



ANNUAL REPORT

family

2017-2018

A D V O C A C Y

family

A D V O C A C Y

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OVERVIEW



VISION & MISSION

vision

Family Advocacy's vision is of families being agents of positive social change so the inherent value of people with developmental disability is recognised within a just and inclusive society.

mission

The mission is for people with developmental disability to attain socially valued roles within the community. This is accomplished through strengthening the advocacy, knowledge and understanding of families. Family Advocacy's focus is to encourage and support families to speak up and seek opportunities with and on behalf of their family members so as to enjoy the same environments, lifestyles and living conditions afforded to most Australians.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In carrying out its mission, Family Advocacy recognises that families can find it difficult to affect ways in which they or their family member with disability can be supported within the context of family and community. This is because of:

- lack of information about alternatives to what is on offer
- isolation, vulnerability, extra pressures and financial costs
- lack of opportunities for community members to get to know and value individuals with disability
- diminished expectations by family about its role and influence in the life of the person with disability
- lack of flexible, family-focused supports
- segregated service systems which lessen opportunities for people with disability to be included in the ordinary life of the community
- lowered confidence to tap into ordinary community resources
- underdeveloped skills and expertise to perform an advocacy role
- lack of independent, organised formal advocacy which supports their individual or local advocacy efforts on behalf of people with disability.

Family Advocacy is an independent, state-wide, community-based advocacy organisation which promotes and protects the rights, needs and interests of children and adults with developmental disability*.

Family Advocacy bases its work on the belief that:

- all people with disability are full members of the community
- good communities are made up of a diverse range of people
- people who have disability have contributions and skills to bring to society.

The organisation recognises that society has, as a matter of public policy, segregated people with disability from the mainstream of society. It recognises the extreme harm caused to people with disability and their families by segregationist policies, and supports the policies embodied in the *Objectives and Principles of the Commonwealth Disability Services Act 1986* and the *Objectives, Principles and Applications of Principles of the NSW Disability Services Act 1993*. Regulatory processes designed to ensure that direct services adhere to these principles are also critical.

PRINCIPLES ABOUT PEOPLE:

- all people, regardless of gender, age, disability, ethnicity, sexuality or religion, have the same human, social and legal rights
- people who have disability are contributing members of the whole community
- all people regardless of the nature and degree of disability have the capacity to learn and develop throughout their lives
- people with disability are vulnerable to oppression, exploitation, discrimination, segregation and rejection by society.

*Developmental disability includes but is not limited to: autism, intellectual disability cerebral palsy, spina bifida and multiple disability

PRINCIPLES & ADVOCACY

PRINCIPLES ABOUT FAMILIES:

- Except for advocacy by individuals who themselves have disability, advocacy by families constitutes the single most important safeguard to protecting and promoting the rights and interests of people with disability
- The family is likely to be the most enduring and constant form of relationship in a person's life and, as such, is the first line of defence in the interests of people with disability
- The family provides the most natural and powerful environment for growth and development. The family is the focus for the development of a range of relationships which lead to inclusion in the life of the community
- While the nature of family relationships evolve as a person grows, for all adults, the family continues to function as an important emotional and strategic link into the community. Positive growth and development is most likely to occur within a family in which each member is valued.

PRINCIPLES ABOUT COMMUNITY:

- Strengthening individual, natural and informal relationships is the most powerful way to maintain, develop, or enhance the inclusion of people who have disability in the community.

ADVOCACY

Advocacy is speaking, acting and/or writing with minimum conflict of interest on behalf of the sincerely perceived interest of a person or persons with disability in order to promote, protect and defend their interests, rights and needs.**

Advocacy strives to be emphatic and vigorous and is, or is very likely to be, costly to the advocate.

**Adapted from Wolfensberger to align to social advocacy for people with disability.

GOVERNANCE



STRUCTURE & MANAGEMENT

Family Advocacy is incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act and operates under the rules of association adopted by members on 19 June, 1991. Under these rules Family Advocacy's affairs are governed by the Committee.

The Committee's primary responsibility is to ensure Family Advocacy stays true to its vision and mission in advocating effectively on behalf of people with developmental disability in NSW and achieves the goals set out in the Strategic Plan.

The Committee, which comprises the Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary and up to a maximum of 15 ordinary members, is elected each year at the time of the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

In fulfilling its primary role, the Committee meet at least six times per year. At these meetings the Committee considers:

- the Treasurer's Report, which details income, expenditure and financial position
- membership matters
- staff and administrative matters
- systemic and general advocacy matters
- correspondence
- complaints
- risk & compliance
- outcomes of program delivery to families and people with disability in NSW.

The proceedings at each meeting are minuted and kept as a permanent record of the business conducted by the Committee.

The Committee reports to members at the AGM where the Annual Report and the audited financial report for the year ended is presented to members.

MEMBERSHIP

As an incorporated association with membership across NSW, Family Advocacy membership is open to individuals only and not organisations or individuals representing organisations.

The individuals that make up the membership of Family Advocacy believe in and support the vision and mission of the organisation and are committed to its goals of creating a genuinely inclusive society. Family Advocacy places high value on its members and the contributions they make to the organisation. Members actively participate by presenting at events, providing input into policy, systemic advocacy, strategic planning and becoming a Committee member. Family Advocacy acknowledges the important role of members and thanks them for their continued support throughout the 2017-2018 year.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Family Advocacy AGM was held on Sunday November 12, 2017 at The Westin Hotel in Sydney. The meeting took place to coincide with the National Symposium on Inclusive Education organised by Family Advocacy.

Lesley Light, chairperson of the Management Committee presided over the meeting. Lesley presented her Chairperson's report and Alex Purvis presented the Treasurer's report. Both reports were part of the 2016-2017 Annual Report which had been electronically made available to the membership.

All nominations for committee membership were accepted and elected. Andrew Brak was reappointed as Public Officer and *Harley, Russel and Day Chartered Accountants* reappointed as the Auditor for 2017-2018.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



ANDREW WILSON
Chairperson



LESLEY LIGHT
Immediate Past Chairperson



MELISSA SMITH
Secretary



DI SAMUELS
Treasurer



ALEX PURVIS
Assistant Treasurer



JANE GILKES
Committee Member



ANNETTE BUSH
Committee Member



LINDA HUGHES
Committee Member

VOLUNTEERS & FAMILY LEADERS

The work of Family Advocacy has been supported and enhanced by the family leaders and volunteers who have generously given time, insights and expertise to administration, advocacy, workshops and systemic advocacy in 2017-2018 in the following ways:

- collaborations with Family Advocacy staff to develop resources and workshops
- providing administrative support in the lead up to workshops and at other critical times
- sharing stories and insights of lived experience with politicians, at events and online
- connecting with and encouraging other families.

Families attending Family Advocacy events in 2017-2018 continued to indicate the importance of hearing from other families and we acknowledge those volunteers who travel substantial distances to provide assistance to the organisation and its initiatives.

Thank you to all volunteers and Family Leaders for your generosity of time and effort to support and deliver Family Advocacy's vision and mission, and also to your families who support your endeavours with us.

Thank you to the following for volunteering in 2017-2018:

- Meredith Baylis
- Sean Barker
- Sharon Baumanis
- Andrew Brak
- Shawn Burns
- Yolande Cailly
- Dr Kathy Cologon
- Jo Cross
- Rachael Cross
- Matt Dimmock
- Belinda Epstein-Frisch
- Sarah Estebrook
- Megan Farebrother
- Philippa FitzPatrick*
- Ben Fitzell
- Sandra Gobell-Macgregor
- Margaret Hardman
- Susan Hoffmann
- Dr. Bob Jackson
- Kamran Jusufovic
- Abdul Karim-Bouchafaa
- Malou Liwanag
- Lucille Murphy
- Kelly Payne
- Brodie Player-McElroy
- Andre Samuels
- Wendy Stroeve
- Vannessa Shearman
- Regan Tippet
- Gina Wilson-Burns
- Alison Wilson
- Annette Bush, in addition to role as a Committee Member
- Jane Gilkes, in addition to role as a Committee Member
- Linda Hughes, in addition to role as a Committee Member
- Barbara Phair: Ashurst Australia
- Alex Purvis, in addition to role as a Committee Member
- Di Samuels, in addition to role as a Committee Member
- Mel Smith, in addition to role as a Committee Member
- Nathan Huynh: Ashurst Australia
- Struan Davidson: Ashurst Australia
- Georgia Monaghan: Ashurst Australia

* Philippa FitzPatrick volunteered intensively for a four month period during the reporting period to support an administrative drive to update the organisation's data records.

Family Advocacy would also like to particularly acknowledge Margaret Hardman, who volunteered in the Epping Family Advocacy office once a week, every week, for nine years (2009-2018).

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Family Advocacy is blessed with wonderful leadership in the Executive Officer and Management Committee—all people with a lived experience of disability, plus a dedicated experienced staff. As a parent, and as Chair this last year, thank you for delivering, again, for persons with a disability and their families; the members and stakeholders of our not-for-profit association.

On Thursday the 21st of September 2017 a multi-partisan committee of the Parliament of NSW—not a journalist, an NGO or a lobby group—issued a report exposing the lack of progress in NSW for the education of students with a disability. I quote from Finding 1, “the inclusive approach to education provision promoted in legislation and policy is not the reality experienced by many students with disabilities”. On Monday the 9th of October 2017 many Family Advocacy members watched the 7:30 *Report's* story, on the ABC, about abuse of disabled children in the NSW Education system. On Monday the 25th of June 2018 we also watched ABC's *QandA* episode on those living with disability who shared the shortcomings of the NDIS. These examples are the reasons why we need Family Advocacy.



ANDREW WILSON

We need to educate, empower, capacity build, network, encourage and stand-by in times of need, our families. Sometimes we need to say, “Stop, that is not OK” to a school principal, a disability service provider, a transport service provider or the NDIS. It is at those moments that people with disabilities and their families need our support, or remember the workshop we provided that prepared them for the next confrontation with the ‘system’ a.k.a the maze.

OUR WORK IS NOT YET FINISHED

By any measure there is a long way to go. Family Advocacy will continue its systemic advocacy to push legislative and department policy issues, and push through blockages that delay necessary important improvements. We will continue to hold workshops for parents and carers in Sydney and regional NSW to educate, empower and connect citizens to push on.

In this last year we held a National Symposium on Inclusive Education and heard how Italy and parts of Canada can succeed where Australian institutions struggle. At Inspire 2018 we facilitated workshops on how self management of an NDIS package can empower people with disabilities and deal with obstacles.

PLACE

In 2018 we moved from a tired, old, noisy office in Epping to new premises in Hornsby, with lower occupancy costs, new up-to-date facilities and the positive vibe of a new workspace, ready to take on ‘next’.

[continues on the next page]

SUSTAINABILITY OF NSW ADVOCACY FUNDING IN THE FUTURE

Much of the Q1, 2018 was spent with our #standbyme colleagues campaigning for ongoing funding for disability advocacy in NSW. I live on the boundary of two NSW electorates and note both of the proximate local members; Matt Kean and Damien Tudehope, get it.

That is, the funding of advocacy for NSW education issues, NSW transport issues, NSW consumer issues and systemic advocacy to help make NSW a better place for people with a disability is **not surprisingly—not** something that national funding via the NDIS insurance scheme should be funding. Rather, it is a small approximately \$15M a year commitment to NSW and we note Victoria and Queensland have pledged to fund it.

While the NDIS may have been described by various national politicians as a panacea, there will always be the need for the States to meet their human rights obligations. Hey guys, you run an education system it is not too much to ask to make it compliant with UN policies.

GOING FORWARD

Family Advocacy will continue to work with State and Federal Governments to improve outcomes for people with disability. Watch this space, Australia will eventually catch up to the rest of the developed world in this space. #SameClassroom. Bring on 2019.

Andrew Wilson
Chairperson 2017-2018

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The organisation's goals and objectives are determined by the Management Committee who represent members.

ORGANISATION GOALS

Family Advocacy will:

- enable families to become agents of positive social change in the lives of people with developmental disability
- be a credible public voice that defends, promotes and enhances the rights and interests of people with developmental disability
- strengthen families to develop and negotiate alternatives to current service practice consistent with building positive social roles for people with developmental disability
- broaden and activate the constituency of people who will speak out for the rights and interests of people with developmental disability
- strive to enhance the capacity and operation of the organisation to ensure its renewal, viability and effectiveness.

OBJECTIVES

- (a) to provide families in which there is a person with developmental disability with information, resources, skills and support in order to perform an advocacy role
- (b) to encourage the development and effectiveness of family-based advocacy groups
- (c) to provide an avenue for the development of leadership amongst families
- (d) to monitor and, where necessary, make representations about legislation, policies and practices which affect people with developmental disability and their families
- (e) to disseminate information about legislation, policies and practices to families
- (f) to encourage the involvement of people who have disability, families and friends, in the work of the organisation.



Image: Screenshot from Family Advocacy's Access Symposium site.

2017-2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

The 2017-2018 financial year has come and gone with great speed and with a lot of work accomplished by Family Advocacy during that time.

CONTINUED ADVOCACY FUNDING

The year was more turbulent than most due to the NSW government's reluctance to continue to fund state based advocacy.

The ongoing nature of funding is always something to be mitigated within an NGO however much more was at stake this year.

Concern around the state government's commitment to cut NSW advocacy funding was less about Family Advocacy's ongoing funding and more about the necessity for a robust, independent and impartial advocacy sector to continue post June 2018.

The early signs of the erosion of the NSW advocacy sector caused the organisation great concern as much of its work is done on both an individual and systems advocacy level that contributes to improved outcomes for people with disability.

The state advocacy sector acts as an assurance that gives rise to addressing significant barriers that impact on a person with disability's ability to live a full and meaningful life. Without this assurance this already marginalised group experiences a greater risk of being further left behind.

Lack of assurance of advocacy funding mobilised Family Advocacy members and lead to them contributing greatly to advocacy campaigns during the reporting period. For some families this meant educating members of parliament, with many attending meetings or writing to their local members to express their experience and concern. The story did not end there with continued work to occur in the year ahead to ensure advocacy funding in NSW becomes an integral part of the support fabric for people with disability.

Family Advocacy continues to maintain the reputation of holding a strong and consistent voice across NSW on issues that impact on people with disability. This has involved extensive involvement in attempting to shape better systems in education, housing, the National Disability Insurance Scheme, the area of 'complaints and compliance' and more broadly areas that create barriers for people to live full lives included in community.

The last 12 months saw the organisation involved in and contributing to many stakeholder groups, consultations, advisory groups and briefings.

Our governance structure has remained strong with the management committee continuing to comprise of dedicated and passionate family members with a wealth of experience both from a lived experience perspective and a systems change perspective.

This strong governance structure remains the most singular means of success for the organisation in its ability to remain aligned to its vision and mission and to be constant and vigilant in its efforts.



CECILE SULLIVAN ELDER

The governance has remained focused on the work the organisation needs to undertake as well as balancing assessments of the external environment whilst continuing to give honour to the purpose of the organisation's work.

Family Advocacy has had the privilege of meeting a lot of new families over the last 12 months in our continued support of families seeking better outcomes for their family members with disability. We have seen the steady rise of membership of families who align with both our Vision and Mission and who want to become involved in the work of Family Advocacy.

A most definite highlight for Family Advocacy this year was the relocation from our long term offices in Epping to new premises in Hornsby. This move was a long time in the making with the primary objective being to find a new office location which met the current and future needs of the organisation and supports its work. We now look forward to building a history in the new office space over the years to come.

In this financial year, Resourcing Families had a change of name to Resourcing Inclusive Communities and launched a new look and logo. This initiative continued to build the capacity of families and broader community across NSW.

Family Advocacy has been fortunate to maintain a strong and dedicated team of employees over the last 12 months who bring a raft of experience to their roles. Much significant work has been accomplished by each work area over this period of time and a great sense of cohesion continues to cascade across each work area within the organisation.

If two significant projects were to be identified this year it would be firstly the inclusive education National Symposium event, held in November 2017, which saw great numbers of people attend from around Australia who were interested in improved outcomes for students with disability in the NSW education system. This event had an international flair and importantly was supported by some of our state and federal political leaders. We had an opportunity to analyse education systems that are more advanced than ours and to give thought to how NSW could move towards a more advanced system. This event was a great success in shifting thinking to the future of the education system for students with disability.

The second event that is important to highlight is Inspire 2018 which brought together over 150 family members aspiring to learn more about self-management. Many families also presented at this two-day event to showcase successful elements of self-direction.

Family Advocacy has always seen self-management as a strong mechanism for building a life lived in a community filled with valued roles that can ensure that supports for a person are wrapped around the vision to achieve this.

It was fabulous to be able to bring together both old and new families and to support the building of relationships amongst these families in the learnings over the two days. Families were also given the opportunity to raise barriers to self-management with the National Disability Insurance Agency and to bring clarity to some elements of policy and practice.

We look forward to continuing to advocate on behalf of and empowering families and individuals to become their own advocate for people with disability.

Cecile Sullivan Elder
Executive Officer 2017-2018

STATEWIDE OVERVIEW: ALL EVENTS

JULY 1, 2017-JUNE 30, 2018



GREATER SYDNEY

- | | | |
|----------------|------------|----------------|
| Bankstown | Haberfield | Marrickville |
| Baulkham Hills | Hornsby | Manly |
| Campbelltown | Hurstville | Miranda |
| Chatswood | Kingsford | Mona Vale |
| Dee Why | Liverpool | Ryde |
| Fairfield | Padstow | Sydney city |
| Five Dock | Penrith | Sth Hurstville |
| Glenmore Park | Maroubra | Toongabbie |

FAMILY ADVOCACY EVENTS

JULY 1, 2017-JUNE 30, 2018

MONTH/YEAR	EVENT TITLE	LOCATION
July 25, 2017	Let's Get Started	Toongabbie
July 27, 2017	Let's Get Started	Marrickville
August 4, 2017	Family Advocacy presentation	Haberfield
September 5, 2017	Education Advocacy presentation	Ashfield
September 12, 2017	Taking Action Advocacy presentation	Grafton
September 14, 2017	One Of The Kids workshop	Lismore
September 15, 2017	Taking Action Advocacy presentation	Alstonville
September 20, 2017	Let's Get Started	Lithgow
October 20, 2017	OOTK	Canberra
October 21, 2017	Lithgow Community Expo	Lithgow
November 13, 2017	National Symposium Inclusive education	Sydney
November 22, 2017	Enriching lives for people with disability	Bega
November 23, 2017	Enriching lives for people with disability	Canberra
February 22, 2018	Inclusive education presentation	Liverpool
March 6, 2018	Information session	Strathfield
March 6, 2018	Let's Get Started	Marrickville
March 20, 2018	Let's Get Started	Broken Hill
March 26, 2018	OOTK	Hurstville
March 27, 2018	OOTK	Manly
March 27, 2018	OOTK	Fairfield
April 10, 2018	OOTK	Hornsby
April 11, 2018	OOTK	Kingsford
April 12, 2018	OOTK	Tumby Umbi
May 1, 2018	Information Session	Chatswood
May 3, 2018	Inclusive education presentation	Baulkham Hills
May 8, 2018	Inclusive education presentation	Gosford
June 14, 2018	Inclusive education presentation	Maroubra
June 20, 2018	Inclusive education presentation	Port Macquarie
June 26, 2018	Inclusive education presentation	Five Dock
June 27, 2018	Inclusive education presentation	Campbelltown
June 29-30, 2018	Same Classroom. Same Opportunity Campaign Launch	Terrey Hills

RESOURCING INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

JULY 1, 2017-JUNE 30, 2018

MONTH/YEAR	EVENT TITLE	LOCATION
September 19, 2017	Developing Community Connections	Dee Why
September 21, 2017	Developing Community Connections	Newcastle
October 17, 2017	Developing Community Connections	Lithgow
October 19, 2017	Developing Community Connections	Penrith
November 14, 2017	Developing Community Connections	Tamworth
November 15, 2017	Developing Community Connections	Armidale
November 16, 2017	Developing Community Connections	Inverell
November 27, 2017	Families Getting NDIS Ready	Cobar
November 28, 2017	Families Getting NDIS Ready	Bourke
November 29, 2017	Families Getting NDIS Ready	Walgett
December 5, 2017	Developing Community Connections	Mittagong
December 6, 2017	Developing Community Connections	Goulburn
December 7, 2017	Developing Community Connections	Bankstown
February 27, 2018	Developing Community Connections	Coffs Harbour
February 28, 2018	Developing Community Connections	Lismore
March 1, 2018	Developing Community Connections	Tweed Heads
March 13, 2018	Developing Community Connections	Nowra
March 14, 2018	Developing Community Connections	Wyong
March 15, 2018	Developing Community Connections	Miranda
March 16, 2018	Developing Community Connections	Ryde
April 4, 2018	Developing Community Connections	Wagga Wagga
April 5, 2018	Developing Community Connections	Griffith
April 6, 2018	Developing Community Connections	Albury
May 22, 2018	Developing Community Connections	Dubbo
May 23, 2018	Developing Community Connections	Parkes
May 24, 2018	Developing Community Connections	Orange
May 31- June 1, 2018	Inspire Conference	Parramatta

Breakdown of enquiries: July1, 2017-June 30, 2018					
	2016-2017	2017-2018		2016-2017	2017-2018
Education	36.6%	45.3%	Isolation	<2.0%	<2.0%
NDIS	25.7%	24.9%	Legal	<2.0%	<2.0%
Future Planning	1.5%	<2.0%	Employment	2.2%	<2.0%
Systems Issues	9.2%	8.9%	Abuse / Neglect	2.6%	<2.0%
Post School Support	<2.0%	2.0%	Equipment	<2.0%	<2.0%
Services	4.6%	2.0%	Finances	<2.0%	<2.0%
Discrimination	5.7%	4.8%	Health	<2.0%	<2.0%
Accommodation	2.4%	3.3%	Independent Living Support	<2.0%	<2.0%
Recreation	2.0%	<2.0%	Transport	<2.0%	<2.0%
Individualised Funding	<2.0%	<2.0%			

Image: Screenshot from Family Advocacy's Access Symposium site.

ADVOCACY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

MANAGER'S REPORT

LEADERSHIP

Family leadership development and training involves the encouragement and nurturing of parents to take on leadership roles. A robust and targeted strategy of supporting and encouraging families to take up leadership roles—in line with the mission and vision of the organisation—has resulted in many confident and active family leaders connected to the organisation.

Family Advocacy's vision sees families as agents of positive social change so the inherent value of people with developmental disability can be recognised within a just and inclusive community.

The organisation recognises families are in the best position to be effective advocates for their family member/s with disability and believes in the importance of events that develop connections, awareness and the individual skills of family members.



KAREN TIPPETT

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING

In 2017-2018 there was a continued approach to reach younger families and build out connections to family leaders further along their inclusive education journeys. Family leaders shared their knowledge, on a broader level, within workshops and information sessions, as guest speakers and as part of workshop audiences.

Family Advocacy supported family members to:

- attend events sponsored by Family Advocacy
- enhance their skills and knowledge by undergoing specific training
- experience values-based training for deeper understanding and community building
- present and assist at Family Advocacy workshops
- share their stories at events
- contribute experiences and testimonies to the Family Advocacy library, resources and web sites
- attend and participate in meetings with politicians or senior bureaucrats.

Family Advocacy also encouraged individuals to become involved in presenting material and facilitating group work at workshops, information sessions and sometimes at conferences across the state so they could meet a wide and diverse range of people, expand their knowledge sets and share their experiences to increase their own skills, competencies and confidence in relation to their advocacy efforts and as a family leader.

Workshop materials were supplied and discussed in advance so family leaders were well prepared and comfortable contributing. Self-evaluation was encouraged and feedback offered.

ATTENDING EVENTS

As part of the leadership development program Family Advocacy provided sponsorship to members to attend events run by other organisations as well as Family Advocacy. This served to strengthen knowledge, facilitate networking and encourages idea generation.

Events families were supported to attend included:

- Social Role Valorisation two-day training; *Towards a Better Life*, Foundations Forum, Sydney
- *One of the Kids*, Inclusive education workshops
- *Let's Get Started*, presentations on inclusive schooling, Sydney locations

- *Moral Coherency*, seven-day training with the SRV implementation group, Sydney
- *National Symposium on Inclusive Education*, Sydney
- Two-day conference *Belonging Matters*, Melbourne
- *National Inclusion Conference* 2 day conference with Imagine More, ACT
- *SRV 7th International Conference*, Winnipeg Manitoba Canada.

EDUCATION

Getting off to a good start in life is vital for all children, particularly children with developmental disability. A good start means commencing a path that keeps the child embedded in their family and community. A 'special' or 'separate' path can lead to children and families feeling isolated, vulnerable and disconnected from the typical and ordinary environments other children and families enjoy.

Family Advocacy's aim is that all children are supported in age appropriate ways to be active members of their families and communities. This starts with being a valued member of regular classrooms. Education increasingly forms a large part of the organisations contact with families and in 2017-2018 comprised close to half of all enquiries taken by Family Advocacy. Barriers families face in education continue to include:

- unwelcoming culture of schools impeding the student from being fully included
- suspending students without proper consideration of the impact of their disability and not putting better processes in place to counter this
- limited parental involvement to contribute to setting goals and strategies for the student
- coercing parents to consider segregated school settings
- suggesting parents consider distance education and home schooling as alternatives
- discouraging enrolments of students with disability and continuing to cite funding as being a reason to not have a student at the school
- use of partial enrolment as a means of addressing apparent funding shortfalls.

Family Advocacy continues to assist families to advocate in a positive way with schools in order to manage the barriers listed above and to create a good learning environment for their family member with disability. The insights and understanding we receive from families then informs the organisation's systemic work to affect broader change.

Responses to each enquiry will depend on the individual circumstances but typically include:

- considering strategies with the individual to formulate a course of action
- providing resources such as articles or documents to increase knowledge and assist people in coming to an informed decision
- advising contact details for other organisations when the request is outside the expertise of Family Advocacy (e.g. legal matters)
- linking the person seeking information to another family with insights to share
- gathering research around a specific topic to ensure that up to date information or new perspectives are supplied
- making contact with senior decision makers where an issue is of systemic significance.

Family Advocacy gathers this information to highlight state-wide trends and enable responsive planning.

LET'S GET STARTED: GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL AND LIFE: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

This two-hour presentation was designed to assist families plan a positive future for their family member and consider the benefits of an inclusive education to achieve this. The focus was on families with children preparing for or in the early years of school.

Family Advocacy was invited to present to families connected with early intervention organisations supporting their transition to school. Five presentations were held in both metro and regional locations reaching over 60 people.

Transition is a point in time when families are making key choices on schooling for their child and they often miss out on information about the benefits of being educated in a regular class and the supports available to facilitate this. Other families said they were often challenged around their decision to

have their child(ren) educated in a regular class. The presentation was designed to assist families to formulate a clear vision, acquire knowledge of the evidence for inclusive education and apply strategies for communicating with schools. Participants particularly valued the insights and experiences shared by family leaders who were on hand to answer questions.

ONE OF THE KIDS: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The Advocacy & Leadership Development team traveled throughout NSW to present this core workshop on inclusive education to over 90 families across ten workshops. Relevant for families of preschool, primary and high school students looking to learn advocacy skills and strategies to assist them to achieve an inclusive education for their children with a disability, this workshop covered topics such as:

- how the school years can lead to a meaningful life
- a brief history of disability education
- what an inclusive education looks like
- evidence and support for inclusive education
- how inclusion can look in the classroom
- education policies and supports that exist within schools and necessary advocacy tools and strategies for families.

These workshops provided opportunities for robust and at times challenging discussions. Families made the most of networking and asking questions about their own specific issues. Evaluations indicated expectations were either met or exceeded.

Many resources were provided on 'the day' and followed up with an email to continue the 'thought process' and encourage families to continue to develop their understanding of the subject. The education booklet, *All Students Learning Together-Taking Action on Education*, was distributed to all participants with extras provided for sharing with others.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PRESENTATION

Family Advocacy was, again, invited by Carers NSW to present a one-hour segment on inclusive education at their *Moving Forward Forums for Families* where information was provided in addition to multiple articles on the day. These presentations took place in regional and Sydney metropolitan locations and reached over 80 families.

ADVOCACY AND EDUCATION PRESENTATION

Family Advocacy was invited by the Centre for Disability Studies to speak about the importance of advocacy in education.

TAKING ACTION FOR A GOOD LIFE

This workshop was a practical, skill-building session for families to assist and support them to be effective advocates for their family member working towards a good life embedded in community.

INFORMATION SESSION: ADVOCACY BY FAMILIES

A presentation was delivered to a third-year undergraduate university class studying inclusion. The presentation investigated the advocacy this organisation fosters and provided explanations about and examples of the work of Family Advocacy.

Attendees received a resource which outlined the tools for being an effective advocate. They were also encouraged to make contact with the organisation to discuss any specific issues and barriers they may be facing.

ENRICHING LIVES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

This workshop guided families through a framework to explore a person's interests and evaluate ways to connect to community in an authentic way. Advocacy strategies and tips are covered and attendees left with practical tools they could implement straight away.

See page 17 for the full list of events delivered by Advocacy Development & Leadership in 2017-2018.

NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

A key event in the 2017-2018 year was the National Symposium on Inclusive education held in November, 2017. Over 180 people attended seeing families, educators, academics, professionals, and politicians coming together to learn more about inclusive education and how they could deepen their own knowledge base.

A strong line up of speakers covered a broad arc of inclusive education including:

- a showcase of international systemic adoption of inclusive education
- illustrations of how to implement inclusive education at the school level
- parent and student experiences
- a panel discussion which presented five perspectives; the politician, academic, educator and parents.

The National Symposium provided the audience with opportunities to hear about successful instances of inclusive education and begin to understand how Italy and New Brunswick in Canada have implemented fully inclusive education systems.

“I felt the flow of presenter was excellent. I felt like I was taken on a journey whereby the knowledge was being built on or reinforced throughout the day. Great work, loved it”

Speakers:

- The Hon. Rob Stokes MP, NSW Minister for Education
- Alastair McEwin, Australian Disability Discrimination Commissioner, reminded the audience about Australia’s human rights obligations
- Professor Roger Slee (UniSA), an inclusive education academic, clarified what IS inclusive education
- Jihad Dib, MP Shadow Minister for Education
- Jody Carr, from New Brunswick, Canada where he was a member of the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick and Minister for Education at the time, shared with the audience policies that brought consistent and authentic inclusive education to the province which ceased segregated schooling 20 years ago
- Professor Simona D’Alessio (UCL Institute of Education) is an international researcher and advocate for inclusive education in Italy and spoke about how Italian students are schooled together and the benefits to society more broadly
- Dr Carol Quirk, Director of Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education (MCIE) works with schools to implement full inclusion
- Leanne Woodley, Senior Education Consultant at The Association of Independent Schools of NSW spoke about a pilot programme to transform schools
- Loren Swancutt, who was the Head of Special Education at a Queensland High school that closed its ‘Special Unit; and transitioned all students into mainstream classes, at the time of the Symposium shared her experience
- Yolande Cailly provided a parent’s perspective and shared her advocacy with regards to her daughters move from a support unit to a regular mainstream class in Year 2.

KAREN TIPPETT

Advocacy & Leadership Development Manager 2017-2018



SYSTEMS ADVOCACY

Photo: Supplied

MANAGER'S REPORT

NDIS

Family Advocacy consulted extensively with the NDIA in relation to the self-management option being as accessible and user friendly as possible for people with disability and families.

Our work in this area was undertaken both formally and informally with much information gathered from families across NSW.

The Systems Advocacy team utilised Facebook as an effective platform to communicate to and with families to gauge their needs and concerns. Communication with families included:

- conducting surveys in relation to the Productivity Commission submission
- providing the results of the survey with a link to Family Advocacy's submissions to the Productivity Commission and the Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS into Transitional Arrangements for the NDIS
- sharing insights and checklists

The Systems Advocacy team also produced the following resources to support families in harnessing the increased self-direction opportunities that sector changes induced:

- an NDIS update which went on the website, was sent out via email and posted on Facebook
- an NDIS Pre-planning tips fact sheet
- an NDIS Troubleshooting Guide fact sheet
- an NDIS Appeals and the Administrative Appeals Tribunal fact sheet
- a Service Agreements Guide fact sheet
- an easy-to-read flowchart on how to challenge an NDIS decision
- an easy-to-read checklist on the Reasonable and Necessary test
- an easy-to-read checklist on whether an applicant meets the 'disability requirements'
- NDIS family updates

NDIS Survey

The Systems Advocacy team conducted a survey tapping into a segmented 'NDIS contact' list and received 100 responses.

The survey was specifically focused on the planning process and satisfaction with NDIS plans.

The survey results were utilised as the backbone of Family Advocacy's submissions to the Productivity Commission on NDIS Costs and the Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS into Transitional Arrangements for the NDIS.

The results were also communicated to the organisation's NDIS contact list, and posted onto the Family Advocacy facebook page.



LEANNE VARGA

SUBMISSIONS

WRITTEN

Family Advocacy was invited by the National Disability Insurance Agency in July 2018 to make a submission to the *Consultation Paper on NDIS Code of Conduct for Service Providers and Workers*.

The Systems Advocacy team provided a submission based on the feedback from families and their experiences in the past with service providers. The Code of Conduct was released with many of the suggestions put forward by Family Advocacy incorporated into the updated Code of Conduct.

Submissions were also made by Family Advocacy to:

- The National Disability Insurance Agency, by invitation, to the NDIS Consultation Paper on *Intermediaries: a vital component of the NDIS in achieving an ordinary life for people with disabilities* (May 2018)
- Family and Community Services on the Technical Issues Paper relating to *Protecting the Rights of Tenants in Supported Group Accommodation* (March 2018)
- The Australian Law Reform Commission on the *Draft Proposals to the Guardianship Act* (February 2018)
- The Joint Standing Committee on the Market Readiness on the NDIS (January 2018)
- The Australian Government Department of Education and Training *Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools* (November 2017).

VERBAL

In October 2017, the Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS into Transitional Arrangements for the NDIS invited Family Advocacy to give evidence on behalf of feedback from families regarding the challenges in their NDIS experiences. Family Advocacy's submissions were recorded on Hansard, the official parliamentary record.

EDUCATION

As with previous reporting years 2017-2018 families continue to experience significant issues with their child obtaining a satisfactory education in regular classrooms at local schools.

There still remains a stark reality between policy and practice and much improvement is needed in setting a clear direction of inclusive practice within the NSW education system. Family Advocacy staff and families have attended many meetings with state and federal parliamentarians, Department of Education staff, the NSW Teacher's Federation, the NSW Ombudsman Department, academics and other representative organisations and stakeholders.

Family Advocacy contributed to the 'NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into the Education of students with Disability and Special Needs' which commenced in August 2016 by providing submissions, evidence at the hearing and attending meetings behind the scenes with the Members of Parliament working on the Inquiry. The final report was released in September 2017, with the government response provided in March 2018.

The Systems Advocacy team continues to place pressure on the NSW government and the Department of Education to ensure accountability in relation to implementing the Recommendations from the Inquiry.

Clear objectives were developed in 2018 to instigate change and build the momentum, including:

- an inclusive education panel at the NSW Labor Fringe Conference July 2017
- leveraging Canadian parliamentarian Jody Carr from New Brunswick who was the keynote speaker at the 2017 National Symposium on Inclusive Education via meetings with NSW and federal parliamentarians in relevant portfolios and the Secretary of the Department of Education.
- hosting an Inclusive Education forum in Parliament House in Canberra
- attending a study tour on inclusive education in New Brunswick, Canada and sharing the learnings with the Delivery Unit from the Department of Education, relevant politicians, the NSW Ombudsman and other advocacy groups

- attending a series of consultative workshops with 40 stakeholders facilitated by the Delivery Unit with the aim to Improve Outcomes of Children and Young People with Disability
- launching the 'Same Classroom. Same Opportunity' campaign at Family Advocacy's *Parents 4 Inclusive Education* weekend to seed a grassroots movement in the lead up to the NSW election in March 2019.

ADVOCACY

Significant lobbying was an ongoing exercise throughout the reporting period in relation to the future funding of systemic advocacy.

Across NSW there were extensive discussions in relation to how best to work collectively to safeguard advocacy funding post June 2018.

Family Advocacy was a founding member of the new Disability Advocacy Alliance NSW which also included:

- the Council for Intellectual Disability (CID)
- People with Disability Australia (PWDA)
- the Physical Disability Council of NSW (PDCN)
- Disability Advocacy NSW (DA NSW)
- Information on Disability Education and Awareness Services (IDEAS)
- Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association (MDAA)

All up, 17 advocacy organisations joined forces to develop a strategy to maintain advocacy funding in NSW.

The alliance has held a NSW Parliamentary forum, several rallies, garnered media coverage and secured a commitment to advocacy funding in perpetuity from the NSW opposition.

The campaign will continue with a focus to secure a commitment from the NSW government to advocacy funding in perpetuity in the lead up to the next NSW election in March 2019.

LEANNE VARGA

Social Advocacy & Campaigns Manager 2017-2018

RESOURCING INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES



Photo: Supplied

MANAGER'S REPORT

SELF-MANAGEMENT IN PRACTICE

The commitment to capacity building of families and individuals with disability to live active lives within communities framed the workshops and initiatives of the Resourcing Inclusive Communities team throughout the reporting period.

Resourcing Inclusive Communities is focused on imparting practical and useful skills and strategies that can be put into practice immediately by workshop and event participants, right across NSW delivering a substantial number of workshops in regional NSW from Cobar in far west NSW to the Vietnamese Parents Association in Canley Vale in metropolitan Sydney.

The team continued to work with outstanding workshop presenters and family leaders who shared their hard-earned experiences for the benefit of other families.



EMMA BAXTER

INSPIRE-INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP FOR SELF-MANAGED DISABILITY SUPPORT

On May 31 and June 1, 2018 the Resourcing Inclusive Communities team delivered a practical two-day workshop, in Parramatta, designed to inspire and upskill people with disability already self-managing their supports and those considering self-management and their families and allies, to acquire enhanced skills and mindsets in terms of self-determination.

A combination of practical information and inspiring case studies were facilitated over the two-day event and covered areas such as:

- employment and roles based recruitment
- NDIS plans and advocacy
- budgeting and record keeping
- building effective support teams
- safeguarding for the future
- the History of Self Direction in Australia
- developing community connections.

Resourcing Inclusive Communities also produced a workbook, *Seven Steps to Self-Direction—Building the right relationship between people with disability, their families, friends and support workers*, written by Margaret Ward, Lesley Chenoweth and Sharon Bourke, which was distributed to all participants at the Inspire workshop and used as a resource during the event.

INNOVATIVE WORKFORCE FUND-SELF MANAGED SUPPORTS

Throughout April and May 2018 the Resourcing Inclusive Communities team worked with a consortium of organisations; JFA Purple Orange (SA), Belonging Matters (Vic), Community Resource Unit (QLD), Valued Lives (WA) and Imagine More (ACT) on the Innovative Workforce Fund which was set up to generate a research report into the nature and efficacy of new workforce arrangements through self-management.

Each organisation was required to complete six interviews to form the basis of the research, as well as deliver a case study video. The Resourcing Inclusive Communities team delivered two video case studies; 1) Rachael Cross 2) Abdul Karim-Bouchafaa that evidenced self-directed lives and inclusion within a community as an active and valued citizen.

FAMILIES GETTING NDIS READY

In November 2017 the Resourcing Inclusive Communities team delivered three workshops in regional NSW facilitated by Jo Cross, from Maitland a parent self-managing her 21-year-old daughter's NDIS plan which is focused on creative links to community.

DEVELOPING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Throughout 2017-2018, 24 workshops funded by ADHC were delivered by Family Advocacy across NSW.

Facilitated by Meg Sweeney and Ric Thompson the workshops were designed to challenge the status quo in terms of thinking about inclusion of people with disability in communities. The facilitators unpacked concepts and imparted practical strategies that participants could take away with them and action immediately in their own communities with meaningful and lasting connections being the desired outcome.

Consistent feedback from participants across the state as these workshops were rolled out indicated an appreciation of the interactive nature of the group work and the learnings attendees acquired not only from the passionate and knowledgeable presenters but also from each other.

Resourcing Inclusive Communities ran numerous information sessions across NSW, during the reporting period, met individually with families and continued to provide a 1800 number service for people across NSW.

The team also delivered its first tailored fee-for-service program with a community organisation.

See page 18 for the entire list of events delivered by the Resourcing Inclusive Communities team.

NB: Cecile Sullivan Elder, the Executive Officer of Family Advocacy prepared this report on behalf of Emma Baxter, who was on leave at the time of writing.

FINANCES

Photo: For Family Advocacy by C. Totterman, 2018

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FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The Committee takes its fiscal responsibilities seriously and ensures the organisation is in a sound financial position at all times.

Internal financial training is included in the orientation of all new committee members and an annual financial audit is conducted by a qualified independent auditor, to ensure accounts are accurate and in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards.

Audited statements are available to all members, see the Treasurer's Report for more specific details.

With uncertainty in recent years--particularly this financial year--with regards to advocacy funding the impetus to establish a sustainable financial position for the organisation became apparent and was a driver for the decision to purchase dedicated premises for Family Advocacy in Hornsby.

The long term impact of an enhanced financial position will be the organisation's capacity to sustain future advocacy and initiatives with and for families and people with disability.

Recurrent Funding and One-Off Grants			
Revenue from Commonwealth Government	Ref	2017-2018	2016-2017
Disability Advocacy	(1)	303,291	291,618
NDIS Appeals	(2)	161,250	53,750
Revenue from NSW Government			
Information Advocacy	(3)	304,133	292,605
Information Advocacy (supplementary)	(4)	28,054	28,054
Resourcing Inclusive Communities - Entity	(5)	207,880	200,000
Resourcing Inclusive Communities - Capacity Building	(6)	615,250	371,750
Grant in Aid from Department of Education	(7)	34,250	32,993
NSW Transition Assistance Program	n/a	0	34,320
Total		\$1,654,108	\$1,305,090

TREASURER'S REPORT

I am pleased to present the Treasurer's Report on behalf of Family Advocacy's Management Committee.

Family Advocacy is grateful for the funding provided by Government, both at federal and state levels for this financial year 2017/2018.

The Department of Social Services (DSS) continued to support the organisation through both:

1. Recurrent funding, and
2. A one off grant to assist NDIS applicants in navigating the NDIS application procedures. This grant was received in 2016 to be expended over two financial years. The final 25% was taken up as income in 2017/2018

NSW Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS) also provided support through five streams of funding:

3. Recurrent funding for advocacy and information work and ongoing operations of Family Advocacy through the NSW Government, Ageing, Disability and Home Care
4. A one off grant was received on 21st June 2016 to be expended between 8th June 2016 and 30th June 2018. This grant is to provide supplementary funding for increased demand in information supports during the NDIS transition period, the final 50% was included as income during 2017/2018
5. Recurrent funding for Resourcing Inclusive Communities
6. A one off grant was received on 1st June 2016 to be expended between 29th April 2016 and 30th June 2018. This grant is to fund a series of capacity building workshops, "Right Relationships" and "Families Getting NDIS Ready". The final 50% of the grant was included as income in 2017-2018.

A second one off grant was received on 22nd December 2016 to be expended between 15th December 2016 and 30th June 2018. This grant is to fund a series of capacity building workshops "Developing Community Connections". The final 75% of this grant was included as income during 2017/2018.

7. NSW Department of Education provided grant in aid of \$34,250

The organisation's liabilities can be fully funded from its accumulated provisions and the organisation continues in a sound financial position. A budget for 2017/2018 has been ratified by the Management Committee.



DIANNE SAMUELS

DONATIONS & DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

DONATIONS

Family Advocacy would like to thank those who have provided financial support throughout the year through their donations to the organisation. A total of \$3,6650 was received from the following givers:

Kabita Kirkham	Karen Schwartz	Tod Sweeney	Bomaderry Bowling Club
Annie Ung	Helen Fisher	Jenny Samson	Bailey Family
Dianne Samuels	Fiona Dorrian	James Kirkham	Supported Living Network
Ken Connell	L & J Scott	Margaret Stead	Adil Foundation

Family Advocacy also acknowledges the following enterprises that have donated in kind:

- Salesforce Foundation: ten free licences of Salesforce Enterprise Edition, available for not-for-profit (NFP) organisations
- Connecting Up: discounted software and training for NFP organisations
- Microsoft: discounted software.

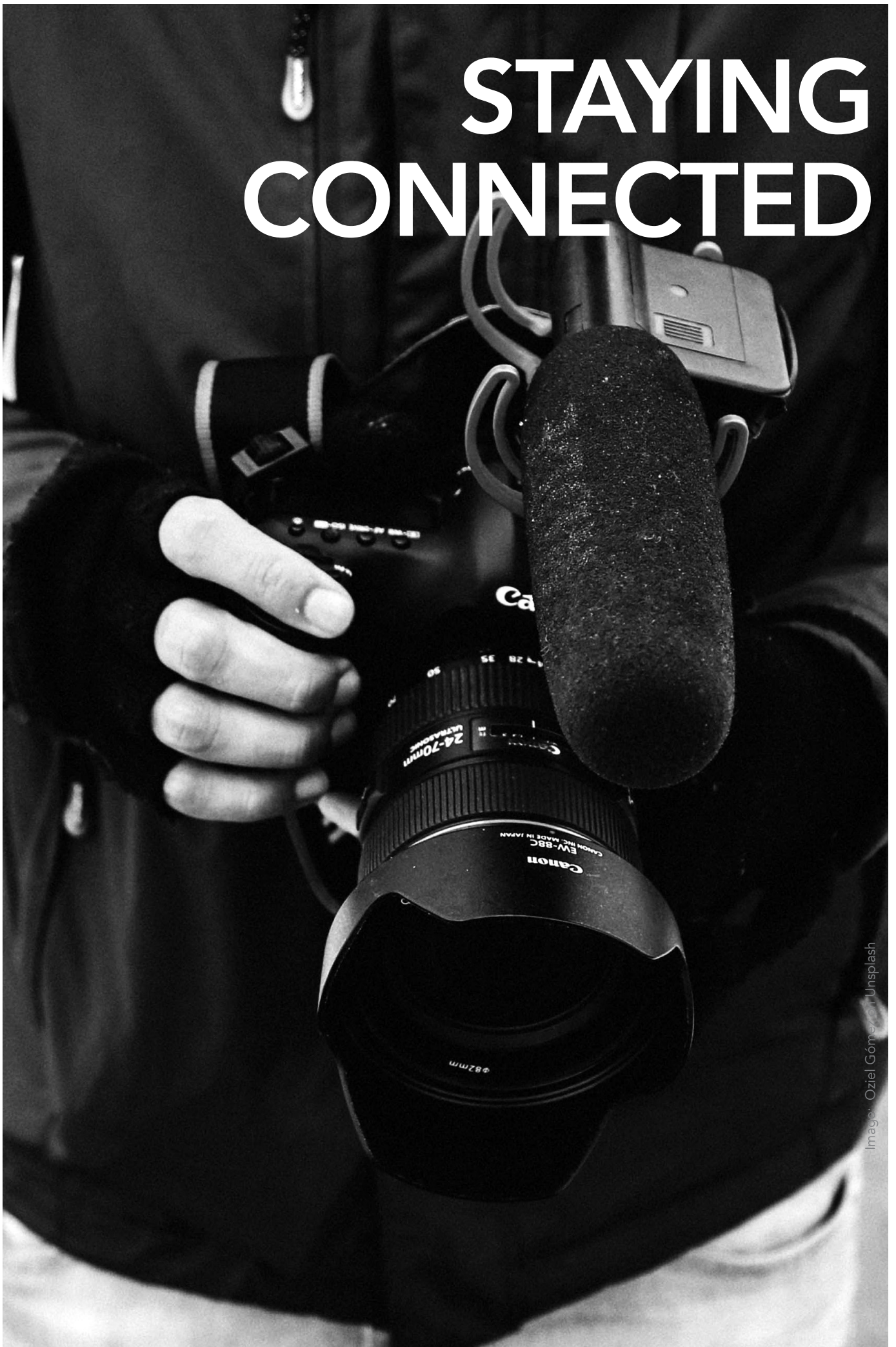
DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

I advise members of payments received by the following Committee Members:

- Annette Bush received Honoraria during the year, at the standard rate set out in the Volunteer Session Leaders Policy, for her contribution towards the work of the organisation as a Volunteer Session Leader.
- In accordance with the requirements of the Rules of the Association, I advise members that no other payments have been made to any committee member other than for reimbursements for out of pocket expenses incurred in the course of carrying out their function as committee members.

DIANNE SAMUELS
Treasurer 2017-2018

STAYING CONNECTED



COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

PRIORITIES

Developing and implementing strategies and tactics that maximise Family Advocacy's media and campaign goals are the drivers for all communication and promotion actions.

In 2017-2018 Family Advocacy utilised social media platforms and its own digital assets (the Family Advocacy and Resourcing Inclusive Communities websites) in conjunction with media releases, electronic direct mail (EDM) to inform, inspire and engage with families, stakeholders and persons with disability.

DELIVERABLES DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD:

JULY 2017:

- Update of the Family Advocacy Media Policy completed

AUGUST 2017:

- Family Advocacy transitioned to a new content management system (CMS) to manage content for the Family Advocacy and Resourcing Inclusive Communities websites.

SEPTEMBER 2017:

- Development of resources addressing questions about the NDIS and a promotional campaign to telegraph to the community the resources were available.

NOVEMBER 2017:

- Creation of the RIC 'look and feel', communication materials and collateral.

MARCH 2018:

Supporting the Systems Advocacy team to present a case to Australian government ministers, in Canberra, for the 'Same Classroom. Same Opportunities' campaign.

MAY 2018:

- In conjunction with the Advocacy and Leadership Development team development of a dedicated, online and content-rich resource for inclusive education was begun utilising content from the November 2017 National Symposium on Inclusive Education.

JUNE 2018:

- Promotion and marketing of the INSPIRE 2018 Workshop
- Uploading content and resources to the RIC website for the community to access
- Working with the Systems Advocacy team on a promotional strategy and development of promotional materials for the 'Same Classroom. Same Opportunity' campaign launch event.

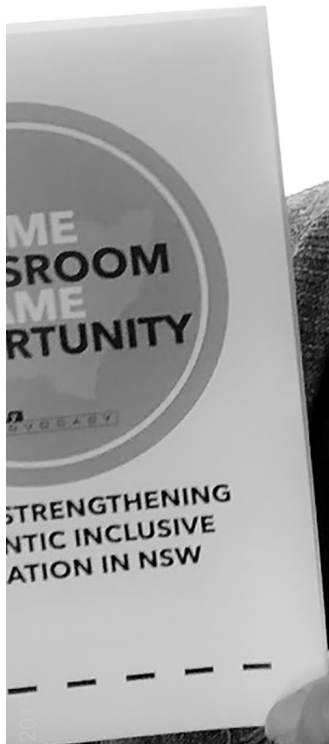


Photo for Family Advocacy by: C. Totterman

OPERATIONS

QUALITY ASSURANCE, RISK & ICT

Family Advocacy is a mission driven organisation focused on ensuring the lives of people with disability are safeguarded.

A committed and passionate leadership committee, clear of its vision and mission, provides the strategic direction. Family Advocacy regularly reviews its processes and practices to ensure it is responding to and serving the needs of people with disability and their families first and foremost.

The policies that underpin Family Advocacy's actions are distributed to the membership bi-annually for review.

The Executive Officer has carriage of managing staff and operations in accordance with the direction, strategies, goals and objectives set by the Committee.

Family Advocacy is committed to maintaining a high standard in providing information and support to families of people with disability. The organisation undergoes quality assurance audits at regular designated periods; every one to one-and-a-half years, depending on the requirements of the funder.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Being a commonwealth and state funded organisation, Family Advocacy successfully completed two quality audits, undertaken by DNV GL Business Assurance Australia this year.

Family Advocacy received a re-certification from the auditors against the National Standards for Disability Services, NSDS (2014) and a third party verification certificate against the NSW Disability Service Standards.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Committee ensures that the organisation covers itself against all forms of risk. Processes and measures are in place to minimise and/or address potential risk in the areas of finance, work health and safety, security, and legal as well as reputation, privacy and confidentiality.

The appropriate types and levels of insurances are in place including business insurance, public liability (which includes personal accident insurance covering both staff and volunteers), motor vehicle insurance and workers compensation policies.

Policies and practices of the organisation are reviewed periodically to ensure relevance and address any risk factors. This is part of our commitment towards continuous improvement and sustainability. When the organisation experienced ransomware and backup systems that were in place failed to be effective, Family Advocacy was able to recover majority of the data excluding the past two years. The organisation immediately placed new measures to address the gap realised by this experience by utilising, among other actions, a cloud backup system managed by our third party IT contractor, PC Quest, as well as taking out a cyber insurance policy.

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Family Advocacy is committed to ensuring current technologies, both hardware and software, are available and networked so Family Advocacy staff can work seamlessly off and online, remotely, virtually and in situ in the organisation's office.

Upgrades to hardware, servers and security have enabled greater flexibility for staff in terms of where and how they work while simultaneously ensuring records, files and content are secure.

HR & DATA COLLECTION

Family Advocacy has operational and HR policies and procedures in place to ensure a working environment where staff can function collectively, collaboratively and in harmony as they execute their individual duties.

As part of ongoing staff development Family Advocacy recognises the importance of current staff keeping their knowledge and skill sets up-to-date in order for them to carry out their duties effectively and efficiently. All staff are encouraged to develop their personal and professional skills.

Training and workshops that support and enhance knowledge and insight into the foundational pillars of the organisation are encouraged, such as SRV and PASSING workshops.

Opportunities to develop soft skills such as communication, mindfulness, emotional intelligence and leadership are also encouraged as is attendance at relevant events, forums, public hearings and conferences, nationally and internationally.

Professional development benefits to Family Advocacy are:

- nurturing of links with like minded organisations and families
- contributions to a dynamic and updated knowledge base that can be drawn upon when advising and informing families
- opportunities to provide leadership in the industry and help families develop their own leadership skills
- contributing to and informing policy input to government

DATABASE AND DATA COLLECTION

Family Advocacy began implementing database security controls during the reporting period which has included data hygiene as an on-going endeavour to ensure integrity of reports and mail outs.

The organisation commenced the transition from its existing CRM database to the not-for-profit Sales-force pack, which will facilitate greater efficiencies and security.

WH&S, ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

Work Health and Safety (WHS) is part and parcel of processes and considerations within the workplace.

Policies and practices covering this area are included in staff orientation practices and current staff have the opportunity to raise any issues as they arise or within regular staff meetings as part of the agenda. Any incidents that occur within or outside of the Family Advocacy office, in the course of work, can be raised and reported. Incidents are recorded to ensure they are acted on appropriately.

Family Advocacy has a first aid trained staff member, with up-to-date qualifications, on the team.

The appointment of a WHS Representative ensures WHS practices are implemented and issues are addressed. Regular inspections are conducted internally to assess possible hazards and safety issues within the premises.

Family Advocacy is committed to a safe and positive working environment where each staff member feels secure and supported to be their best in their roles. The organisation seeks out various resources available to address and support the wellness of staff.

The move to new premises in Hornsby facilitated work station improvements, enhancing the physical wellbeing of current staff, who now have access to height adjustable desks as well as gym and pool facilities in the complex the office is located within.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Family Advocacy strives to be a responsible organisation in its day-to-day operations and activities as it carries out its mission to improve the lives of people with disability.

The organisation continues to minimise hard-copy mail outs and is moving towards minimising its use of internal hard-copies.

The smaller footprint of the new Hornsby premises will translate to reduced energy consumption and wastage.

The organisation continues to recycle paper, plastic, glass, and tin containers.



PEOPLE

**SAME
CLASSROOM
SAME
OPPORTUNITY**

family
ADVOCACY

STAFF: JULY 1, 2017- JUNE 31, 2018

CECILE SULLIVAN ELDER
Executive Officer



EMMA BAXTER
Manager, Resourcing
Inclusive Families



LEANNE VARGA
Social Advocacy &
Campaigns Manager



KAREN TIPPETT
Advocacy & Leadership
Development Manager



KIM BECHERAND
Advocacy & Leadership
Development: Projects



MARYBELLE IGNACIO
Office Manager



PAUL BARRETT
Accounts, Admin & Events Coordinator



Media & Digital Communications Manager

- TIM SKINNER (March-July 2018)
- ALEX POTTER (until January 2018)

Systemic Advocacy and Campaigns Manager

- MEG CLEMENT-COUZNER (until September 2017)

Advocacy and Leadership Coordinator

- MONICA SWEENEY (until December 2017)

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

ADEs	Australian Disability Enterprises
ADHC	Ageing Disability and Homecare
ADN NSW	Aboriginal Disability Network New South Wales
AGM	Annual General Meeting
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CID	Council for Intellectual Disability
DA NSW	Disability Advocacy NSW
DNF	Disability Network Forum
DoE	Department of Education
DSS	Department of Social Services
FACS	Family and Community Services
MDAA	Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association
NDAN	New South Wales Disability Advocacy Network
NDAP	National Disability Advocacy Program
NDIA	National Disability Insurance Agency
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
NSDS	National Standard for Disability Services
NSW	New South Wales
PDCN	The Physical Disability Council of NSW
PWDA	People with Disability Australia
WHS	Workplace Health and Safety