



PORT STEPHENS  
FAMILY AND  
NEIGHBOURHOOD  
SERVICES

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

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



Communities  
& Justice



Australian Government

Department of Social Services

PRIMARY  
HEALTH  
NETWORK



Brotherhood of St Lawrence  
Working for an Australia free of poverty



Premier  
& Cabinet

# ABOUT US

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

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

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

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





# BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

It's been another year where we have seen overwhelming demand for service that we do not have the resources (funding/staff) to meet. Responding as best we can, within this context, to the humanitarian crisis of homelessness has stretched us to the limit.

Domestic and Family Violence continues to be a large part of our work and lack of adequate systemic support adds to the complexity and the injustice of what children continue to have to live with.

Our staff remain as committed as ever to this community and we are so grateful for how they show up every day to do this work.

And importantly, every day we meet with amazing Port Stephens community members who support our work by volunteering, by donating food and funds, by supporting other community members to access our programs, and by participating in our programs themselves.

Thank you for your support,  
Robyn South

## OUR COMMITTMENT TO COMMUNITIES

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

### Chairperson

Robyn South

### Vice Chairperson

Tim Mizzi

### Secretary

Helen Smyth

### Treasurer

Richard South

### Members

Giacomo Arnott  
Chris Baguley  
Phiona Haire

### Members

Sheridan Noble  
Bronwyn Leary  
Nicki Saroca

### *Our Vision*

A just community that includes and acts

### *Our Purpose*

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

# OUR VALUES

*We believe in:*



## Community

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



## Creativity

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



## Courage

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



## Respect

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

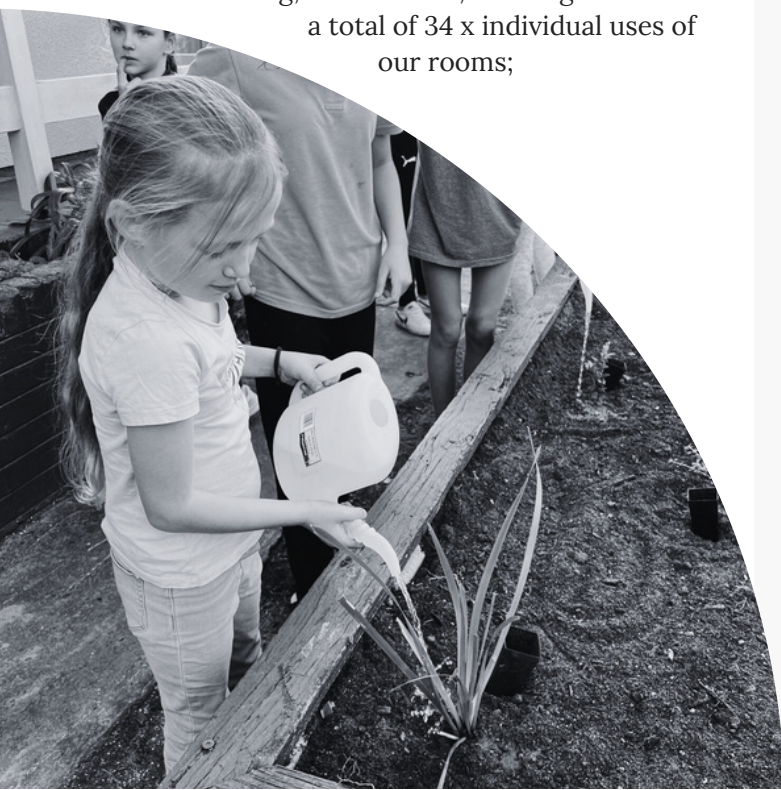




*A look back...*

# HOW MUCH DID WE DO?

- 4 x Tuning in to Kids Programs;
- 3 x Tuning in to Teens Programs;
- 4 x Women Speak Programs;
- 1 x Rent It to Keep It Programs;
- 33 x Work & Development Orders with \$25,750.96 in credits applied;
- 6 x Playtime groups weekly;
- 4 x after school groups;
- 2 x Weekly Art Therapy groups (young people and adults);
- Youth drop in once a week;
- Youth LGBTQIA drop in once a fortnight;
- Youth school holiday day camps;
- 4 x Aboriginal traineeships in Community Services
- Weekly food provisions through Oz Harvest and Second Bite;
- 19 full time staff & 20 part time staff (3-4 days per week);
- \$114,239 of Emergency Relief vouchers;
- \$27,478 additional ERF for Covid;
- \$27,478 for flood assistance;
- \$10,600 for Energy account payment assistance scheme vouchers (with more available as needed);
- \$2,495 of Hunter Water PAS Vouchers;
- \$839 of school uniforms from Lowes;
- 16 x social work student placements;
- 13 x visiting services regularly used our rooms for training, access visits, meeting clients with a total of 34 x individual uses of our rooms;



- Child & Family Support - 772 children and families including 149 intensive support;
- Child & family support (Tilligerry) - 138 children and families;
- Youth & Family Support - 475 young people and families including 125 intensive support;
- 408 engagements via our Tilligerry Family Network site which included groups, counselling / mentoring and food assistance;
- 723 people accessed our service for Homelessness Services and an additional 362 people given information and/or referrals;
- 978 people accessed ERF (some more than once)
- 1097 people accessed our Neighbourhood Centre (some more than once);
- 74 children and their families accessed HIPPIY each week;
- 792 clients accessing Staying Home Leaving Violence Program;
- In-house Psychology Team with same day appointments available for urgent requests;
- 45 x Wesnet Telstra Pre-Paid phones given out to families escaping DV;
- \$1000 Wesnet Uber Credit for women and children escaping Domestic and Family Violence;
- 90 x free 6 & 12 month Optus SIM cards given out to clients experiencing DV and homelessness;
- 95 free car seats given out to parents/carers (64 x 0-4yrs + 31 x 4-8yrs);
- Free PBS Medication Program from homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless;
- 2 x Safe Houses for Families escaping DV;
- Partnership with Hunter Water enabling us to negotiate reductions in rates for homeowners/mortgagees;
- Partnership Friends with Dignity who furnish/stock homes for women leaving DV, school bags with school items, Christmas presents;
- Partnership with Headspace for outreach at the Neighbourhood Centre;
- Partnership with Lifeline for counselling services;
- Partnership with Centrelink Community Outreach for payment support;
- Partnership with St Johns Anglican Church for weekly food hampers;
- Partnership with Raymond Terrace Rotary for food help and household donations;
- Partnership with Hunter Womens Centre for counselling services;
- Partnership with Hunter Valley Project for financial counselling;
- Auspiced and chaired Port Stephens DV Committee;
- Hosted Hunter Region DV Committee and Port Stephen's Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Contemporary Challenges Forum;
- Manage 4 Facebook and 3 Instagram pages to engage with community;
- Partnership with Health for onsite Pediatrician;
- Successful bid for Port Stephens Refuge (coming 2024).

## HOW WELL DID WE DO IT?

PSFaNS is an evidence informed service. We deliver evidence based practice. In 2022-2023 staff were trained in Irespect, Trauma informed Practice, First Aid, Installation of car restraints, Child Protection, Child Development, and more.

Staff participated in individual and group supervision and case reviews in keeping with our commitment to reflecting on and developing practice.

## WHAT DIFFERENCE DID WE MAKE?

### *A snapshot of our evaluations*

- **91%** of parents/caregivers reported that since attending Playtime they have learnt of a service, resource or activity in the community for children and families
- **92%** of families reported that they learnt new things about positive parenting in our parenting programs
- **86%** of families improved in parent/caregiver warmth and empathy towards their child/ren
- **88%** children at school entry age had participated in formal early childhood education at least two sessions a week for at least a year prior school
- **84%** of young people said their most important goal was achieved in counselling/ casework
- **94%** referring services reported that PSFaNS is responsive to community needs
- **97%** referring services found the staff at PSFaNS to be helpful, friendly and knowledgeable
- **98%** of Staying Home Leaving Violence clients said because of the service I feel safer
- **100%** of Staying Home Leaving Violence clients said because of the service I feel my children are safer
- At the start of Women Speak, **88%** of participants blamed themselves in various degrees for the abuse that happened to them. By completion of the program, this number reduced to **15%**.
- **100%** of Women Speak participants said they now knew the difference between a healthy and unhealthy relationship on completion of the program.

# 93%

*of referring services reported that PSFaNS is responsive to community needs*



# 100%

*of Staying Home Leaving Violence clients said because of the service I feel my children are safer*

# SERVICE STAFF 2022-2023

**Manager** - Sue Pollock  
**Assistant Manager** - Ann Fletcher



**Team Leader**

Rachel S

**Aboriginal Programs**

Emma  
 Karen

**HIPPY**

Victoria  
 Domaneca  
 Katrina  
 Emma

**Child, Youth & Family**

**Senior Practitioner**

Andrew

**Caseworkers**

Amy  
 Mardi  
 Kelly  
 Sarah W  
 Rachel W  
 Erin  
 Alison  
 Liz  
 Sarah M

**Psychology**

Timothy  
 Maddie

**Tilligerry Family Network**

Danielle  
 Miranda  
 Julia  
 Julianne

**Team Leader**

Ann

**Senior Practitioner**

Kylee

**Caseworkers**

Nichola  
 Kayla  
 Courtney  
 Adrian  
 Jess S  
 Blake  
 Brianna  
 Alicia

**SHLV**

**Senior Practitioner**

Sarah Q

**Caseworkers**

Barbara  
 Ellen  
 Camilla  
 Rebecca

**Finance & Admin**

**Finance Manager / Team Leader**

Max

**Reception & Admin**

Jo (Phillip St)  
 Clare (Jac Ave)  
 Jessie (Phillip St)  
 Domaneca (Phillip St)



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







# COMMUNITY REVIEWS

★★★★★

*"They are are really good with the kids and such great help with everything and great to talk to when in a bad spot or just need help with anything they are always there for u".*

★★★★★

*Always Wonderful, Caring people.*

★★★★★

*They great people who work there and they try there best at helping people in need*

★★★★★

*If they can help they will. Ive needed there help a couple of times over the past few years. Very understanding and easy to deal with. If you need help pop on in im sure you will be blown away with the help they offer. The best people who actually care about us locals.*

★★★★★

*Wonderful support and lovely people.*

★★★★★

*The men's health worker has helped me through probably the toughest time in my life great all round team very friendly and helpful.*

*Very large variety of community programs and services here.*

★★★★★

*Amazing people very kind and helpful*

★★★★★

*I have been involved with Port Stephens support for over five years going to play groups, culture groups and even parenting advice groups. All the staff have always been amazing 🍑🍑🍑🍑🍑*

