



ANNUAL REPORT

2014

Committed to Community

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE



UnitingCare Victoria and Tasmania is integral to the ministry of the church, sharing in the vision and mission of God – seeking to address injustice, working together to overcome disadvantage and to strengthen communities.

Our Values

Expanded from the principles outlined in The UCV&T Theological Framework and Guiding Principles November 2003.

Our Faith

Seeking to share in the love and purpose of God, as revealed in Jesus Christ, we strive to address injustice and to offer reconciliation and hope.

A Focus on the Disadvantaged

Having particular concern for people who are vulnerable, poor and marginalised.

Social Justice

Promoting equity, human rights, participation and access for all

Empowerment

Seeking to build on people's strengths and enabling people to speak and act for themselves.

Respect

Respecting the contribution of all involved in our network, valuing diversity and promoting inclusivity.

Working Holistically

Responding to the total circumstances of those we serve, promoting wholeness by working at all levels.

Working Together

Seeking partnerships in service delivery, acts of solidarity and social commentary.

Pursuing Innovation

Continually examining our services and programs to ensure they are cutting edge responses to human need.

Striving to do better

Undertaking ongoing research, evaluation and quality improvement.

CHAIRPERSON



It is with much pleasure that we as a Board, can report on the life and witness of UnitingCare Tasmania in this our sixth Annual Report. As we review the past year it feels like we have moved to a maturity as an organisation that brings with it all the responsibilities and challenges that go with wanting to be 'Committed to Community', in ways that reflect our values and beliefs as an organisation. Our growth continues with many exciting outcomes and new initiatives along with some disappointments being delivered, along with the challenges of performing in a changing environment in which we live.

UnitingCare Tasmania, is maturing and establishing a critical mass that enables the Board to address many of the strategic challenges and opportunities. Our thanks to a Board who are skilled, dedicated and committed to the values of our organisation.

Particular thanks goes to our CEO Lindy, her dedicated and committed team and the encouragement by other stakeholders. The Board was delighted to offer a new contract to Lindy in October 2013.

UnitingCare Tasmania is well placed to continue to grow and continue to seek to live out our vision of being 'Committed to Community' throughout the State.

Board:

We have been delighted with the conscientious management of our CEO, Board and sub-committees (Executive, Finance, Risk and Mission) who have guided us through challenging times. We continue to build on relationships that will strengthen and grow UnitingCare Tasmania.

During the year we farewelled Rev Tony Duncan, who provided a particular pastoral presence in the northern office and will be greatly missed. We welcomed to the Board Mike Stoddard, Daryl Massey and Cathryn Peppiatt and more recently Rev Brian Cole from the North West Coast.

We continue the practice of reviewing a skills matrix of the board and are well placed with the expertise and state-wide representation to address the issues likely to emerge in these changing times.

One of the joys of the way this agency works is the deep involvement in the Board of Uniting Church members and leaders and the close relationship with the Presbytery and congregations. Toward the end of the year we had to accept the resignation of Daryl Massey due to his unexpected relocation to the Northern Territory. Our sincere thanks to those who have departed and a sincere welcome to new members.

Governance

We continue to strive to be an organisation that is committed to best practice governance. During the year, the Board continued to up-skill individual directors, including attendance at a Not for Profit Governance course through the Australian Institute of Company Directors by the chairperson. The Board manual has been updated.

The organisation has developed a risk identification programme and reports any identified risk to UnitingCare Victoria and Tasmania, the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania and the Board through our Risk Committee. We have established face to face meetings with our new auditor for the Finance and Risk committees

Merger of Cerebral Palsy and Hobart Benevolent Society

We continue to move toward the merger of Cerebral Palsy Tasmania and Hobart Benevolent Society into our family. Much work has been done with both bodies, some compliance issues continue to frustrate a sale of property as part of the merger with Cerebral Palsy however we are delighted that the Deed of Gift has been signed re Hobart Benevolent Society and final winding up matters are proceeding in the current year.

Relationships

Relationships remain a high priority in the way we live out our life. We have seen significant growth in our relationships with the UnitingCare Victoria and Tasmania and the ongoing support provided by UCVT. Our relationship with the Presbytery and local congregations continues to develop with some strong partnerships emerging. E.g. Mission Committee strategy, Kingston Uniting Church support of emergency relief.

Relationships with Government departments (Federal and State) and funding bodies have continued to grow and partnerships in addressing gaps in service delivery have developed. Our CEO has been invited to a number of State Government appointments and committees providing advice to Government

Relationships with other parts of the Uniting Church have continued to mature: BOMAR, Lenten Offering and Share Appeal continue to be very supportive of projects put up by UnitingCare Tasmania. We are most grateful for this significant support provided by these Church funding bodies.

Our strongest relationships are with those we serve and as Chair of the Board, I have witnessed many extraordinary examples of those relationships.

Staff and Management:

During this year there have been a number of difficult decisions for management to address. The Board has supported management by providing policy and governance guidance through these difficult times.

We are extremely well served by Lindy our CEO and her commitment to the organisation. Her vision, her leadership and her passion to see UnitingCare Tasmania live out its vision 'Committed to Community' as a faith based organisation is inspiring.

Lindy's daily infectious enthusiasm about living out our values in new and imaginative ways in response to changing times is part of the leadership she provides to staff and the Board. I would like to place on record our heartfelt appreciation for her contribution and leadership.

In addition to Lindy, I would like to record our grateful thanks to her dedicated and very talented team, many of whom have often gone the 'extra' mile in difficult times.

To our growing number of volunteers who have caught the vision of UnitingCare Tasmania in our service to those in need, we also say a huge thank you.

It has been a challenging year with many highlights but one that places us in a position to address significant opportunities in the years ahead

To members of the Board I say thank you for your support, hard work, clear vision and commitment to the organisation as we serve those in need in our community and as we try to live out Gospel values in all we do and say.

David Parker (Rev)
Chairperson

CEO

This year has been a year of evolution. There is hardly a program or office that has not undergone significant change. Whilst change creates turbulence at the time, reflecting upon it afterwards, I can only come to the conclusion that the upheavals have given us really positive outcomes.



Our large cohort of staff previously based at Bellerive have been separated into admin, who are now located in a head office at St Johns Park (the former Cerebral Palsy Tasmania building) and direct service staff who are now located at Old Beach in two buildings that fit us and our needs like a glove. Our programs have moved into Child and Family Centres in Burnie and Bridgewater. Significant investigation and discussions were had in Launceston with Pilgrim Church regarding a possible move into the hall and upstairs offices, however it was determined that our needs are better met in the Wesley Chambers building we currently use.

Along with new office accommodation, we have welcomed a number of new faces and farewelled a number of longstanding staff members. A contributing factor to our staff losses was the uncertainty of ongoing contracts as all of our funding contracts were up for renewal at the conclusion of this financial year. Uncertainty of ongoing employment is always a major impetus for staff moves. We thank those who have moved on from UCT for their commitment and dedication to the agency. In their place we have been lucky enough to recruit a high caliber of experienced staff. We welcome new staff to PYPS north and south, Newpin South, Pathway Home, and to both Pilgrim and Scots Early Learning Centres.

Scots Early Learning Centre has not been immune from major changes. After many years of service, Mirela farewelled us in late 2013. We welcome Marie Wilson as Scots new director. Marie comes to us with significant experience in Early Years, and is ready to lead us into the accreditation process. Additionally whilst the Early Learning Centre lost two of its most highly regarded staff they were eagerly seconded into the Southern Newpin program. This is exciting as creating pathways through the agency is allowing career trajectories for personnel in terms of exposure to increased skills and experience opportunities.

The winds of change also brought new programs whilst we lost others. We took over Intrepid Explorers which is a social inclusion program funded by HACC for (generally) older people in the Southern Midlands and Central Highlands. Also in the Southern Midlands, in partnership with Rural Primary Health and Communities for Children, we now have a Rural Outreach program, which is proficiently delivered by Anj Darke who had previously worked within the Newpin program.

We made further inroads into our work within the prisons with additional programs in the Women's prison, where the inmates make swags specifically modified for Tasmanian conditions. The swags include a snap-in thick eiderdown, and an insulated mattress. Another creation is a baby bag that includes a cot blanket, change mat, soft toy, and the holdall itself. This has now turned into a micro business enterprise and come labelled "Hand Made With Pride". The initials also stand for Mary Hopkins Women Prison.

We forayed into Ashley Youth Detention Center where we trialed a modified Newpin on the Inside program. However due to the high mobility rates of young people through the system, we were unable to catch a cohort for consistent periods of time where change could be effected. Unfortunately we have had to withdraw from Ashley whilst we consider what other options there may be that are more suitable.

Sadly the Communities for Children programs, which allowed us to run our PYPS programs around the state have come to an end whilst the Department of Social Services decides its new priority areas, both geographically and in terms of programming. This has meant a huge loss for group members in Burnie and in Bridgewater-Gagebrook. Anglicare has been kind enough to allow us to continue in George Town until December 2014. We are hoping that CFC funding rounds will commence again early 2015. Additionally our St Andrews funding for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) also came to an end. We have been lucky enough to obtain some ongoing funding for GRG from BOMAR and a once-off donation from the Collier Trust, which has allowed us to continue to provide a service in the north-west and south.

Although we put in budget submissions for GRG to the State Treasury we were unsuccessful in gaining any funding. However our submission triggered the Government to providing additional funding specifically for grandparents into the Gateway System.

We also put in a Treasury submission for increased funds for PYPS, due to overwhelming evidence of need that this cohort experiences. Our Lenten Appeal-funded, commissioned research that saw the release of the Northern Tasmanian Teen Pregnancy Research Report (in partnership with the Northern Early Years Group, and 3P Consulting who conducted the research) and proved conclusively that there is a wide spread of unmet need, misinformation and ignorance amongst young people and an inability of the current service system to provide timely, relevant service. We will continue to find avenues of raising awareness of this group of people, and to provide as much support around the state as we can. We all know that the early years set the blueprint for a child's later life.

Our other flagship program Newpin has made a successful transition in the south to now provide a centre-based component in addition to the outreach. The centre was pleased to receive funding through the Community Support Levy to buy a transit vehicle and playground equipment. One of our original Newpin

employees has returned to the fold as the Southern Family Services Manager, Karen Browning, and we welcome her back with enthusiasm, as she brings existing knowledge of Newpin and therapeutic practice.

We have been improving the evidence base for all of our programs and have presented our findings at the UnitingCare Connections conference, with another presentation due later in the year. We are gearing up to publish our findings in journals. One of the ways in which we are doing this is by the use of a pre and post testing tool, called the Outcome Star. This allows us to assess and plan with our clients and to then reassess every few month, collecting rates of change. This creates opportunity for collecting hard data with which to provide funders in terms of giving value for money. Alongside this we have after several years of thinking and talking, finally captured our systems and processes and intellectual property of the PYPS program into a manual. Further work needs to be done but our intention is to move towards licensing the program allowing us to monitor and evaluate its use in a systematic matter. Thanks go to Vyv Alomes and Robyn Rice for getting that work ready for the next stage.

We have continued to work on incorporating Cerebral Palsy Tasmania and the Hobart Benevolent Society into our agency. Both projects stalled for different reasons but are well on their way to completion.

My thanks to both Boards for their resilience during what have been long processes.

I must also mention of another new initiative being our involvement with the Tasmanian Council of Churches in providing Pastoral Care in Emergencies Ministry. A number of people have been trained and further opportunities will be offered soon. I have been lucky enough to be one of three people trained as a team leader for the Southern Emergencies ministry. Let's hope that training is not put to the test.

We rely heavily on the writing of tenders and funding applications in order to provide the services across the agency. Nicole Day continues to enjoy great success with her grant writing. Her ability to seek out new sources of funding and find creative matches between our work and philanthropic criteria have meant that we have kept good programs like GRG operating and have continued to gain support for existing programs. One of the issues we always face is that there is nothing sexy about the funding we apply for, but Nicole is able to find the very human stories to illustrate the need for a compassionate response to the vast areas of need experienced by vulnerable Tasmanians. Our thanks to Nicole for doing what must often seem to be thankless.

Our Newpin, PYPS and Reunification programs have now secured funding to June 2016. However we only have a guaranteed extension to December 2014 for

our Emergency Relief programs whilst the new Department of Social Services undertakes an extensive tender process of all of its programs. Whilst this is a time of great uncertainty, this also creates opportunities, and we hope that we are well-placed to take advantage of that.

The uncertainty of the funding places great pressure on the Board who need to continue to make plans in absence of information. It is a credit to the Board that its members have an unwavering belief in this agency, its staff and programs, and a quiet determination to see it succeed. The Board goes from strength to strength under the guidance of Reverend David Parker. We are lucky to have his hand on the tiller, as it is steady as she goes.

We farewelled Rev Tony Duncan as he takes up the new challenge of retirement to Victoria, where he can be closer to his family. We thank him most sincerely for his contribution to both the Board and through pastoral care to the Northern staff. The combination of quiet dignity, his irreverence and sense of humor combined with his passion for social justice is sorely missed although we wish him well. Whilst Tony will be a hard seat to fill, we have managed to do that by gaining the Rev Brian Cole, who brings a wealth of skills and knowledge to our team. His enthusiasm and his commitment to the agency is infectious and he has been a great resource for me personally. He brings a connection to the NW Coast that we have been looking for, for a number of years and we are sure that he will act as an advocate for our agency wherever he goes. We have also welcomed Cathryn Peppiatt to our Board, who can provide the insight of a younger person, and contemporary practice. Lastly we welcome Mike Stoddart and Darryl Massey to the Board and hope that both are enjoying the experience and being challenged by it, both bring legal expertise which is becoming increasingly important as not for profits steer increasingly towards mergers, acquisitions and joint ventures.

Thank you to Lois Van Eimeren the Community Services Manager, who has continued to improve the offerings available to clients at our ER outlets through improved processes for both Foodbank and Second Bite. Her work in recruiting, training, supporting and retaining volunteers is truly inspirational and the commitment shown by our volunteers is testament to the relationships she creates with people. She is a steadfast presence in the management team and I thank her for her wisdom and support to me at all times.

Appreciation must go to Mark Donnelly for his sustained commitment to the agency demonstrated by unreasonably long hours including evenings and weekends that are needed to get the job done. His perseverance to create resilient systems and processes that will stand UnitingCare Tasmania in good stead for the future is admirable.

Our brand recognition and profile has been steadily increasing throughout the year due to the hard work and incredible writing skills of Nigel Tapp. His timely, relevant and well-crafted letters to the editor, opinion pieces and media briefings

create UnitingCare as top of mind when it comes to social justice. Nigel, you have my gratitude, without you, I would not seem as eloquent or articulate!

I would like to thank the large group of people who support us from the sidelines. Our volunteers, the Share unit, the congregations, particularly East Derwent, the NW Coast and Penguin Adult Fellowship, and organisations such as Second Bite, Foodbank Tasmania, Fuji Xerox and IT4Business. We also offer our sincere thanks to the ABC Giving Tree and Target, who through their respective appeals offer a great support to our clients.

Lastly, I extend my sincere thanks, appreciation, gratitude and admiration to all of the UnitingCare Tasmania staff.

Our team is such an asset to the agency, with a wide range of skills and abilities across the state. Each employee offers their commitment, goodwill and hard work to the agency, to clients, colleagues and our external stakeholders. Please don't feel that your efforts go unnoticed. I have been immensely proud of the way all of you have rolled with the changes that we

have undertaken, in professional and cooperative ways, even though at times it has significantly increased or affected your time. Thank you.

The overall theme of the 2013-14 year has definitely been about change, and whilst that can be challenging, it also brings opportunity, and a fresh outlook and I believe that we are well-placed to go strongly into the future.

Lindy O'Neill
CEO

COMPLIANCE AND RISK

Ensuring sound contractual and legislative compliance and the appropriate management of risk are significant challenges in most organisations. In not-for-profit human service organisations it can be more difficult to identify and manage compliance and risk whilst at the same time noting that failure to do so can lead to major reputational and contractual funding breakdown. It can be difficult to make available sufficient resources to ensure effective compliance performance whilst maximising funding for essential client and community services. The Board of Governance, with the assistance of the CEO, endeavours to maintain a vigilant oversight of compliance and risk. It is recognised that systems and processes must comply with relevant legislation and funding agreements. It is also important that an effective risk management framework is established.

During the year further measures have been put in place to strengthen risk management including policy and procedures development and review of the Board manual.

Work has been undertaken on identifying improvements to the managing of some key risks such as improvements to reporting (including additional key performance indicators on staffing, contracts and compliance, efficiencies etc), benchmarking and Board performance. A suite of standards for accommodation for UCT premises was recently drafted.

On referral from the CEO the Committee (and on some matters, the Board) also considered a number of incidents and particular issues including:

- Significant employee pay rate anomalies in one business unit
- Staff/ industrial related matters

In some matters legal advice and representation was sought in order to ensure that matters were dealt with appropriately and with attention to risk and compliance.

In all cases the remediation actions by the CEO were endorsed by the Committee and/or Board.

Philip Morris
Board Member

TREASURER

This year has seen the Agency finish the year with a surplus of \$544,407 compared to a surplus of \$5,879 in the previous year. This dramatic increase is the result of the donation from the Hobart Benevolent Society, which chose a number of years ago to transfer its emergency relief operations to UnitingCare Tasmania. The donation is final chapter in their history as they now seek to close the Society after 153 years of operation. Hobart Benevolent Society's assets have been donated to us for us to continue their work in supporting those in need in the Greater Hobart and Southern Tasmanian regions.

Under the leadership of the new Director, UnitingCare Tasmania's Early Learning programs through Scots Early Learning Centre started to overcome the issues of previous years and has seen a turnaround in the month on month financial performance. Changes in the rosters and the implementation of a new childcare billings system have both contributed towards an improving financial performance. Cash flow continues to be tightly managed and this will be the case for the foreseeable future.

UnitingCare Tasmania also faced a number of challenges during the year. A number of key Government-funded programs were due to finish at the end of the year. This coupled with a change of Government left the Agency a little apprehensive as to what the future held. In the end our major programs were refunded for a further two years.

However, our Emergency Relief operations funded through Commonwealth grants have been put out to tender by the new Federal Government. As a consequence we were initially only funded through to December 2014, (although this has now been extended to the end of February 2015.) A decision on whether or not we continue to receive Commonwealth funding is expected to be known in late December 2014.

The two Agencies have weathered these difficulties to emerge the year with a stronger balance sheet and a more focused and successful Early Learning and Family & Children's operation. We continue to look for opportunities to densify the funding streams and improve our internal cost structures in order to maximise the funds available for direct services to those we seek to assist.

Tim Matton-Johnson
Treasurer

COMMUNITY SERVICES

The year has flown by so quickly with all our community services experiencing growth. Lindy's guidance and advice has been greatly appreciated. It has been a very busy year.

Volunteers

Our volunteer base has grown with nearly 40 volunteers participating in many aspects of our community service. We would not be able to assist the most vulnerable in our society without the many hours our wonderful volunteers contribute to our programs. We welcome on board the wonderful volunteers that assist on the Intrepid Explorers monthly trip.

Emergency Relief

UnitingCare Tasmania works out of 4 locations plus the Southern Midlands. Over the 4 locations we have wonderful volunteers who assist in providing much needed assistance to our clientele. Over the last 12 months we have assisted 2127 clients in Gagebrook/Bridgewater ER, 1128 in Hobart Benevolent Society, 398 in Kingston and another 115 in Cygnet. Though our partnership with Rural Alive and Well Inc (RAW) we have assisted another 243 clients in the Southern Midlands. We provide anything from a bag of food to practical assistance in major crisis. In a remote area of the Southern Midlands, a client's house burnt down and they are now living in a caravan with 2 teenage twins. The insurance company will not pay for a rebuild as there was a mix up in the policy meaning the clients are still paying off a mortgage even though they have no home. They had reached crisis point. We were able to assist with mortgage payment and also register their car to assist in being able to move forward. Single mums are still struggling to make ends meet and we are finding a lot more homelessness especially in Hobart. We are seeing an increase in domestic violence and fear more is to come with the changes to welfare under the new budget. Our new data base gives us access to more vital statistics which assists in the ability to plan ahead. Christmas was a success this year with 120 food hampers being delivered to Southern Midland clients, vouchers to our clients at Kingston, Gagebrook, Cygnet and Hobart and toys to their children. Once again the volunteers were able to be on hand to distribute. A big thank you to other volunteers from Air Traffic Control, Kristy and friends and families of our staff who were able to assist in being Santa's helpers to sort out the donations from the ABC giving tree.

Bush Fire Donations

We have been able to assist with the rebuilding of some people's lives through the Bush Fire Donations Committee. This committee was formed through the Department of Premier and Cabinet to bring



together agencies committed to assisting people who had fallen through the cracks and had not been assisted with any of the funding made available. Some people were too embarrassed to ask for help during the funding rounds or were not eligible for various reasons. The money UCT are distributing through liaisons on the committee, were funds raised through Share as bushfire donations. We have assisted a lady purchase equipment to rebuild her small business that was not eligible for assistance. She has been able to move forward and become self sufficient and not rely on welfare. We have helped farmers purchase food and fencing along with other such assistance. It has been a pleasure to work alongside Salvation Army, St Vincent's, Rotary, Lions and the Red Cross. Much has been achieved by working behind the scenes and without recognition.

Prison program

The Prison program has gone from strength to strength. Our first swags have been delivered to be tested out by one of our homeless clients. He was impressed and was able to give feedback to be able to make minor adjustments. This program has been wonderful as Moira our volunteer, works with the women to produce outstanding goods for distribution among our clients. The bags they make are welcomed by our emergency relief clients as are the toiletry bags that we are able to fill with soap, deodorant, shaver, and tooth paste/tooth brush. The soft toys and quilts have been gratefully received by our Newpin and PYPS clients. They are beautifully made with pride and care. The tags on the quilt have Hand Made



With Pride (HMWP) which is also an acronym for Mary Hopkins Women's Prison. The inmates are learning new skills, learning to work in a team, brainstorming and having pride in their achievements. Some are thinking about how they can change their lives with their new skills and attitudes when they

are released from prison. They are proud to be giving back to society and I make sure they are aware of how grateful the recipients of their goods are.

Travelling Op Shop

The Top Shop in Ulverstone is still doing well. Glenys stepped down in January due to finding employment and a wonderful volunteer Val Britton was able to step up to take over the reins. Val has many years of experience in the fashion retail business and has been able to transform the bus into a beautifully presented Op Shop. Big thanks to Trevor Beswick our driver who has also taken over the maintenance of the bus. Unfortunately Val's husband passed away and

she has taken leave. Trevor and his wife Marlene have been able to step in and take over the reins. Down south we have taken over the back room of the Hobart Benevolent Society. We have had it painted, carpeted and are now in the process of sorting clothing for the next season of bus trips. This has also served in providing warm clothing for our Hobart Benevolent Client who we have



been able to clothe along with others in need. The blankets have also been distributed from here to clients who often don't have enough warm bedding.

Lois Van Eimeren
Community Services Manager

FAMILY SERVICES

Family Resource Library

The Family Resource Centre continues to operate, however we are now without a central person to manage and co-ordinate this. The absence of Wendy Miller, our former librarian, has impacted on the Paterson St staff, as staff are often interrupted from their work to assist those who wish to access or borrow from the library. The library resources continue to be accessed by agency workers, clients, community members and other service providers. Community demand for Family Support Guide has remained strong, with sales of several hundred books through the period. However due to funding constraints we have been unable to update and add to the resource collection.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Christine Jefferies continues to deliver the Grandparent's Raising Grandchildren program in the North West, based in the Ulverstone office. Christine provides support and assistance via direct one to one contact and also through regular group meetings that she facilitates. Christine has just over 70 clients on her files who she supports in various ways depending on their level of need. Christine ensures that she works hard to ensure that her families eventually more self sufficient and less reliant on external support. Christine is highly supported within the community with many of her clients actively providing feedback to the agency as to how invaluable they find her support.



Anne worked two days a week until 30 June. During this time, support was provided for 61 Families including telephone contact, home visits, coffee and chat meetings at several venues, a monthly newsletter and frequent emails of notices. Anne provided assistance to the Senate Enquiry into GRGs by holding consultations, providing a submission and attending the Hearing in Hobart in October. Going forward, the Southern GRG program will be reduced to one day a week, due to lack of ongoing funding.

We farewelled Jon Morrison in early 2013. During his time as the Northern GRG Support Worker, Jon had worked intensively with approximately 12 grandparent families with intensive needs. The northern model had not found success with group/morning tea opportunities, and so operated more as a case management program, until the subsequent funding period ended.

Newpin Inside Parents

The Newpin Inside program has been running back to back sessions. Each block runs from between 6-8 weeks. This year we have seen sessions being run in both minimum and medium security. Discussions around providing some inmates with the opportunity to engage on a one-to-one basis has resulted in a more flexible format and is aimed at inmates that are close to release. Post release follow up outside the prison is possible on a case by case decision this will increase opportunities for fathers to make successful connections with their children. This year we have had an increase of participants which has resulted in a waiting list.



Newpin Ashley

Newpin at the Ashley Youth Detention Centre ran a group session once a week until the end of May. Following a review of the program, a number of systematic issues were identified and the program delivery was ceased. The number of young people in detention has reduced significantly (partly as a result of the introduction of the Court Mandated Drug Diversion Program), and there was an average of 8 young people in residence at any given time, with only one or two being parents. Whilst the numbers remained low, there were also constant changes in who attended group, as the young people were either coming into the centre or were being released. It was identified that the custodial setting was not ideal for group program delivery for this age group as they are greatly influenced by peer pressure and were often outnumbered by centre staff who were present in a supervisory role over the centre residents. This made engagement difficult. Further consideration will be given to how we can continue to support young parents in a custodial setting, in a format that best meets their needs.

Pathway Home

The Pathway Home reunification program, delivered in Launceston, has been operating at capacity and achieving positive outcomes for families, with 9 children being returned to the full time care of their parent/s. The Pathway Home workers provide intensive support to assist families whose child or children have been placed into out of home care. Reunification is a very structured process that takes a considerable amount of time (often up to 2 years) to achieve. Pathway Home works to support children who have often experienced significant trauma, as well as working with the parent/s to address the areas of

concern, as identified by Child Protection. The program works very closely with Child Protection Services and a positive relationship between the services has been established. For each family the program is involved with, Pathway Home engages in 4-6 weekly meetings with Child Protection and the family to review progress. Pathway Home also has half yearly review meetings with Child Protection Services, in addition to attending state-wide Pathways Home meetings (Centacare in Hobart, and Anglicare in the North and North West).

Rural Outreach

Our partnership with the State Government, which commenced in early 2013, has exceeded expectations and our worker in this role is working to capacity and we are seeing amazing outcomes which has been recognised by other organisations and agencies. The worker at times is isolated geographically and safety around travelling long distances etc has been addressed with the installation of a fleet minder.

Outcome Star Family Plus

In 2013, staff were trained in the Outcome Star Family Plus state-wide, which is an important tool used with family support clients and IFSS clients across most programs. This comprehensive tool aims to provide both the client and the worker with a clear snap shot of where the client is placed across a number life domains, on a scale of 1 – 10. Apart from providing a useful visual aid, this tool clearly demonstrates to clients the areas in which they may need additional support, as well as identifying the areas in which the client is doing well. Angela Darke from the Southern Newpin team has previously worked with the Outcome Star and has been supporting & motivating staff to get the most out of this comprehensive tool. Angela is keen to become a state wide support for all staff.

Sally Ryan
Northern Regional Manager

Karen Browning
Southern Regional Manager

NEWPIN FAMILY FUTURES

NORTHERN NEWPIN

During the 2013 – 2014 period we supported 12 families with a further 8 families declining the services of the Newpin centre-based program and the Outreach service.



This year the Newpin centre was able to assist with food vouchers, donated blankets, clothing, an outing to Circus Quirkus and provide support to attend a local Art Therapy group at the Ravenswood Neighbourhood House. As we produce a monthly calendar we were able to schedule in conjunction with our Newpin education and therapeutic sessions, a Devonshire morning tea for Mother's Day (using our new stove purchased with funds donated by Glenlife), a Footy Day and general cooking sessions to update members' skills, as well as our regular visits from Dr. Scott and the Child Health Nurse. We held two events over this time, which included men, a BBQ and a family open day with the goal of introducing the Newpin core modules to male partners. We only had one male attend.

As with previous years we have worked collaboratively with other services. During this period we worked intensively with the co-located Child Protection Team Leader with one of our families and also with other services such as Family Violence, Launceston Community Legal Service, Early Learning, Child Health, Walker House, St Giles, Centacare, and the Child and Family Centre at Ravenswood. A social work student was also on placement with us for a period of four months.

The Newpin staff in late 2013 experienced a major critical incident and requested appropriate professional support from the manager, which was provided. As a result of having access to appropriate professional support all staff were able to process and continue their work in a highly professional manner. This situation did result in making improvements with regard to more mutual accountability with our vulnerable families, re extending home visits, more texts and phone calls, especially as members have extreme trauma backgrounds and usually Child Protection histories.

The Newpin centre has remained very stable with staff over the last few years but the Outreach program has had a number of changes, with three workers coming and going from the position during the 2013/14. During this time there was a request from management to reduce the overall centre-based hours which allowed us to streamline the roles and position one of our more experienced, longer term staff members in the Outreach program. A relief worker position was also secured enabling one of our 2014 Newpin graduates some occasional work in keeping with program philosophy of employing ex Newpin members. This year also saw the departure of our cleaner Sharee Loader who was replaced by Cynthia Davis.

Northern Newpin has been involved in the compliance and accreditation process of the van during the whole of this year. We have developed all the necessary pre departure paperwork and have completed all of the ongoing inspections up to date. We have also

continued to work on the maintenance issues for WH&S purposes around the building and the grounds. The vandalism this year has included broken windows and a few glass breakage alerts as monitored by the local security company.

Staff members have accessed much less training opportunities this financial year with Play Staff and Outreach attending The Accidental Counsellor and Motorvate Driving and the Coordinator attending SOS training and Homes that Heal.

Regular attendance throughout the year at WAAM ensured that both programs were able to secure families as they became available. There was a noticeable decline toward the end of the year in availability of families that fit the target group for Newpin programs.

The Northern Newpin Centre in Ravenswood has continued to operate at capacity to provide families with intensive support and education. Newpin in the North operate a centre-based program 3 days a week, and also provide an outreach service 2 days per week. Referrals for the outreach service come from Gateway, and we continue to see an increase in the complexity of issues that families are having difficulties in managing.



Despite a number of changes in staffing and management structure within the agency in the last 12 months, the northern Newpin team have remained a solid and stable unit.

Polly Fowler
Newpin Coordinator

SOUTHERN NEWPIN

There have been some significant changes and growth in the service delivery of Newpin. An increase in the complexity of referrals which equates to a higher level of service delivery. Staffing has been stable this year with the exception of filling a maternity leave position. Operating at this level has seen all southern staff attending regular monthly supervision which has proved to be very beneficial. A Newpin group has been established and operates 1 day a week out of Old Beach. UTAS students have provided back up support during these sessions which has provided both groups flexibility and support.

Of course the middle of the year provided both challenges and opportunities during the process of relocation from Bellerive to Old Beach, but it provided staff with the opportunity to have a good clean out and time to refocus the program with the potential for centre-based groups and related activities.

The success of two funding applications through the Community Support Levy, saw Newpin South purchase a transit van which has been an enormous asset to the program, allowing workers to better support clients who have limited mobility due to lack of licences/cars or irregularity of their local public transport options. The other successful funding application enabled the centre to invest in much-needed, educational play tools and equipment which are focused on child education and development, and have given us all, clients, workers and children, a lot of fun!



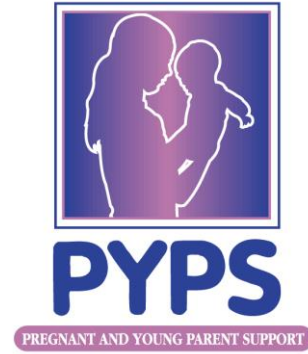
The team has benefited immensely from the staff who have joined the program, and had provided opportunities for career development, as we have welcomed the first two staff members whose careers have moved them into Family Services from the Scots Early Learning Centre. We were also able to support Anj as she moved from the Newpin program across to deliver our Rural Outreach program. Our thanks to Vyv who oversaw the program before moving across to project manage the PYPS Licencing project, before he farewelled the agency, when we welcomed Karen Browning back to the program in a managerial capacity.

Staff have continued to work alongside external bodies as the Newpin program has been externally evaluated, and this has offered new learning opportunities for us all.

Karen Browning
Southern Regional Manager

PYPS

PYPS continues to have a state-wide presence (Hobart, Old Beach, Launceston Georgetown and Burnie), and is able to offer a multi-faceted level of support to young families that varies in intensity. PYPS offers weekly group sessions, one to one family support, and Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS). State-wide there have been 7 PYPS workers. Robyn Rice was holding the position of PYPS team leader (state-wide), however she stepped down from this role early in 2014.



In the North Kelly Sheehan facilitated the Georgetown group and held capacity for 4 IFSS clients. The Georgetown group is has a consistently strong attendance, and Kelly formed strong and positive relationships with the client group. Kelly also offered home visits and individual support for those who may not wish to come to group, or who require an extended level of support. Kelly built strong community connections and the local child health nurse will also often drop into group. Work has commenced on the new Child and Family Centre (with completion due at the end of 2014), and it is anticipated the PYPS group will relocate to the new facility. As the Georgetown group is funded through Communities for Children (Anglicare Launceston), monthly meetings occur to provide program updates to Communities for Children, in addition to the comprehensive 6 monthly written reports. The ongoing funding of this program remains uncertain.

IFSS referrals in both the North and South have remained steady. There has been a marked increase in the complexity of cases coming through, with housing stress, financial difficulties and parental substance abuse being common themes. We continue to see an increase in the impact of the use of the drug ICE within the incoming referrals. The IFSS role is challenging and often extremely intensive, and usually requiring longer periods of intervention and support compared to that of our regular PYPS one to one support. Given the complexity of many of the IFSS cases, there are usually multiple services involved, so collaborative practice with other service providers is pivotal in ensuring positive outcomes for clients.

The Launceston group has been facilitated by both Kylie Warren and Madeline Gerke. Whilst there have been 23 clients on the books, the number actually attending group has been gradually declining over the first half of 2014. There are several reasons as to why this gradual decline may have occurred including the nature of group dynamics, the natural life-cycle of groups, group members getting older and exceeding the age criteria, group members returning to study, the influence of winter weather, and most importantly the skills and interactions

of the group facilitator. The PYPS team continue to work hard to create an interesting and diverse program that is attractive to the clientele.

PYPS camps were another success in 2013 for both the Northern and Southern clients. Participants from both the Launceston and Georgetown groups attended a 2 days camp at Camp Clayton in early November 2013, and it was lovely to see a few dads in attendance as well. An enormous amount of work and planning goes into ensuring that camps are a success and everyone has a good time. Ten families participated in the camp from the South.

PYPS in the South has been working at capacity most of the year. Working collaboratively with the Child and Family Centre in Bridgewater has increased UnitingCare's exposure within this region. The establishment of the program gave parents an opportunity to develop and practice positive parenting skills. Certificate 11 in Community services was also provided and this gave the group an avenue to gain a qualification as well as explore their own values and beliefs. Fifteen completed Cert 1 through the On Our Patch program & 6 received their full certificate 11 in Community Services. Six of the participants were selected as finalists in the 2014 Tasmanian Equity Awards. Eight women & several partners participated in Circle of Security (Attachment focus) which PYPS



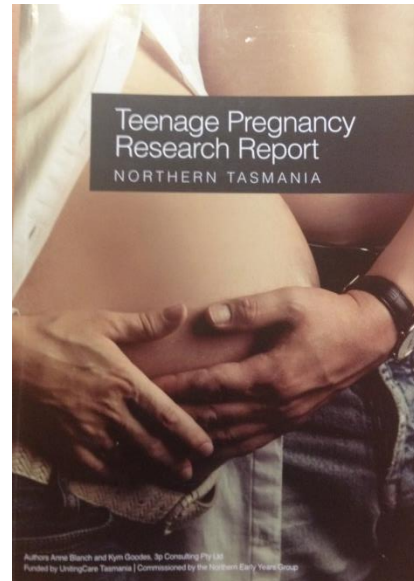
worker Lee-Anne Harris-Walters facilitated. The funding contract with The Salvation Army has ceased however the group continued running from Old Beach. Parent participation became purposeful and now the group is running with a mix of staff and parent volunteers.

The partnership between the PYPS program and Avidity Training and Development has continued to provide the PYPS participants with valuable training and upskilling opportunities. The Northern region has seen PYPS clients participate in a variety of training, including Certificate 1 in Business, and Certificates 1 and 2 in Community Services across Burnie, Georgetown and Launceston. We look forward to being able to continue to offer training opportunities to our PYPS clients in the coming year. The PYPS program in the North/Northwest is also looking at exploring further options in the coming year to connect with young parents who attend our local high schools and colleges.

PYPS has moved through many challenges and service changes this year. Dedicated Managers and Staff have navigated their way through showing commitment and strength. A common goal and innate understanding of the program and its objectives have seen PYPS flourish and achieve project aims.

Despite the number of significant staffing changes across the PYPS programs statewide, the underlying core theme of supporting our young parents in within the community continues to be a major part of our core business, and from community and stakeholder feedback, something we believe that we do well.

Finally, in late 2013, we were privileged to present the Northern Tasmania Teenage Pregnancy Research Report. The report was commissioned via our partnership with the Northern Early Years Group, funded through the Lenten Appeal, and prepared by 3P Consulting. The data represented in this publication will be important going forwards as research and statistic-based evidence of the needs and issues surrounding the young parent cohort in Northern Tasmania. We are already using the data as a tool to justify and inspire our work through the PYPS program around the state.



In November, PYPS Launceston was the invited program to launch the 'Bringing Baby Home' information pack, as prepared and provided by the Commissioner for Children's office, and we felt privileged to share in this opportunity.

Our partnership with Karinya, in delivering the Young Mums and Bub program continues to deliver strong outcomes and we work effectively with the Karinya staff in this model. Ongoing funding uncertainly may see the program cease, however if further funding can be sourced, we see real potential for the longevity of both the program and partnership.

Sally Ryan
Northern Regional Manager

Karen Browning
Southern Regional Manager

EARLY LEARNING SERVICES

SCOTS EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

Scots Early Learning Centre has continued to provide excellent care and education for the children despite a year of uncertainty and change. Scots Educators continued to provide professionalism in their work with the families and children at each of our locations - Melville Street, CamKindy, Campbell Street and Mount Stuart. Scots serves up to 200 children daily ranging in age from three months to twelve years.



September 2013 Scots ELC supported a visit from Claire Warden from Scotland who trains educators to work with children within natural environments. Scots Educators had the opportunity to explore the benefits of incorporating the outdoor education in early childhood programmes which supports learning outcomes set by the Early Years Learning Framework and National Quality Standards.

In February 2014 Scots ELC appointed a new Director who has lead the service through a period of change that reflects a positive atmosphere for children's learning through play and exploring natural environments. Educators are including a broader range of opportunities for children to extend their learning through vegetable gardens, water, bark and rocks and recycling materials to support a sustainable future.

To support the children's learning for a sustainable future and caring for our environment we upgraded the playground with recyclable materials and the staff, parents and children joined and worked together at a working bee to undertake the work to revamp the playground. Thanks go to Kelly Smith for her role in providing design, advice and support throughout this process.

Scots ELC continues to encourage our Educators to achieve the highest standards of qualifications to achieve the best outcomes for the children. All our Educators have Certificate 3 or above. Several have or are working towards their Diplomas and some are working on early childhood teaching degrees. All educators hold level 2 First Aid certificates which includes defibrillation, asthma emergency management and anaphylaxis.

During 2014 Scots staff have built united teams that empower members to be positive decision makers in all aspects of planning. This includes quality practice within the programs to provide strong and rich environments in literacy, numeracy and science to support the learning of all children to become more skilled, competent and confident learners through play and intentional teaching.

Scots has been involved in a humanitarian cause this year as we aim to serve the wider community and to teach our children humility and care for others who are less fortunate than them. The “Early Years Learning Framework” encourages us to contribute to the community and be connected with the wider world. To this end Scots sponsors two children through Compassion Australia in Bolivia and Thailand. Educators have training in cultural diversity to respectfully support the cultures of our migrant families. Scots Educators are also committed to widening their understanding of our Aboriginal culture.

The relationship between the Centre and Scots Memorial Congregation is a very important part of the Centre’s journey and has recently been reinvigorated. The children visited Scots church for the Easter Story with music and this was a most rewarding and enjoyable experience for them. We welcome further opportunities for similar events in the future.

The community is a major part of the children’s learning and we participated in awareness days for protecting children. The children shared lunch with their parents and let off white balloons with a message to protect children from



violence. We also participated in Pink Ribbon day where the children cooked cupcakes for their parents. The parents donated a coin and the children then took the raised funds to CBA.

We also support and educate children in healthy eating and oral health, this is done by careful menu planning, a greater involvement with independent serving of food and eating followed by programs that teach the importance of looking after our teeth not just by brushing but by food choices.

This year we have focussed on quality improvement over a number of areas. We have improved our administration systems and refined our OH&S responsibilities. These have been completed with assistance from Kelly Smith, Risk Manager Officer. Additionally we have implemented new strategies and processes to become more efficient in the financial management by changing our software to Qikkids from Kindy-Manager which is providing more efficient management of accounts and financial reporting systems. Our aim is to provide a sleeker, more efficient and accurate service to the parents.

We are working hard to be ready for the National Quality Assessment that will occur later in 2014. During this journey our Educators are gaining increased knowledge and understanding of Early Education and Care Legislation. The Assessment and Rating process will determine whether the service is meeting National Quality Standards in educational programs and practice, children's

health and safety, physical environment, staffing arrangements and relationships with children. We believe we will be well placed to meet the new standards which are significantly higher and more complex than the existing standards.

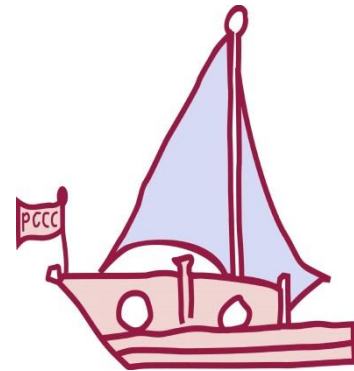
My focus as Director is to develop the Centre to achieve the highest level of quality and provide an outstanding level of care for our children focusing on rich learning environments and a sustainable future. I will continue to encourage Scots staff to strengthen their professional knowledge and quality practice to best support learning opportunities for children.

Scots ELC has been fortunate to have the support of a strong senior management team which has progressed our successful year. With the continued support of CEO and Business Manager of UnitingCare Tasmania I am confident that we will continue to work together to become a centre of excellence.

Marie Wilson
Director

PILGRIM EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

What a busy year we have had at Pilgrim Early Learning this year! We began the year quite concerned with low numbers of children accessing our occasional care centre. We realized that many families who use occasional care were struggling to make ends meet, and seeing child care as a luxury, were withdrawing to help their budgets. This of course was putting immense financial pressure on the program.



However in late 2013, TasTafe approached the Centre and requested placements for a number of children who had entered Australia under the Humanitarian Settlement Scheme, whilst their parents undertook English classes. This has seen the Centre filled to capacity in most sessions throughout the week.

Our team has remained stable, with no change from last year, however educators have continued to undertake ongoing training and development. All staff have achieved a minimum of Certificate 3 in Children's Services, with most educators either having completed or working towards their Diplomas in Children Services.

We undertook a review and reformat of all of our policies and procedures in late 2013, lining our policies as much as possible up with Scots Early Learning Centre's policies, creating better synergy across the agency. Thanks to Maddy and Nic for their work in getting everything looking good, and doing all of the typing, formatting and assembly.

We have continued to program using the Early Years Framework as our guide, and the children have enjoyed a range of craft, outdoor and roleplay opportunities which have been programmed with their development, education and pleasure at the forefront.

I am very proud of my team, and as I start to look forward and prepare for my own retirement later in 2014, I am so thrilled and inspired by the efforts each educator is taking to learn more about the running of the Centre and what opportunities the new year, might bring for them.

My particular thanks to Natasha, for her hard work and help in the office, Janine for her dedication and skill in programming, and Rosie who has been here forever like me (25 years this year!) and who offers her support and friendship to me and to the rest of the team.

Marilyn Chapman
Director

MEDIA/EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

In the 2013-14 financial year UnitingCare Tasmania appeared in more than 30 news items across the three forms of newspaper, radio and television. The biggest number of hits was achieved by the release of the Teenage Pregnancy Research Report, funded by UnitingCare. This was covered across all three media forms and was a clear example of how a powerful news story will always attract significant publicity. It even received front page coverage in The Mercury Newspaper. A two-page feature on the report was run in Crosslight, important given funding for the research was provided by the Church's Lenten Appeal.

Interestingly, in light of difficulties in getting publicity in Victoria, the Operation Santa launch in November was well received with two newspapers and both commercial television stations providing coverage. It is worth remembering the commercial nature of this event almost precludes ABC coverage, even more so given its own appeal (the ABC Giving Tree). Perhaps the most salient point in relation to Operation Santa is the timing of the release and how it is done. The Salvation Army-Kmart Wishing Tree launch appears to always been done earlier and a bigger event often featuring a choir or other name to kick it off.

PYPS and Newpin programs have continued to attract positive coverage from the main stream media and several of these announcements also had coverage in Crosslight, which is important in maintaining our relationship with potential financial supporters. During the last financial year we also began using Letters to the Editor as another means of getting media coverage and this has proven fairly successful and we will persevere down this track.

There is no doubt the media sees UnitingCare as a respected voice within the community services sector and that is assisted greatly by Chief Executive Lindy O'Neill's willingness to make reasoned comments across a range of issues. While it might be presumed that we get less media coverage than the Salvation Army or Anglicare a serious examination would prove that to be a folly, particularly when you look at our areas of community involvement and if you discount coverage of the Red Shield Appeal.

UnitingCare Tasmania has worked hard on its community recognition and understanding in the media. The fact we have been approached to comment on issues as broad as abortion law reform, the impact of State and Federal budgets, the needs of grandparents raising grandchildren, the struggles of low income earners and teenage pregnancy – to name a few – is testament to our success. In the next few months we will be devoting some time to our website with a view to making it more modern and interactive within the constraints of a very tight budget.

Nigel Tapp

Senior Communications Officer (Synod of Victoria and Tasmania)