



Family Support Newcastle  
*your family, our community*

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

# Family Support Newcastle



Waratah Family Centre  
2 High Street Waratah



68 Orlando Road  
Lambton 2299



PO Box 117  
Lambton NSW 2299



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9am-4pm Monday-Friday



reception@nfss.org.au



www.nfss.org.au



# About Us



Family Support Newcastle (FSN) is a non-government, for purpose, incorporated association that has provided services to families with children in the Lower Hunter Region for just over 40 years. The safety and wellbeing of children and families are at the centre of everything we do.

## VISION

Family Support Newcastle provides services that promote the well-being of children and their families, of individuals, and communities. We often work in partnership with other services to provide more options for the families we support. We are inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from other culturally diverse backgrounds, and those who experience discrimination and disadvantage.

## MISSION

Communities that are just, safe, strong and connected, providing opportunities for *all* families, individuals and children to grow and live well. Communities where history is acknowledged and healing is supported; where diversity and creativity are embraced and encouraged.

## VALUES

 Integrity

 Justice

 Diversity

 Generosity

Our services include:

- Intensive assistance to families where there is serious risk to children
- Counselling and individual assistance in the home, a centre or agreed venue
- Therapeutic group programs with associated child development activities
- Supported playtime activities
- Support to women leaving domestic violence
- Support to men in their fathering role and in their relationships
- Approaches that are informed by research, evidence and best practice

Our services are free, respectful, accessible and accommodating of people with varying levels of ability. Families and staff are given opportunities to engage with the Family Support Newcastle community and to participate in decision making. We strive towards ensuring our work is evidence informed with the skills and practice to reflect this approach.

## From the CEO

Family Support Newcastle has experienced a monumental year during 2019–2020, one that could never have been anticipated. In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic and all the complexities attached to that, FSN has:

- Relocated from the Joy Cummings Centre, Scott Street Newcastle to Orlando Road Lambton. We were underutilising the JCC to a large degree, parking was extremely difficult and we wanted to be located closer to our Waratah Centre and the families we support
- Outsourced the management of our IT systems to OAS Technology Group
- Outsourced our financial management to Cinch Financial Services



These changes were the result of changing needs of FSN, changes in IT requirements over the years, including the reduction of the number of programs we managed and the need to have highly skilled accounting, improved systems for how we allocate our funds.

We worked to review the FSN Vision, Values and Mission, and the Strategic Plan with all staff involved. Working as a team was a valuable experience, resulting in us sharing in the outcomes.

Family Relationship Services Australia (FRSA) Conference November 2019 at the Hunter Valley. FSN was involved in the planning of this national conference, with representation by the CEO on the organising committee, as a Chair of some sessions and presentation of a paper by Gener Lapina (Separated Dads Program).

COVID-19. Due to degree of impact of this pandemic it has been allocated its own section in this report!

## 2021 and Beyond

- A new position is being introduced from July 2020; ‘SHLV Intake and Referral Support Worker’; Monique Hudson is the worker for this role. This position was created out of additional funding, to provide support to the SHLV program and family workers, due to the increase in incidences of domestic and family violence. To recognise this increase during COVID-19 the federal government provided additional funding which will conclude on 30 June 2021. We sincerely hope that there will be ongoing funding to retain this role at FSN.
- From 1 July 2020 the new position of Cultural Liaison Worker will be introduced. Maxine Fennell will take on this role; Maxine has worked for FSN for many years in a number of different positions
- A Maintenance Plan is being developed to repair and revitalise the Waratah Family Centre, it has become jaded over the years. It is important that the centre is welcoming to families and visitors and a pleasant, safe and functioning place of work for staff
- A ‘Families Reference Group’ will be introduced, following the AGM. The requirements of Boards have changed over the past years and FSN wants to ensure that our Board has

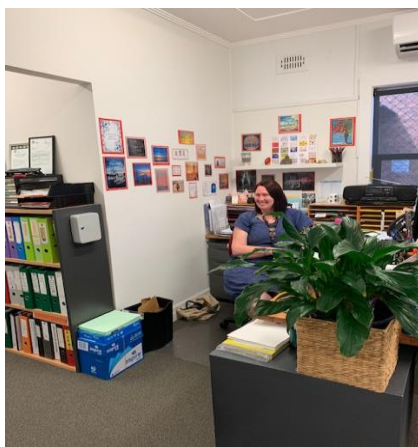


the capacity to meet these changes, which include; increased accountability regarding funding and reporting, increased complexities around practice, service delivery and HR management responsibilities. It is proposed that the Constitution is amended to change the percentage of families on the Board, however FSN wants to continue its commitment to families being involved in the organisation, with an opportunity for input, hence the introduction of the Families Reference Group. An information session will be organised for those families who would like to know more, then Expressions of Interest will be called.

- A maintenance plan has been developed for the Waratah to bring the building to good condition.
- New signage is planned for the High Street Turton Road corner of the building. This is being undertaken in collaboration with Callaghan Waratah Campus, with donations from Bunnings.

*Susan Hellier*

Sue Hellier



*Karen at her Admin/accounts work station*



*Orlando Road Lambton Offices*



*Amanda, the newly appointed First Aid Officer and Fire*



*Joy Cummings Centre*





## Family Support Newcastle Board of Management

The Board has overall responsibility for running the service, overseeing our financial management and other responsibilities such as work health and safety, funding requirements, compliance and human resource matters. It helps with planning, evaluation and guiding improvements.

The FSN Board members for 2019-2020 comprise:

- Janine Robinson (Resigned July 2020)
- Val Rutherford
- Jo-Anne Black (Secretary)
- Joshua Comyns (Treasurer)
- Crystal Curtis
- Michelle Williams (Leave of absence)
- Margaret Stewart

Thank you to the Board for your ongoing work in supporting FSN, attending meetings and other activities, decision making, questioning and valuable input. Your ongoing help is greatly appreciated.

### Val Rutherford

Val has been on the FSN Board for over 15 years. Val has been a significant contributor to FSN over many years and is entering a well-earned retirement.

Thank you for all that you have done Val!



## Our commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

We recognise that the trauma that Aboriginal families have experienced and continue to experience as a result of ongoing colonisation and racism means that our service must be particularly accessible and effective for Aboriginal families.

We will:

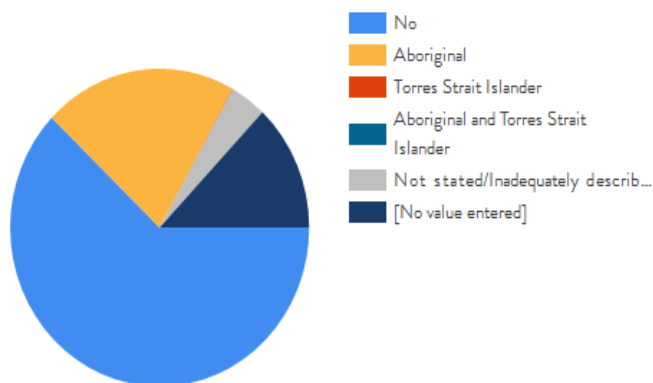
- Provide a respectful, safe and welcoming environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Provide services appropriate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and Aboriginal agencies
- Proudly and visibly support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights and openly challenge racism in ourselves and others
- Develop Aboriginal cultural competence
- Respectfully learn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, recognising that this is a life long journey.



FSN is working towards meeting this commitment by:

- From 1 July 2020 a new position of Cultural Liaison Worker will be introduced
- Providing cultural supervision for Aboriginal staff
- Cultural Safety Plans for Aboriginal staff
- FSN Reconciliation Action Plan in development
- Reference Group in development
- Partnering with Aboriginal organisations, including Warlga Ngurra, Birra Li, Justiz, Lobamba, Wandiyali, the Cultural Hub and Awabakal.

Contacts By Features



## Our work

We provide our services in a context where there is growing inequality between the most disadvantaged and the most advantaged members of our society. We believe that this is harmful to everyone including the most advantaged. The structural disadvantage that is experienced by the families that we come into contact with must be addressed for us to make a lasting and significant difference to the outcomes for our most vulnerable children. The families that we work with are more stretched than ever before. Affordable housing is virtually non-existent. Domestic and family violence is significantly impacting the lives of large numbers of mothers and their children. Income support for those who have limited abilities to participate in the work force is completely inadequate and the associated conditions and penalties are demeaning and draconian. We recognise that some or all of these impacts the families with whom we work and that we need to recognise the larger context that impacts on families.

## Service Delivery 2019-2020

The following programs are delivered by FSN, primarily from our Waratah Family Centre, alternatively in the family home or other appropriate venues. The majority of our group programs are delivered in partnership with other organisations, either at the Waratah Family Centre or in a community space.

### Erin Beard – Team Leader

Erin is line manager for the staff of the following programs, she also provides support to those staff and supervision to other staff at FSN.

*Playtime Plus:* A group at our Waratah Family Centre on a Thursday morning during the school term, with the aim of supporting parents and their pre-school aged children; e.g. developing socialisation skills, parents connecting with other parents, craft and play activities, skills development for children and just fun playing, singing and stories.

*Family Support Program:* Parents/carers needing additional support who have children 0-12years; FSN provides information, home visiting where there could be challenges to parenting such as mental illness, children with particular needs, loneliness and isolation, family and domestic violence, poverty, impact of alcohol and other drugs, for example. When appropriate case management will be provided to ensure that families are receiving services that best meet their needs, that there are no gaps or duplication.

*Intensive Family Preservation Program:* Families residing in the Newcastle/Maitland areas who have the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) involved; FSN family workers will visit regularly to provide support, information and assistance to the parent/s to develop goals to keep children safe, refer to other relevant services, 24/7 telephone access to support, practical parenting suggestions. Referrals are received from DCJ only.





## Nicole Cameron – Team Leader

Nicole is line manager for the staff of the following programs, she also provides support to those staff and supervision to other staff at FSN.

*Staying Home Leaving Violence:* Support for women in the Newcastle area, who have left family and domestic violence and either remain in the family home or in other secure accommodation. Support may include obtaining orders to exclude the perpetrator from the home, to assist with keeping the family safe in their home by installing security measures and by providing emotional support and linking to counselling.

*Family and Relationship Services* - There are two programs within this service: Family Skills and a Men's Program. The Men's program; a male worker who support men and their families living in and around the Newcastle area with children 0-18 years who are experiencing difficulties with being a father. This can include home visits and centre based visits, information and referrals to other services. The Family Skills program offers a variety of groups in collaboration with other services in and around the Lower Hunter. The groups provided focus on parenting and family relationships however they are driven by the needs of the community and participants.

*Separated Dads Program:* A program in partnership with Interrelate; a male worker who supports dads who live in or around the Newcastle area, with children 0-18 years who may have had contact with a family mediation service. We can provide short-term face to face or telephone support around issues impacting on co-parenting or mediation. Support may include referrals to other services including FSN

In July to December 2019 Family Skills workers, in collaboration with partner agencies; Margaret Jurd Centre, Fennel Bay School as Community Centre, Maitland Family Support, delivered groups as usual, such as Fun with Rainbows, an after-school group, Smooth Sailing, Say No to Violence; school holiday activities, Staying Afloat and Shark Cage. From March 2020 groups were cancelled due to COVID-19. While the groups were cancelled some individual work was undertaken.



## Thank You Children's Activity Workers



Family Support Newcastle would like to say a very big thank you to our reliable and skillful Children's Activity Workers. FSN has been in a fortunate position to support parents to attend the group work programs we offer by offering appropriate activities for children.

Our Children's Activity Workers nurture, care for and entertain children for a few of hours over a number of weeks. Our children's activity workers are welcoming to families, they are calm, compassionate, flexible, and creative. They have the ability to juggle many things simultaneously while still being present and available for children.

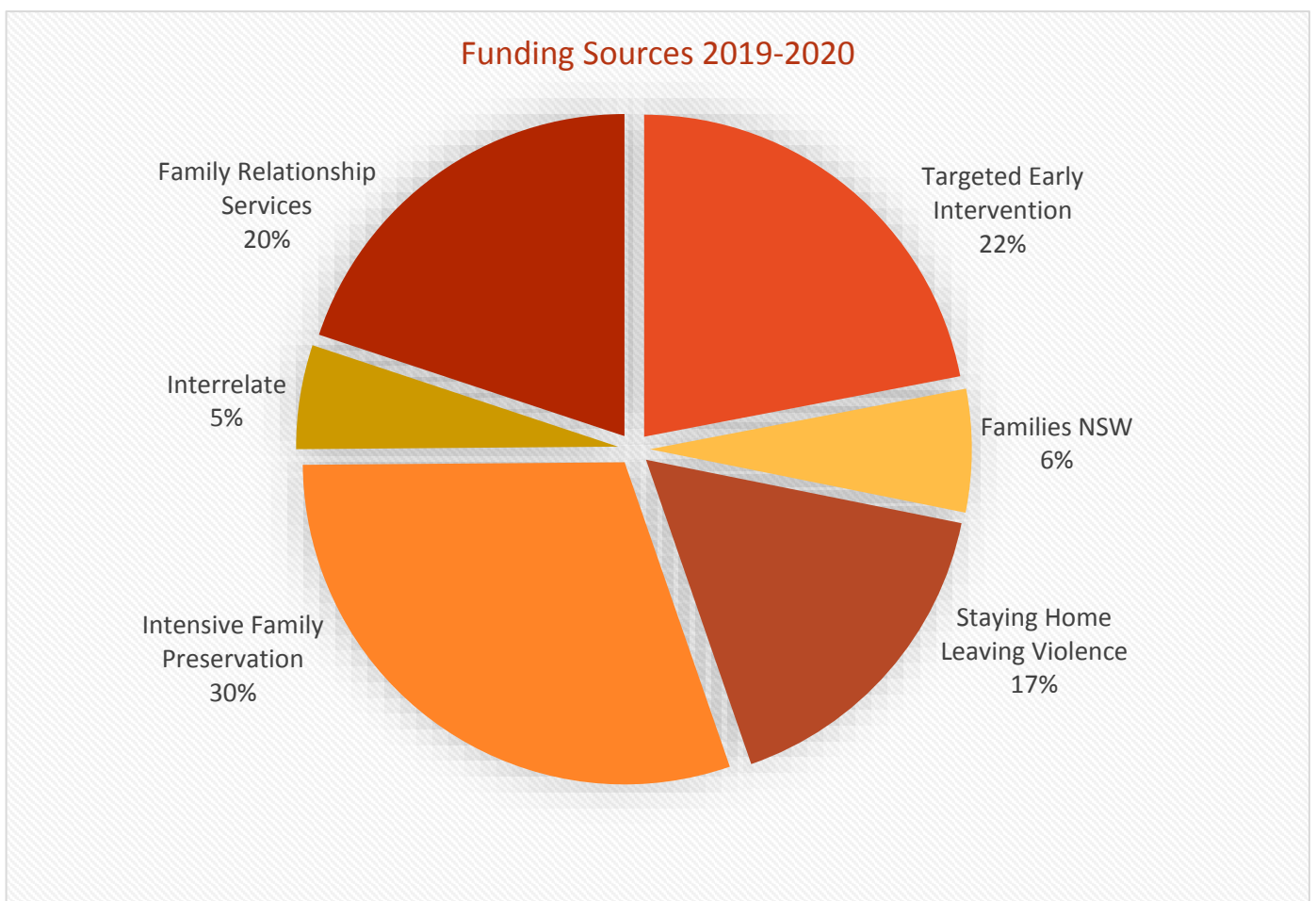
During the period of COVID-19 these workers have gone above and beyond to ensure our spaces, toys, cushions etc. are sanitized, safe and compliant. They have also done a Food Handling course to ensure this safety continues.

The Children's Activity Workers support our children, their parents, each other and our group facilitators. They make a difference with the important work they do.



## Family Support Newcastle Funding

FNS receives government funding from Department of Social Services (Federal) and Department of Communities and Justice (State). FNS is also in partnership with Interrelate to deliver the Separated Dads program which is federally funded. Please see below for the distribution of these funds across the organisation. Targeted Early Intervention is the funding program for our Family Support Program; Families NSW is Playtime Plus and Family Relationship Services is Family Skills. We continue to source funding opportunities so we can provide more comprehensive services.







# Jenny's story

## History

Jenny experienced a childhood trauma, has been diagnosed with several mental health conditions and suffers from epilepsy. In 2001 Jenny served five years in prison for stabbing a former partner while both were drug affected.

Jenny had children at age 17 and 18.

She has experienced a number of abusive relationships. In January 2019, Jenny was assaulted by her former partner when she collected him from jail.

## FSN Support

Jenny was on parole when, in March 2019, she was referred to FSN's Staying Home Leaving Violence (SHLV) service for security upgrades, safety planning and court support.

Jenny's FSN Family Worker has taken her to the Dress for Success outlet in Newcastle, to acquire new outfits to wear to court. SHLV has supported her through each court process, including supporting two claims for Victims Compensation, from which Jenny was able to access counselling.

Jenny has been supported with ongoing safety planning re her previous partner's jail release in September 2020. He was fitted with an ankle bracelet linked to Jenny's tracking device.

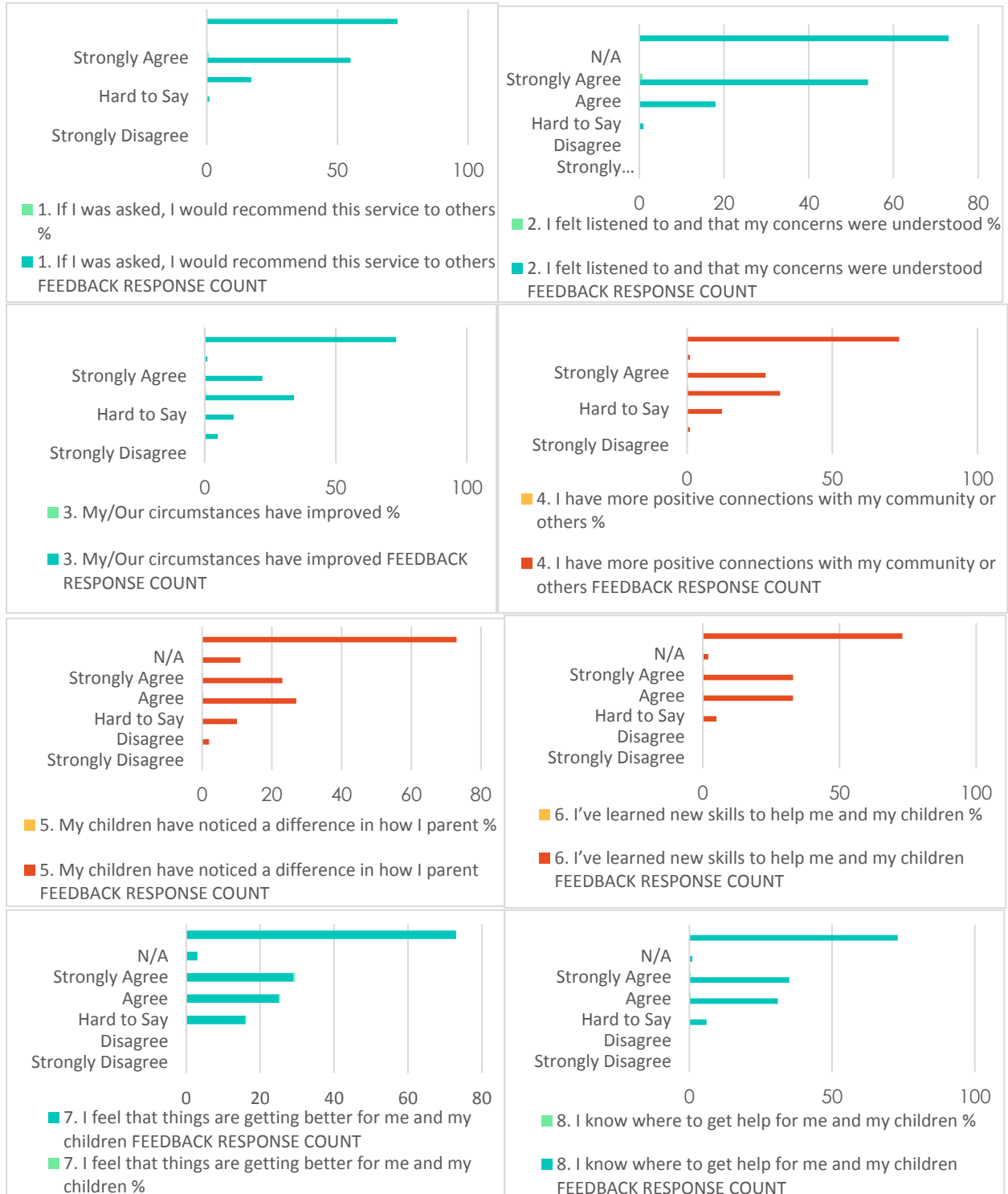
## Recovery

Jenny states that she has developed a positive outlook on life and is looking forward to the future. She has been clean and sober and attending regular sessions with an AOD counsellor since meeting her FSN Worker. She and plans to enroll in a Lifeline phone counselling course when the Covid-19 restrictions have eased.

# Evaluation and Feedback

FSN recognises the importance of collecting evidence-based data, both quantitative and qualitative, about the services we provide. This is critical to ensure that the services we deliver are effective. It also enables FSN to measure what we are doing well, to assess areas for development and improvement, and to comply with the requirements of funding providers.

## 'As a result of the assistance I have received ...'



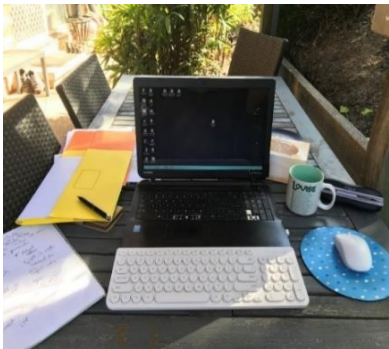
# COVID-19



As a result of the pandemic, significant modifications to service delivery and work place practices were introduced. The wellbeing and safety of staff and clients was taken seriously by FSN:

- Staff worked from home in the early lockdown phase
- Groups were cancelled initially
- A staff wellbeing survey was undertaken to hear from staff how they managing during lockdown, to what degree were their needs being met and did we need to do anything differently
- Some family work was undertaken via phone, FaceTime or zoom
- Triaging was introduced for face to face visits, which involved checking in with families prior to a visit regarding temperatures, cold/flu symptoms, etc.
- Triaging continues for anyone coming into either of the FSN buildings
- Sanitisation of surfaces, sanitiser for hands
- Ensuring distance compliance of people per room
- FSN provided two fabric face masks (3 ply compliant) for all staff
- Playtime story time via zoom was introduced
- Group were reintroduced, with restricted numbers in Term 3. This has meant an increase in work for group facilitators and children's activity workers, surfaces must be sanitised, cushions, toys and mats cleaned with each use; food served in small individual bowls
- Weekly updates are provided to staff regarding latest Covid-19 requirements
- Meetings were conducted via zoom. These have now become a way of life; sometimes we just had to laugh as well as find other ways to connect.

# COVID-19 times



*Home Office, facing the challenges of working from home during lockdown*



*Activity and sanitization packs provided to families during lockdown*



*Story time set up for families via zoom*



## Celebrations and Acknowledgements

Partnerships: FSN works in partnership with a number of organisations via our group work programs; Family Action Centre with groups for men/dads and the Alternatives to Violence Program, Thou Walla, Gan Gan, Koe Nara and Woodberry Schools as Community Centres, Nar-un-bah, Margaret Jurd and DALE Schools, Maitland Family Support Scheme and the Hunter Women’s Centre

Nic, Simon and their generous team from New City Baptist Church did some fundraising for FSN which was used to provide a wonderful end of year celebration for the families we support. In addition, the NCB team came to the event to face paint, played soccer, serve food, set up, clean up and provided some hampers for families. We appreciated the support, thankyou

Activities planned, delivered or acknowledged on facebook by the FSN Events Committee and FSN included: R U OK Day with staff, Reclaim the Night march and vigil, NAIDOC 2019, International Women’s Day, International Day of World’s Indigenous People, Grandparent’s Week and Pride Week. The usual full range of activities was not possible due to COVID-19. Thank you to Nicole and the Events Committee for your work.



*Reclaim the Night*



*New City Baptist Church Fundraising*



*RU OK Day for Staff*



*End of year celebrations for families with support from New City*

## Auditor's independence declaration

To the Members of Family Support Newcastle Incorporated

In accordance with the requirements of section 60-40 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, as lead auditor for the audit of Family Support Newcastle Incorporated for the year ended 30 June 2020, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

- (a) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of section 60-40 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 in relation to the audit; and
- (b) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

*Kirsty Porteous*

Kirsty Porteous - Partner

*DFK Crosbie Partners*

DFK Crosbie Partners  
Chartered Accountants

Dated: 12 October 2020  
Newcastle West, NSW

Newcastle | Sydney



## Responsible entities declaration

### In the responsible entities opinion:

- (a) the financial statements and notes set out on pages 6 to 16 are in accordance with the Associations Incorporations Act 2009 (NSW) and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, including:
- (i) complying with Australian Accounting Standards, Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, and the Associations Incorporated Regulations (NSW) 2016; and
  - (ii) giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2020 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date, and
- (b) there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Association will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the responsible entities.



- Responsible Entity



- Responsible Entity

Dated: 12 October 2020  
Waratah, NSW

Family Support Newcastle Incorporated

**Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income**

For the year ended 30 June 2020

	Notes	2020 \$	2019 \$
<b>Revenue from continuing operations</b>	2	<b>2,037,613</b>	1,962,062
Other Income	3	128,354	10,726
Administration expenses		(166,703)	(136,699)
Depreciation		(35,802)	(13,856)
Employment costs		(1,553,636)	(1,771,991)
Finance Expense		(3,578)	-
Occupancy		(75,392)	(80,049)
Program activity costs		(82,873)	(94,930)
<b>Profit / (loss) before income tax</b>		<b>(1,917,984)</b>	<b>(2,097,525)</b>
Income tax expense		-	-
<b>Profit / (loss) for the year</b>		<b>247,983</b>	<b>(124,737)</b>
Other comprehensive income		-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income / (loss) for the year</b>		<b>247,983</b>	<b>(124,737)</b>

Family Support Newcastle Incorporated  
**Statement of changes in equity**  
For the year ended 30 June 2020

	Accumulated profits	Reserves	Total
	\$	\$	\$
<b>Balance at 1 July 2018</b>	660,887	41,516	702,403
Profit for the year	(124,736)	-	(124,736)
Equipment reserve write-off	41,516	(41,516)	-
Other comprehensive income	-	-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<u>577,667</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>577,667</u>
<b>Balance at 30 June 2019</b>	<u>577,667</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>577,667</u>
Profit for the year	247,983	-	247,983
Other comprehensive income	-	-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<u>247,983</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>247,983</u>
<b>Balance at 30 June 2020</b>	<u>825,650</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>825,650</u>

Family Support Newcastle Incorporated

## Statement of financial position

For the year ended 30 June 2020

	Notes	2020 \$	2019 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	864,161	443,160
Trade receivables	5	1,908	1,667
Financial assets at amortised cost	6	57,686	302,003
Other assets	7	10,361	36,031
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>934,116</b>	<b>782,861</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	8	179,231	157,725
Right-of-use asset	9	143,592	-
<b>Total non-current assets</b>		<b>322,823</b>	<b>157,725</b>
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>1,256,939</b>	<b>940,586</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables	10	69,630	84,808
Provisions	11	206,043	264,436
Lease liabilities	9	31,289	-
<b>Total current liabilities</b>		<b>306,962</b>	<b>349,244</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Provisions	11	12,023	13,675
Lease liabilities	9	112,303	-
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>		<b>124,326</b>	<b>13,675</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>431,288</b>	<b>362,919</b>
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>825,650</b>	<b>577,667</b>
<b>MEMBERS FUNDS</b>			
Retained profits		825,650	577,667
<b>Total members funds</b>		<b>825,650</b>	<b>577,667</b>



**FSN would like to express our appreciation to:**

- Committed and amazing staff of Family Support Newcastle
- FSN Board of Management
- Families and individuals who trust us with their stories and experiences
- Groups and individuals who thoughtfully contribute to the work of FSN through donations and fundraising
- Cinch Financial Services
- OAS The Technology Group
- DFK Crosbie Auditors

**FSN would like to acknowledge our funding providers and key partners in providing services:**

- Department of Community and Justice (Previously Family and Community Services)
- Department of Social Services
- Interrelate





**Family Support Newcastle**  
*your family, our community*

[www.nfss.org.au](http://www.nfss.org.au)



Family Support Newcastle