the year for all aspects of the organisation including those shown below.



## GRANT AND FUNDING APPLICATIONS

Grant applications have included a number of concepts including one for a family program around basic core skills for families. An opportunity arose for us to submit a “creative entry” to the Foundation for Regional and Rural Renewal. This was done in a powerpoint slideshow complete with music, which fortunately gained the attention of the panel. In January we were informed that we were successful with our application and received an Innovation and Community Impact grant to develop the program and deliver and evaluate 8 pilot sessions in the Lake Macquarie region.

To date most of the background work has been done for the development of the program including surveys, rationale and a basic outline of the session. Felicity Cross, a final year MSW student on placement from Charles Sturt University is assisting with the development phase. It is anticipated that the delivery phase will be in collaboration with Child and Family Services. The aim of these short sessions is to introduce families with 0-12 year old children to some of the core family life skills. We have divided “core life skills” into three sections: mental health, relationships and household budgeting. The final part of each session will promote parenting programs as a valuable free resource for families in the Lake Macquarie region.


**VERONIQUE MOSELEY Communications and Special Projects Coordinator**



# CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES



## REPORTS




## SENIOR CLINICAL PRACTITIONER'S REPORT

Over the past 12 months, there have been a number of changes within the family work team that have continued to compliment our high quality of service provision to families.

In November 2014, the Family Work team relocated to Main Rd, Cardiff. This was primarily to accommodate the expanding team and provide a suitable location for families in need of support to drop in. Due to this move, the profile of the family work team has continued to grow, with a significant increase in 'drop-in's, agency and self referrals. The Signs of Safety Framework continues to be a very successful way of working with children and families and has been firmly embedded into the daily practice of the team. It continues to be a very empowering and supportive process for children and families, especially when addressing child protection concerns. This has also transferred across to individual supervision and family work meetings.

The family work team has continued developing and consolidating our expertise in child protection and trauma informed practice. Historically, the C & F and IFP/S programs were separate in the allocation of staff, with a clear delineation of role expectations. However, over time, this has evolved with more cross over of roles for individual staff and joint work. This has now developed into more structured opportunities for individuals to be employed across both programs. This ensured The Canopy was able to meet target numbers in IFP/S and has enabled the program to utilise staff expertise and skills. Having a team approach has assisted in reducing stress or boredom related issues within the team. This has also supported maintaining high quality staff in the team and an increase in staff morale.

The Canopy continues to be highly recognised by Family & Community Services as indicated in the feedback below, and printed throughout these reports.



In my 18 years of working in Child Protection it is rare to find a service that is so adaptable, flexible, committed and focussed on the needs of children and young people as much as Ruth and her team at The Canopy.

*Susan McDermott Manager Casework Edgeworth CSC 2015*

Due to the ongoing professional relationships and high quality family work, The Canopy were approached to take on additional contract work. The first contract was to provide 3 months intensive support to 2 families at significant risk of losing their Housing NSW tenancy, due to issues such as hoarding and squalor, a history of rental arrears and child protection concerns. The following contract is to provide supervisory and mentoring support for staff at NOVA Women's refuges for a 12 month period. This will involve such things as upskilling staff in the Signs of Safety Framework and creating a child development space with the Eastlakes and Westlakes refuges and supporting staff to gain the voice of the children and develop case plans for those residing in the refuges.

The continued cohesion, professionalism, reflective practice by the team and access to relevant training has been the linch pin to providing such a high quality service from the FW team. Our ongoing professional relationships with a variety of external services continues to be valued in meeting the growing complex needs for families in the community.

I would like to thank the team for their ongoing dedication to the children and families that have come through our service in this 12 month period.

Thank you to Alex, Angela, Feona, Julie, Lee, LEEANNE and Marie; your exceptional work is greatly appreciated and never goes unnoticed.

**RUTH BURKE Senior Clinical Practitioner**



## TESTIMONIALS

### CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

#### FEEDBACK FROM FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES MANAGEMENT

The Metro Assessment and Referral Team (MART) work closely with The Canopy to ensure positive outcomes for children and their families. The relationship between MART and The Canopy is strong and this is due to open and effective communication, and constant collaboration between workers.

*Amie Budden | Manager Casework, Metro Assessment and Referral Team (MART), Edgeworth CSC*

Ruth Burke and The Canopy Workers have been involved with Edgeworth Community Services over the last 4 years. In this time we have built a solid relationship between the workers within Community Services and The Canopy enabling open communication and support. Given this Ruth and the workers have developed an in depth understanding of Community Services role within the context of Child Protection and as such the IFP and the Child and Family programs have evolved to meet the needs of Community Services and primarily the needs of the Families in order to reduce risk of harm to children.

I have found the families that have engaged with The Canopy have made change and this is demonstrated via no further reports of the Family to the Child Protection Helpline. In sum risk to children has been addressed and parents have been able to not only make change but maintain this change.

The IFP and Child and Family program have become a crucial part to Children Protection in this area over the last 4 years it has enabled Community Services to respond to more ROSH (risk of significant harm) reports as Caseworkers do not have to try and work intensively with as many families. The workers that I have had the pleasure of working with are all highly experienced, very committed and motivated.

In my 18 years of working in Child Protection it is rare to find a service that is so adaptable, flexible, committed and focussed on the needs of children and young people as much Ruth and her team at The Canopy.

*Susan McDermott, Manager Casework, Edgeworth CSC, August 2015*

#### FEEDBACK FROM DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES CASEWORKERS

What the Canopy means to me is when they accept a referral for one of our families: They work with the family to create change. I have transferred families across that I have not thought this change was possible, but the families have engaged and the change has occurred, thus increasing the safety for the children. There are other families that struggle to engage and Canopy are very good at reporting this lack of engagement back and therefore confirming that the safety of the children has not increased. – Kate

The Canopy Workers are committed to working with our high risk families often when other services are not. This is what we need in Child Protection and The Canopy provide this service. Also the communication between CS and IFP workers is spot on and this has also been feedback from families. - CPCW

In my 10 years as a child protection caseworker I have had the opportunity to work with a number of different service providers to address the safety of children and support of caregivers. For me, The Canopy service provision rates as one of the most effective services that I have had the pleasure to work along side. In my experience of working with The Canopy and its associated services the Intensive Family Preservation Team and Child and Family team I have been able to effectively work with many families with the knowledge that I am supported by a skilled, committed and reliable team. The Canopy have supported my endeavors to keep children safe in their home and have built a strong reputation among Community Services clients as being a desirable service to have working with them. In providing a service The Canopy are professional and approachable and will often be able to work with families in ways that I cannot due to my status as a child protection caseworker with FACS. The Canopy are also prepared to consult with Community Services as their knowledge of further services both local and elsewhere is comprehensive. Their continued presence is an asset to Child Protection and supporting at risk families. –Jen



## CHILD & FAMILY TEAM OVERVIEW

**CARDIFF**  
**INFORMATION AND REFERRALS: 308**  
**HOME VISITS: CARDIFF: 209**  
**OFFICE VISITS: CARDIFF: 111**

**MARYLAND**  
**INFORMATION AND REFERRALS: 81**  
**HOME VISITS: 104**  
**OFFICE VISITS: 4**

### CASE MANAGEMENT COORDINATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND REFERRAL SOURCES

Sugar Valley Neighbourhood Centre, West Wallsend, Cardiff and Edgeworth Public Schools, Lake Macquarie Mental Health, Ability Links, Early Links, Macauley Outreach, Family and Community Services, Mulloombimba, JIRT (Joint Investigation Response Team), NOVA, Family Referral Service (FRS), JHH – Social Work Team, JHH- Maternal Health

### CASE MANAGEMENT TOTAL NUMBER OF FAMILIES :36

FEEDBACK FROM  
GROUP PARTICIPANTS

#### 123 MAGIC

*Everyone that I have had contact with from the Canopy have been so pleasant and very helpful. This is an excellent family based service.*

*Loved it, really makes you stop and think about your own reactions.*

*Feona and Mel were amazing, they made it so easy to talk and throw around different ideas in the group*

*Very non judgemental group with a lot of ideas and respect for each other*

#### CIRCLE OF SECURITY

*Loved this group, can't wait to do more groups like it. I enjoyed coming into the group and learning new things and it has helped really well.*

*the circle of security has helped me to be a better mother and has helped with understanding them (my kids) better.*

### PARTNERSHIPS /COLLABORATIONS

Family Insight, Family Action Centre, CALM, Eastlakes Family Support, Sugar Valley Neighbourhood Centre, Samaritans, Mulloombimba, NOVA women's housing

### NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS WHO COMPLETED PROGRAMS

#### CARDIFF

PATS (Parents As Teachers Playgroup) – 34

COS – Circle of Security – 18

Triple P – 11

123 Magic – 13

Sing n Grow – 22

#### MARYLAND

Parenting Programs- 26

### ABORIGINAL FAMILIES ENGAGED WITH THE SERVICE: 21

#### MAIN PRESENTING CLIENT ISSUES

Child Protection, a significant increase in parents contacting for support where their children have been removed and placed in the out of home care system, 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.

#### STAFF TRAINING

Family Inclusion Network Hunter Forum, Childhood Trauma Conference, Bringing Up Great Kids, Circle of Security, Keeping Children Safe, 123 Magic, Trauma Informed Practice, Safe from the Start, Baby Makes Three, First Aid, Fire Warden Training, Mental Health and Family Law Pathways Seminar

#### PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY EVENTS

Come and Be Loud at Blackbutt & Newcastle, NAIDOC Day, Your Kidding Me Expo, School Forums, Cardiff Halloween Street Fair

FEEDBACK FROM  
GROUP PARTICIPANTS

#### SING N GROW

*Learning new ideas with my son.  
The ball is a great idea – stop and go.*

*I really liked singing and interacting with Roary and involving myself and him in group activities.*

#### TRIPLE P

*It is an excellent way to refocus on how we deal with discipline and turning parenting into a positive experience.*

*Worth going to, to help your kids become resilient, happy adults who can cope with life.*

*A relaxed atmosphere that helps people interact and express different views and ideas on parenting.*

# CHILD AND FAMILY TEAM REPORT

## HIGHLIGHTS

1. Increased collaboration with other agencies and understanding of what different services offer.
2. Increase in profile of The Canopy and community engagement.
3. More visibility and increased accessibility to our service due to location change to Cardiff which offers a welcoming and supportive environment for staff and families. Having a laptop for client use while in the office has enabled staff to separate staff work areas and client areas.
4. Increased number of clients dropping in and office service visits.
5. Increased flexibility around staffing, case loads and allocation of clients between the Cardiff and Maryland programs.
6. Positive staff morale and internal supports that promote a positive work culture.
7. Increased levels of training opportunities which has resulted in best practice case management for our clients and informed knowledge for staff.
8. Increase in the variety of parenting programs offered to the families within our community and new partnerships formed.
9. Staff are able to offer a wide range of evidence based programs due to The Canopy's commitment to high quality training.
10. Themed programs have been a priority for the staff to promote parent/carers participation in the activities of the Parents as Teachers group. While the sessions are currently well attended there are plans to promote the group through schools, welfare agencies and services.
11. Maryland is meeting the annual targets for information and referral and parenting groups having almost doubled departmental requirements.

## CHALLENGES

1. Having access to ongoing up to date resources and training.
2. Continuing to monitor workloads to reduce the risk of staff burnout.

## WISHES

1. A Canopy Family Work bus or more cars with larger passenger capacity to transport our clients.
2. Continued assessment of self care options for staff.
3. Close of service between Christmas and New Year ( this was greatly appreciated last year).
4. Being able to better support families with disabilities and NDIA issues.





## CHILD & FAMILY TEAM CASE STUDY

The Child and Family Team were referred a grandmother who had care of her five grandchildren. Four of the children had been placed in her care by FACS, and another was an informal arrangement made with her son.

The referral had been made by the Learning Support Teacher at the primary school where three of the children were attending. Upon meeting the grandmother and her husband it was apparent that there were multiple issues that were complex in nature that were occurring for this family.

The grandmother had a complex childhood history and was a current disability pensioner. Her husband was her carer although he had some back problems himself. The grandmother had recently been in a road accident in which had resulted in an injury to her head and back and as she was transported to the hospital the ambulance that she was travelling in crashed and rolled, which resulted further injury to her. The grandparents presented as a very caring and united couple and were very keen to engage with our service. Two of her grandchildren had been previously assessed as having a diagnosis which included; Autism, ADD, ODD, Anxiety, Obesity and Foetal Alcohol Syndrome. After speaking with the Learning Support Teacher at the school both children needed additional support in the classroom as their teachers were struggling to cope with some of the behavioural issues the boys were presenting with. When asked why the school could not provide extra support the answer was a consistent "because they do not fall in the category which attracts funding".

### SUPPORTS AND REFERRALS PROVIDED

***Legal aid appointment to access if compensation claim for the grandmother accident was viable.***

OUTCOME: Application to NSW Compensation Lawyers for compensation claim for grandmother. (ongoing)

***Support by the local Men's Shed was offered to the grandfather to assist with yard maintenance, rubbish removal and repairs to fencing.***

OUTCOME: This offer was not accepted by the grandfather, as he saw it as his children's responsibility to assist him in this area.

***Support was offered to assist with the issue of hoarding in the home***

OUTCOME: Initially this was viewed by the grandmother as needed, however, she later expressed that she was not ready to deal with the issue.

***Accessing after school and vacation care with local OOSH service for respite for grandparents and social interaction for children***

OUTCOME: Children attending as needed.

***Accessing financial assistance with long standing telephone debt incurred by their daughter. Accessing material aid with Salvation Army over Christmas period***

OUTCOME: referral to local financial counselling service and contacts established with aid agencies. (ongoing)

***Applications for NDIS support for her two grandsons ; Application for NDIS support for home cleaning, respite and yard help for grandparents***

OUTCOME: Referrals made with Early links and Ability links for grandsons to access funding for learning support at school, Occupational Therapy and Behaviour Therapies and supports etc. (ongoing). Referral made with NDIS engagement team in Newcastle; Jane Tumeth to support NDIS application and package guidance for grandmother. (ongoing. ) Referral to psychologist for counselling to support for grandmother to assist in treating trauma from accident and issues associated with depression from her past history of childhood trauma

***Assistance to source support services available for teenage children in their care***

OUTCOME: Local Child and Adolescent Counsellor, Youth Worker, mental health phone numbers provided and parenting courses for adolescent children offered. Information about relevant web sites provided to access information about boundaries on screen times and curfews

***Assistance to create a job/ chores and behaviour reward system chart for children***

OUTCOME: Ongoing.

**At the point of writing this report the family is nearing the end of support with our service.**

# HOUSE of GOOD THINGS

1. The move to the Cardiff office has been an advantage to the IFP/S team. The team is now located more centrally to the client base for home visits and is in an easier and more convenient location for clients to access the office space. We have been able to utilise the counselling room to meet with clients and other services.
2. The IFP/S team are continuing to develop good working relationships with other services in the community including government agencies, non government agencies, health and indigenous services.
3. Our relationship with the local Community Services staff is continuing to work well with a collaborative working relationship between our services.
4. The IFP/S team has successfully engaged with a number of indigenous families this year.
5. The Childhood Trauma Conference was a very valuable learning opportunity. Attendance at the conference enabled us to keep up to date with best practice standards across the field. It was also a positive team building activity for us to share with the Child and Family team.
6. The team have been able to utilise brokerage again this year to support the work that is being done with families. Brokerage has been utilised for a wide range of purposes relevant to individual children's needs. Examples of brokerage use include purchase of children's bedroom furniture, acquisition of birth certificates, purchase of resources such as headlice treatment products and fees for children to participate in after school activities such as soccer.
7. The team designed and implemented a school holiday program for the children involved in the service. The program covered topic areas such as self esteem, feelings, mental health, protective behaviours, friendships and healthy eating. We used structured activities including games, craft, mindfulness and cooking to present the content to the children. We were able to utilise brokerage funds to purchase resources and transport the children to enrich these activities at no cost to the families. The feedback from the children and families was very positive and the children often ask if we are running another group.
8. The concessional Christmas leave that was provided to the staff again this year was much appreciated by all the staff and we felt that it was an acknowledgement of the effort that we put in throughout the year.
9. The Child and Family team have been working closely with the IFP/S team to provide the intensive service to families. Lee has been able to step into an IFP/S worker role in addition to her Child and Family responsibilities to support the team during staff shortages.
10. The newest members of the Family Work team have settled in well, have approached their roles with a positive attitude and brought a range of skills and experience to the team. We are very grateful to have new workers who approach their work with the same values and ethics to the current team.
11. Two workers attended 'My Kids and Me' training to be able to facilitate the program to parents who do not have care of their children.
12. The handyman role at the Cardiff office has been invaluable in supporting the team to be able to focus on family work. Craig's contribution is much appreciated by the whole team

## HOUSE OF WORRIES

1. Server and phone system issues since the Cardiff re-location have resulted in some difficulties meeting deadlines for reports and a heavier than usual reliance on IT support. Staff have circumvented these issues by working offline when possible. SOS are looking into the problem.
2. There have been occasions with staff experiencing threatening and intimidating behaviour from clients. As a result, the Safe Home Visiting policy is being reviewed and topics such as worker safety and self-care are being discussed at Family Work meetings.
3. The relocation to Cardiff was challenging, especially because usual commitments to clients needed to continue. All staff agree however that these temporary difficulties were worthwhile.

## HOUSE OF DREAMS

1. To continue to increase the number of indigenous clients engaged in the service, to access indigenous specific resources and continue to improve staff cultural competence and skills.
2. To continue to pursue training opportunities to stay up to date with best practice standards and provide clients with the best possible service.
3. To review the brokerage system.
4. To continue to run groups like Keeping Children Safe and Me and My Kids that are appropriate for parents who do not have children in their care.



## IFP/SCASE STUDY 1

The IFP/S team were referred a single parent family with one 10 year old child. Community Services had received reports around the child exhibiting inappropriate sexualised and abusive behaviours at school.

After developing a relationship with the family the worker also became aware that there were also issues around lack of appropriate parenting and boundaries, the child co-sleeping with his parent, the child having inappropriate boundaries around personal privacy and issues with the child's health resulting from poor diet and excessive and inappropriate screen time.

The worker utilised the Signs of Safety framework to hear the voice and experience of the child. The worker provided interventions based around protective behaviours with the child and covered areas such as personal privacy, safe and unsafe touching and 'no' feelings and strategies to manage this.

The worker provided emotional and parenting support to the parent to transition the child into sleeping in his own bed. Through the worker's ongoing advocacy through the Department of Education and the local school the child was enrolled into a specialised behaviour school for 4 days per week to support him to better manage his behaviour in the school environment.

The worker successfully advocated for the child to attend an alternative school on the remaining 1 day per week to provide him with an opportunity to attend a school without the stigma and triggers he had experienced at the previous school. The worker arranged for the child to be assessed by a paediatrician who referred the child on to a dietician and occupational therapist.

The worker has focussed a significant amount of the work with the family around educating them around healthier lifestyle choices and supporting the recommendations of the health staff. This has included educating the family around the nutrition and food choices, encouraging physical activity and reducing screen time.

The worker persevered by encouraging the family to attend the Go 4 Fun program which addresses childhood obesity with both child and parent. The worker facilitated family discussions with the wider family network to discuss concerns about the child's safety and wellbeing and support the family to implement the changes.



### FEEDBACK FROM THE ABOVE CASE STUDY

*When the Canopy came to assist my family, my son & I were desperate for help. My son was enrolled at a school where he was constantly bullied, was always in trouble & this made him very anxious & often physically sick, which caused a lot of time off school.*

*Marie became a voice for us to help with the communication problem at the school. She helped us get in contact with services needed. If we needed appointments with specialists Marie would get us in, and then also attend them with us for support.*

*Marie also helped us with getting my son to sleep in his own room. I found this method so effective that I have shared it with other mothers who I know are struggling. She has taught us a more healthy way of life with eating & exercise.*

*My son is now a more confident, happy 10 year old boy. He enjoys going to his new school & has made great new friendships. He participates more in sports & activities. He enjoys going to Happy Dots (Occupational Therapy).*

*I would recommend the Canopy to any family in need of help as they have helped transform & change our lives for the better.*



## IFP/S CASE STUDY 2

The IFP/S team were referred a family with 8 children who had contacted Community Services for support around substance use issues and inadequate housing issues which impacted on their ability to provide appropriate parenting for the children.

In partnership with Community Services, advocacy was provided to the housing provider which resulted in the family being re-housed twice for similar issues around unsafe and inadequate housing.

The IFP worker provided practical and emotional support to the family during this process which resulted in the family being housed into a suitable and safe home.

The worker supported the family to utilise the Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service to challenge a large bill they incurred through the Tenancy Tribunal which resulted favourably for the family.

Brokerage was utilised to buy the family essential furniture items necessary for the children's rooms such as chest of drawers and tallboys for clothing storage.

The father has struggled with long term use of amphetamines and marijuana which has resulted in conflict in the home and a reduced parenting capacity for both parents. The father has been supported by IFP to attend a detox facility and a referral was made to a specialist drug and alcohol service for parents. Unfortunately both of these interventions were complicated by the father's ongoing physical health issues and difficulties with communication and the family disengaged from both services.

The family have remained engaged with the IFP worker around these issues and have expressed that they remain committed to working on addressing the substance use. The father has significantly reduced his drug use and through ongoing support and conversations with the worker has gained insight into the effects of his drug use on the children and expressed willingness to attend a detox and rehabilitation program.

Due to these ongoing issues, the family had difficulties attending group parenting programs and through the IFP program the worker was able to deliver parenting programs to the family in their home specifically tailored to the families needs. The worker organised for the preschool age children to attend daycare by being able to access the Special Child Care Benefit through Centrelink.

The family have also begun taking the younger children to the Parents as Teachers playgroup facilitated by the Child and Family team.







# CAMERON PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE



## REPORT



# CAMERON PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE

## HIGHLIGHTS

Each Annual General Meeting report is an opportunity to reflect not just on the year past but also on how it has differed from those preceding. In reflection, the 2014 – 15 highlight for me has been solidifying the growth of Cameron Park Community Centre from being a brand new facility waiting to be tenanted in 2011 to the thriving hub that it is today. When walking through the centre on any given day the place is alive with the sounds of children playing, groups in discussion, bands practicing, coffees being brewed, musical accompaniment to dance practice and more. Even after our office shuts, daily activities continue and a visit on any given evening will mean running into multiple groups who call Cameron Park Community Centre home.

The Cameron Park Community Centre team has also grown and developed over the last few years. I see a sense of camaraderie as well as pride both in the centre and in the common aim that we all share of facilitating the use by the community of the centre as best we can. Although the team is a mix of paid and voluntary staff within highly varied positions, problem solving and brainstorming happens organically including staff across the board with individual knowledge and skills shared to 'get the job done'. It is exciting to work in this collaborative and energetic environment. The ownership of the centre that we see from the local community indicates to me that we continue to travel on the right path and I look forward to further growth in the years to come.

*With respect to your organisation that operates and runs the Community Centre at Cameron Park, we wish to acknowledge the services that you have provided to our local community. Ever since you were initially introduced to myself and Tim Yates by Lake Macquarie City Council as a contender group, we have appreciated that The Canopy have run the centre with the utmost professionalism and competence and the community have enjoyed the management that you and your team provides.*

*Given the tasks that you perform there on a daily basis and the responsibilities that you are faced with, like dealing with children and families on a daily basis, you have carried out your tasks in an exceptional manner. We have never received any negative feedback about your group. I remember that when you were first mentioned as a possible candidate for the tender process to us, we were asked to assess the candidates based on their previous experience and expertise and relevancy for the centre.*

*I can confidently say now, after knowing you all for a number of years that you have never let us down and we are privileged to have been part of that process and we are very grateful that we chose your group. Best wishes for the future and I hope we enjoy many more years under your control.*

*Pat Mitchell, Chairman, Cameron Park Community Association*

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A key highlight in the maturation of Cameron Park Community Centre has been the development of strong relationships with fellow community organisations, local businesses and government organisations. We have long worked in partnership with Cameron Park Rural Fire Brigade and in September of 2014 this resulted in the inaugural Cameron Park Family Fun Day. The family fun day was initiated by Cameron Park Rural Fire Brigade in order to provide a day of family activities for residents of Cameron Park and it was a pleasure working with them to plan the success of the day. It featured a jumping castle, interactive community stalls, a BBQ, face painting, free spray tattoos, a reptile display, performances and static displays. sponsorship for the event to support its growth.





### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT continued

The day was a great success with attendance of 250 people. Following this a community committee was formed to continue the event on an annual basis, increase participation and seek sponsorship for the event's continued growth. Cameron Park Rural Fire Brigade are unfortunately not able to take the lead planning role that they did in 2014 and this year The Canopy are acting as lead agency with myself facilitating meetings as the representative of Cameron Park Community Centre.

The first meeting of the committee was held in April of 2015 with local residents and representatives from Ability Links, Lake Macquarie City Council, Cameron Park Fellowship and Restored Church. In response to feedback it was decided to run the event in the afternoon/evening and as a result it has been reborn as the Cameron Park Twilight Festival. Preliminary planning indicates that it will have a 'village fair' atmosphere with a variety of stalls and activities to appeal to the culturally and demographically diverse community members living in Cameron Park, who have no local meeting point apart from the centre.

I am excited by the prospect of the Cameron Park Twilight Festival being an annual event as I believe that it will allow an opportunity for community members to build social connections, increase awareness of the community groups and services available in the area and foster community pride.

The weekly computer classes have continued throughout school term and rather than following a set program our tutor tailors the content taught to meet the requests of the members of the class. One term was dedicated to learning how to create a photo book and after participants had received their books in print many were shown to centre staff and volunteers, leaving us inspired to create our own.

We were pleased to be able to also offer meditation classes from early in June and look forward to the development of other classes and interest groups in the future.

The Multicultural Food and Cooking Group has continued to be joined by residents from Opal Macquarie Place, our local aged care facility, on a monthly basis. Both the residents and the staff who accompany the visit have provided positive feedback about the lunches and each month the group has a different cultural focus.



### OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE COMMUNITY TO MEET LOCAL MEMBERS

We have had the pleasure of hosting community consultation days held by both our State Member of Parliament, Clayton Barr, and Federal Member of Parliament, Pat Conroy. Clayton Barr served up a 'Barr-beque' at the centre on Monday 20th October 2014 which was an opportunity for local residents to both meet him and chat about issues that they may have had. Clayton also joined Pat Conroy for a post Budget morning tea on Monday 18th May 2015 which was attended by around 50 local residents. We appreciate the support that both Pat and Clayton have provided to Cameron Park Community Centre and The Canopy more broadly.

## STAFF AND VOLUNTEER SUPERVISION

Throughout the year we were joined both by new Axis Injury management Job Placements and new volunteers. Our General Assistant position has continued and is a great asset as this not only provides cleaning and maintenance services but more general management of the logistics involved with running the building and broader maintenance facilitation. In September of 2014 we were excited to add the Administration Assistant position with this worker acting as my 'right hand man' and sharing the management of room hire bookings, writing grants for potential projects and putting

together a document management system for the organisation broadly. The added support brought by this position, not just in terms of facility management but also with community development projects, has been more valuable than I had expected and has allowed for more streamlined management of the workload.

Our Community Café worker completed her placement in January of 2015 and following this we commenced liaison with Axis Injury Management for recruitment of a new worker in this position. By this time four regular volunteers were also working in the café and they brought with them extensive experience not only in food preparation and service in a commercial environment but also management of restaurants. The introduction of volunteers within the Community Café environment has allowed for it to grow.

We hosted Tax Help again in 2014 which is managed by the Australian Tax Office with returns being completed by volunteers who have been trained by the ATO. The serviced had increased patronage compared to in our first year and I am looking forward to it being offered annually. Following completion of Tax Help both of the Tax Help volunteers approached the centre about volunteering in reception and were welcomed to the team.

We had twenty four volunteers within the 2014-15 financial year with fifteen working in administration for Cameron Park Community Centre, five in the Community Café, one providing computer tuition and three assisting with grounds maintenance. Sixty five percent were retained at the end of the period and of those who moved on six did so as they received paid employment, four due to changed personal circumstances and one due to a mutual agreement that the placement was not suitable for their requirements.

The Cameron Park Community Centre volunteer team represent a significant asset to the community centre as their involvement allows us to be directly informed by the local community on how best to meet their needs and wishes. Although we recruit for specific roles these are sufficiently flexible that individual strengths, interests and areas of interest for improvement are taken into consideration to provide as meaningful an experience for each individual as possible. I value opportunities to provide thanks to our volunteer team for their vast contribution to continued growth of the centre and look forward to continuing to work alongside the centre's voluntary staff.





## FACILITY MANAGEMENT

We have experienced a 30% growth in permanent bookings in 2014 – 2015 as compared to the previous financial year with an average of 26 permanent hirer bookings per week and 27 permanent hirers. We now host nine church activities on a permanent basis with these including three weekly and one fortnightly service, in addition to a weekly theological college study hub. In addition to the increased usage by churches we have had a diversification of activities provided at the centre in comparison to previous years with these including cooking classes for people with a disability, remote control drift car racing, personal counselling and offsite activities of the Lake Macquarie Adolescent Support Unit. Further information about usage of the centre by permanent hirers can be found in the table on the next page.

Casual bookings have similarly increased with a total of 201 sessions booked either as one off events or multiple sessions held by the one hirer. Although we have not seen a significant change in usage of the centre for private weekend functions we are hosting many more training days and workshops run by other organisations than in previous years. I am not concerned about the lack of change in private weekend function bookings as the increase in permanent bookings has limited the opportunities for growth in this area.

We continue to be regularly booked by Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Kenyan and Muslim community groups. While bookings by these community groups are largely for celebration of important dates we are proud to have hosted



Indian Superchef, run by Vedic Samiti Newcastle, for the previous two years and look forward to hosting it again in 2016. We are also host to a number of other regular community functions and events including the Heartkids Christmas Party, Minmi Public School disco and graduation evening for Cameron Park Early Learning.

Having previously acted as a Federal Election Polling Place we are now also a State Election Polling Place and played host to the State Election on March 27<sup>th</sup> of 2015. The planning for this particular booking required substantial negotiation with hirers whose bookings coincided with this date however all were agreeable to either rescheduling their booking or changing plans for regular bookings so that there were no issues.

I was thrilled to be joined by both Kate Barton and Gavin Dyett in 2014 – 2015 who were referred to us by Axis Injury Management for twelve month placements at the centre. Kate provided invaluable assistance with management of room hires and the timing of her joining my team meant that the increased workload due to the substantial increase in bookings was made manageable. Similarly, Gavin's ability to manage the substantial levels of general maintenance of the building and grounds has meant that I have been able to almost completely hand this over to him and he manages maintenance as required in addition to his general daily duties.

**ANNA DOWLEY** Cameron Park Community Centre Manager



# CAMERON PARK CENTRE USAGE DETAILS

## ROOM 1

### Northlakes Christian Church

Sundays 8am – midday, 52 sessions.

### Northlakes Salvation Army Children's Group

Saturdays monthly 4:30 – 8:30pm, 8 sessions.

### Northlakes Christian Church Youth Group

Fridays during school term, 33 sessions.

### GKR Karate

Thursdays 7:30 – 9:30pm, 13 sessions.

### Cameron Park Community OOSH & Vacation

**Care** Monday – Friday each week. 6:30 – 9am & 3 – 6:30pm during school term, 6am – 6:30pm during school holidays, 457 sessions.

### Restored Church

Thursdays during school term, 9:30 – 11:30am, 9 sessions and Sundays 4-6pm, 21 sessions.

### Cameron Park Fellowship

Second and fourth Saturday of each month 9am – 3pm, 21 sessions.

### Paraquad

Thursdays, variable bookings, 10:30am – 12:30pm, 5 sessions.

### Isagenix

Mondays 7:30 – 9:30pm, 13 sessions.

### Remote Control Drift Car Racing

Tuesdays 7 – 10pm, 22 sessions.

### Casual Hires

Various days and times, 37 sessions.

## ROOM 3

### Restored Church

Sundays 4:30 – 5:30pm, 20 sessions.

### Band Practice

Fridays casually 6 – 10pm, 13 sessions.

### Goodstart Early Learning

Various days 9:30am – 4:30pm, 12 sessions.

### Northlakes Christian Church

Sundays 10:30 – 11:30am, 52 sessions.

### Cameron Park Fellowship

Second and fourth Saturday of each month 11am – 12pm, 19 sessions.

### Casual Hires

Various days and times, 48 sessions.

## ROOM 2

### Bunn Patchwork

Mondays 9:30am – 12:30pm, 44 sessions.

### Cameron Park Mixed Probus

Wednesdays monthly 9:30am – 12:30pm, 11 sessions.

### Cameron Park Mixed Probus Dance Group

Second and third Wednesdays of each month 2 – 3:30pm, 3 sessions.

### Northlakes Salvation Army Mothers Group

First and third Tuesday of each month 9am – 12pm, 11 sessions.

### Remote Control Drift Car Racing

Tuesdays 7 – 10pm, 6 sessions.

### Indian Dance Lessons

Tuesdays 5-6pm during school term, 18 sessions.

### Lake Macquarie Adolescent Support Unit

Thursdays 10:20 – 11:20am during school term, 7 sessions.

### Pentecostals of Newcastle

Sundays 5:30 – 9pm, 32 sessions.

### Goodstart Early Learning

Variable days 9am – 4:30pm, 6 sessions.

### Beyond Body Boot Camp

Variable days and times, 5 sessions.

### Ability Links

Variable days and times, 12 sessions.

### Toogee Tae Kwan Do

Tuesdays and Fridays 5:30 – 7pm, 24 sessions.

### Back to Balance Yoga

Wednesdays 6-8pm, 45 sessions and Saturdays 9:30 – 11:30am, 19 sessions.

### Cameron Park Community

**OOSH & Vacation Care** Variable dates and times, 3 sessions.

### Casual Hires

Various days and times, 73 sessions

## ROOM 4

### Cameron Park Christian Church

Sundays 9:30 – 11:15am, 42 sessions.

### Mini Munchkins Playgroup

Mondays 9:30 – 11:30am and Fridays 10am – 12pm during school term, 87 sessions.

### Hunter Christian Fellowship

Wednesdays 7 – 9pm, 43 sessions.

### Northlakes Salvation Army Mothers Group

First and third Tuesday of each month 9am – 12pm, 16 sessions.

### Indian Dance Lessons

Tuesdays 5-6pm during school term, 23 sessions.

### Beyond Body Boot Camp

Mondays 5:30 – 7pm, 43 sessions.

### Cameron Park Community OOSH &

**Vacation Care** Variable dates and times, 6 sessions.

### Remote Control Drift Car Racing

Tuesdays 7 – 10pm, 2 sessions.

### Goodstart Early Learning

Various days 9:30am – 4:30pm, 1 session.

### Toogee Tae Kwan Do

Tuesdays and Fridays 5:30 – 7pm, 66 sessions.

### GKR Karate

Tuesdays 7:30 – 9:30pm, 13 sessions.

### Casual Hirers

Various days and times, 43 sessions.

## INTERVIEW ROOM

Personal Counselling

Various days and times, 35 sessions.

## GARDEN OFFICE

H100 Training Hub

Thursdays 8am – 6pm, 19 sessions.



# MARYLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE



## REPORT



The following pages summarise some of the highlights at Maryland Neighbourhood Centre in the 2014 to 2015 financial year:

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Maryland Neighbourhood Centre has developed some partnerships that are proving to be beneficial for community members, such as *The Blue Gum Hills Men's Shed* who built our Little Free Library.

*Ability and Early Links* have assisted a few of community members with children's applications for NDIS.

*Head Start*, who have a group of participants that come along once a month and help with weeding and planting in the garden or doing craft activities to decorate and brighten our walls.

*Wallsend Library Services* have supplied us with new adult and children's books for our Little Free Library as well as assisting us with our holiday program.

Maryland Primary and Glendore Schools have also become very involved in the centre, taking an interest in the activities and advertising for us in their school newsletters.

### SECONDBITES FOOD PROGRAM

In June this year, Maryland Neighbourhood Centre along with Coles Fletcher, introduced the SecondBite program redistributing surplus fresh food to community members who are presently facing hard times.

This program compliments the Oz Harvest program that delivers every Monday. Dedicated volunteers collect the food from Coles, Fletcher 3 times a week, it is then sorted and distributed to those community members who have rung in that morning and reserved food to feed their family members.

On occasions, there has been surplus food so this has been delivered to Warlga Ngurra Women's and Children's refuge at Wallsend. Coles has partnered with SecondBite to donate fruit, vegetables and bakery items that are still safe and nutritious to eat. The Centre currently helps to feed between 100 and 150 people each week.



### VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF

The Maryland Neighbourhood Centre has had many comments from users and visitors about how welcome they feel when they come to the Centre. The Centre's small but dedicated group of volunteers help the Centre connect with the community.

They make a real difference to those they come in touch with, showing warmth and understanding at all times. Volunteers assist in the garden, the office, the coffee shop, with specialised group activities and the food distribution program. The volunteers put in approximately 380 hours a month. Maryland Neighbourhood Centre could not function as efficiently as it does without their assistance.

## MARYLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

### THE LITTLE FREE LIBRARY

Maryland Neighbourhood Centre joined a worldwide movement in June this year when it opened its Little Free Library. The Little Free Library was first started in Wisconsin, in 2009, when Ted Bol built a model of a one room schoolhouse as a tribute to his mother, a former school teacher who loved reading. He filled it with books and put it on a post in his front yard. His neighbors and friends loved it. He built several more and gave them away.

A Little Free Library is a “take a book, return a book” free book exchange. In its most basic form, it’s a wooden box of books where anyone may pick up a book or two, or bring a book to share, anyone is welcome to take or exchange a book.

The Little Free Library at the Maryland Neighbourhood Centre itself is a piece of neighborhood art that was lovingly built by our friend Bob through the Blue Gum Hills Men’s Shed. The Little Free Library is located on the world map <http://littlefreelibrary.org/ourmap/> it is worth checking out and seeing how many Little Free Libraries there are throughout Australia and the wider world.

Since the opening of the Little Free Library in June this year we have been delighted by the response, as neighbors stop to browse the selection of books or exchange a book while on their morning walk. The other aspect of the library that amazes us is the number of people who gather and chat at the library or come and visit the centre having seen the or heard of the Little Free Library. There has been an enormous amount of interest in it, with many community members now using the library as a The Little Free Library crosses all ages with children beginning to be some of our most regular uses.



When a child can walk down the street and chose a book, take it home, read it and then return again for another, that child has been given one of the essential tools needed to learn and grow. The Little Free Library has been an effective community engagement tool that takes minimum effort

### HALL HIRE

Maryland neighbourhood centre no longer allows birthday parties to be held on the premises due some disruptive behaviour of guests. There are many other sorts of functions still able to be held, for example there have been many cultural groups hiring the hall and most weekends accommodate private functions.

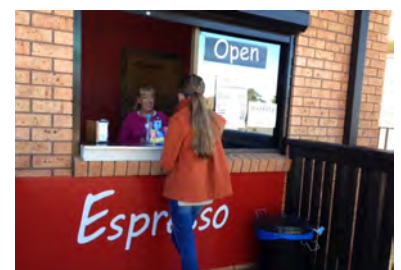
Prime times are permanently booked and many of the permanent hirers have increased their usage .

For example: Healthy Hearts picked up another morning and are averaging 50 attendees each session, Centre Stage and Cloggers have increased their hours and Key Psychology hired the back office for a time to accommodate another psychologist. The Centre, thanks to Lee-Anne and Sherrie’s astute negotiations picked up Gymeroo who are hiring the conference centre hall 4 days a week.

(Please see detailed facility usage statistics over the page)

### COFFEE SHOP

Maryland Neighbourhood centre ran a promotion through May—buy one get one free. This little promotion increased the sales at the coffee shop which have continued to build. People using the centre are staying longer to have coffee with friends however we are also getting more users of the coffee shop off the street.



**MICHELE KOWALSKI** Coordinator & **SHERRIE MACE** Bookings Officer



# MARYLAND FACILITIES USAGE DETAILS

## PRIVATE OFFICE SPACE

### Key Psychology

Permanent – 52 weeks.

### Grace Bible Baptist Church

Permanent - 52 weeks.

### Maryland Physio

Permanent – 52 weeks.

### Advanced Personal Management

7 hours per week x 52 weeks.

### 2Bfit Health Nutrition Personal Training

permanent – 4 weeks.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE MAIN ROOM

### Cloggers

Tuesday evenings Weekly – 51 sessions per year. Average 2-3 attendees.

### Grace Bible Baptist Church

Sundays weekly – 52 Sessions per year. Average 50 attendees.

### Healthy Hearts

3 times weekly. 152 sessions per year. Average 20 attendees.

### Probus

2<sup>nd</sup> Fri monthly – 11 sessions. Average 90 attendees.

### Prostate Cancer Group

2<sup>nd</sup> Tue monthly – 11 session. Average 50 attendees.

### Bollywood Culture Group

Casual. Various Dates. 3 Sessions. Average 100 attendees.

### St Johns Ambulance Cadets

Monday weekly. School Terms. 40 Sessions. Average 20 attendees.

### Toogee Taekwondo

Mon/Wed weekly. 104 sessions. Average 20 attendees.

### Wallsend Physical Culture

Casual. 6 Sessions. Average 12 attendees.

### Tickles Playgroup

Tuesdays weekly. School Terms. 9 sessions. Average 4 attendees.

### GKR Karate

Casual. 4 sessions. Average 20 attendees.

### Hunter Valley Yoga

Saturdays weekly. 12 Sessions. Average 5 attendees.

### Maryland Possums Playgroup

Wednesdays weekly. School terms. 40 Weeks. Average 5 attendees.

### Casual Hirers

Various days and times. 19 Sessions various number of attendees.

## CONFERENCE CENTRE—ACTIVITIES ROOM

### Budgie Club

4<sup>th</sup> Fri monthly – 12 Sessions – average 20 attendees.

### Centrestage Dance

Mon/Tues weekly. School terms. 20 sessions per term. 80 per year. Average 10-15 attendees.

### Korean Church

Casual – 4 sessions. Average 50 attendees,

### Gymbaroo

4 days per week. School terms. 160 sessions per year. Average 50 families attend.

**Casual Hirers** – Various days and times. 25 Sessions various number of attendees.

## CONFERENCE CENTRE SOCIAL ROOM

### Budgie Club

4<sup>th</sup> Fri & 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed monthly – 24 Sessions – average 20 attendees.

### Garden Club

1<sup>st</sup> Wed monthly – 10 sessions – average 15 attendees.

### Grace Bible Baptist Church

Sundays weekly – 52 sessions per year. Average 12 attendees.

### Weight Watchers

4 sessions. Average 5 attendees.

### HUMSUM, Hunter Malayalee Samajam

Casual. Saturday weekly. 4 sessions. Average 6 attendees.

### Meditation Group

Fridays weekly. 3 sessions. Average 3 attendees.

### Casual Hirers

Various days and times. 8 Sessions various number of attendees



# COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND STAFF



## STAFF 2014-2015 FINANCIAL YEAR

### BOARD

*Chairperson:* Susan Jenkins

*Treasurer:* vacant

*Secretary:* Janelle Hope

*Public Officer:* Janelle Hope

*Board Members:*

Meredith Daniel

Rosemary Heppell

Doreen Herron

Glenn Crisp

Matt Crocker

*Executive Officer:* Lee-Anne Holmes

*Finance and Administration Manager:* Lisa Standen

*Senior Clinical Practitioner:* Ruth Burke

*Cameron Park Community Centre Manager:* Anna Dowley

*Communications & Special Projects Coordinator:* Veronique Moseley

*Systems and Funding Development:* Kate Barton

*Child & Family Workers*

Marie Incze (IFS/IFP)

Angela Peck-Charlesworth (C&F, IFS/IFP)

Alex Sullivan (IFS/IFP)

Lee Wilton (C&F)

Julie McQuire (C&F)

Feona Ray (Maryland C&F)

Leeanne Toomey (C&F, IFS/IFP)

*Maryland Neighbourhood Centre Coordinator:* Michele Kowalski

*Maryland Neighbourhood Centre Bookings Officer:* Sherrie Mace

*General Assistants: Past:* Michael Billings, Stephen Hart.

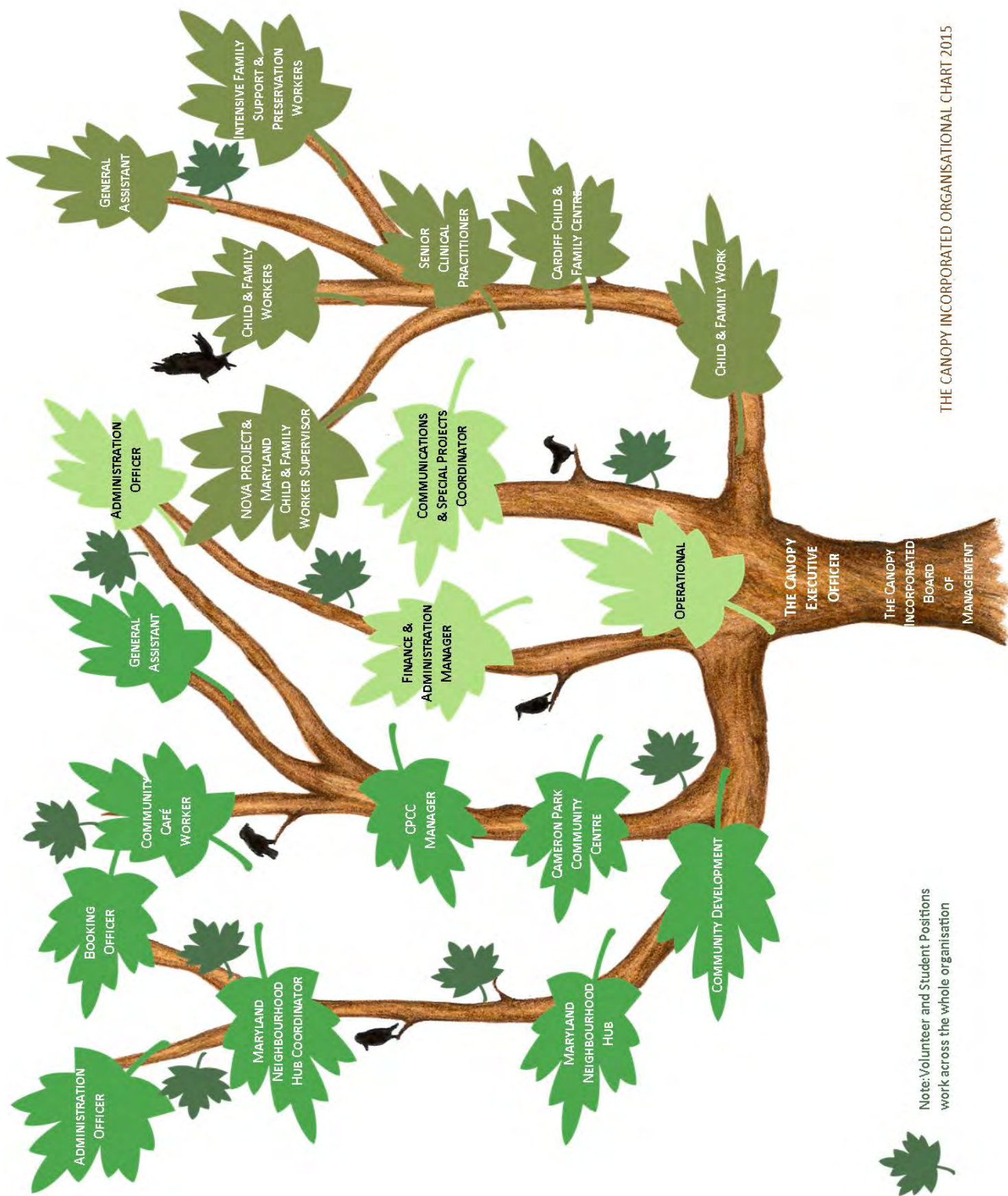
*Current:* Gavin Dyett (Cameron Park) Craig Adams (Cardiff)

*Community Café Worker: Past:* Roslyn Hill *Current:* Heather Johnson

### VOLUNTEERS

Vicki, Wayne, Linda, Jimmy, Bill J, Bill H, Phil, Amy, Rebecca, Krystyna, Matt, Jenny, Trudy, Barry, Brenda, Mel, Beryl, Elizabeth, Jenny, Jeanette, Olivia, Katrina, Carrol and Julie





Note: Volunteer and Student Positions work across the whole organisation

FINANCIAL REPORTS  
JULY 2014 TO JUNE 2015



**FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING JUNE 2015**