



Aboriginal Family Support  
Services Inc

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Together with the community

# Annual Report 2013 -2014





# Contents

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Aboriginal Family Support Services – <i>about us</i> .....	page 4
Organisational chart .....	page 5
Board of Management .....	page 6
Message from the Chairperson .....	page 7
Message from the Chief Executive Officer .....	page 8
Regional Services .....	page 9
Metropolitan Services .....	page 15
Therapeutic Services .....	page 18
Corporate Services .....	page 22
Financial Reports .....	page 23
Where to find us .....	Back page





# Aboriginal Family Support Services Inc – *about us*

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## Our Vision

Together with Aboriginal communities strengthen families to ensure safe and culturally strong futures for our children and young people.

## Our Mission

Aboriginal Family Support Services acknowledges the diversity of Aboriginal communities and ensures that all services are innovative, creative and healing-based.

Through strong leadership Aboriginal Family Support Services influences change in policies and service delivery in all areas of capacity building within Aboriginal families and communities.

We maintain that our Aboriginal heritage is beyond value and no child should be deprived of its richness.

## Our guiding principles

### Together with the community

We work together with the community to ensure our purpose is achieved in a culturally sensitive manner.

### Spirituality, culture and country

We recognise the importance of our spirituality, rich cultural heritage and our strong connection to country. We ensure that we acknowledge this as an integral part of our organisation.

### Leadership

We show strong leadership that challenges and influences social change for the wellbeing of our communities.

### Equity

We treat all people in an ethical and professional manner.

### Respect

We treat all people with respect, honour cultural sensitivity and promote an environment based on these principles.

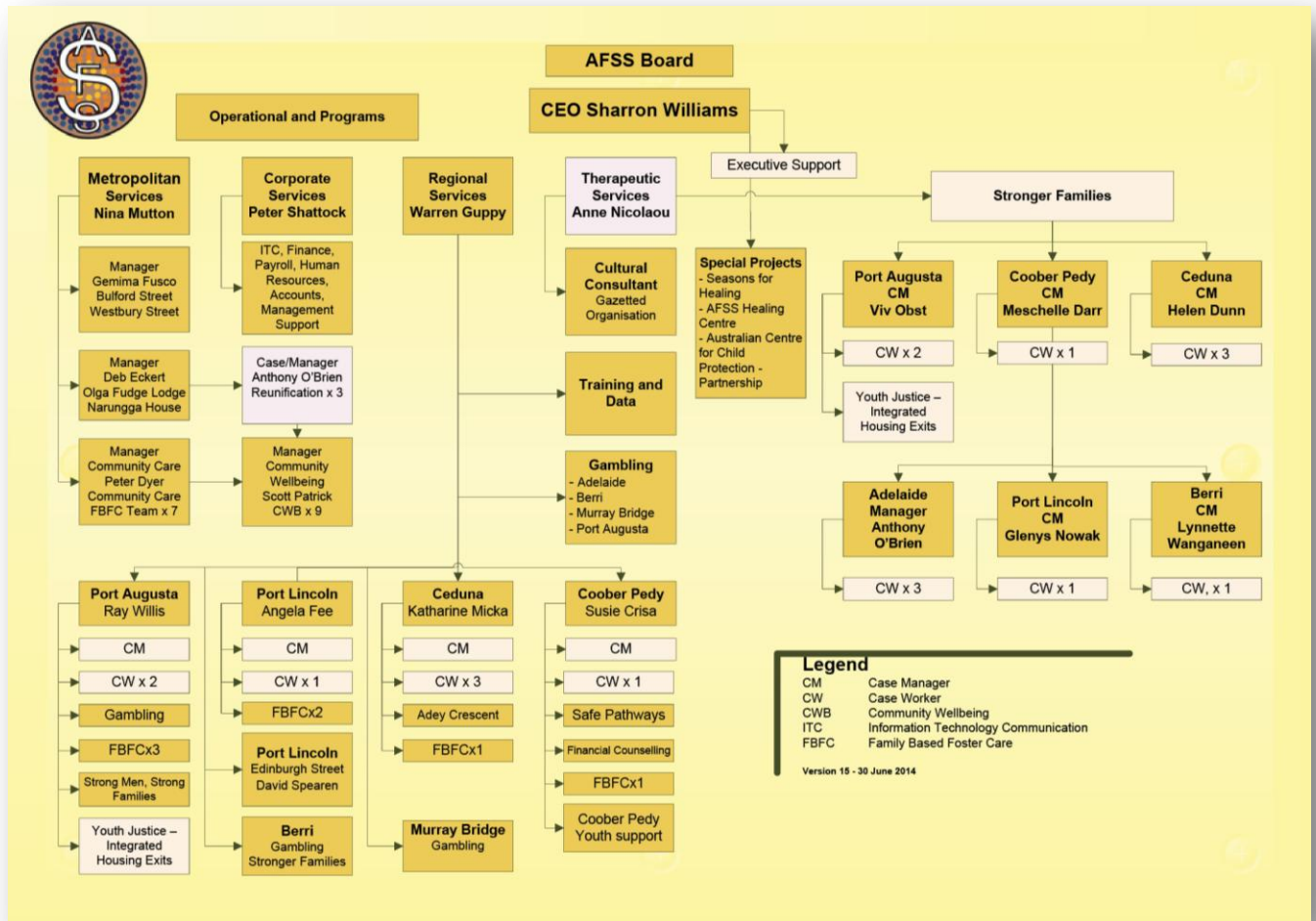
### Responsibility

We are responsible for the decisions we make and for our actions. We are responsible to each other and to our clients.

### All employees are supported and valued

As an organisation, we value our staff and their contribution.

# Organisational chart



# Board of Management

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Chairperson - Paul Elliott

Secretary - Bev Ewen

Treasurer - Margaret Nelson

Executive Member - Wayne Rigney

Executive Member - Greg Sinclair

Public Officer - Sharron Williams



*Pictured from left to right: Sharron Williams (Public Officer), Wayne Rigney (Executive Member), Greg Sinclair (Executive Member), Paul Elliott (Chairperson). Seated: Margaret Nelson (Treasurer), Bev Ewen (Secretary)*

# Message from the Chairperson

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Aboriginal Family Support Services continues to maintain its place as the peak South Australian Aboriginal agency working in the vital area of child, family and community wellbeing, now serving the Aboriginal community for more than 36 years.

On a personal note, I am pleased to have continued to serve the organisation as its Chairperson this year. I lead a committed team of fellow Board members; Bev Ewen, Margaret Nelson, Wayne Rigney and Greg Sinclair.

Together with our CEO Sharron Williams, the Senior Management team and all AFSS staff, we focus on keeping Aboriginal families together, safe in culture, and working to ensure that we fulfil the aims of our vision and mission, which you will find on page 3 of this Annual Report.

I encourage all Aboriginal people in South Australia to become members of AFSS, so that you are able to join with us as we strive to provide the best possible service to, and outcomes for, Aboriginal children and families in this State.

Paul Elliott  
Chairperson



# Message from the Chief Executive Officer

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Writing this report provides me with the opportunity to reflect on the activities of AFSS over the past 12 months.

Once again it has been a year of challenge and positive outcomes in our service to Aboriginal children, youth and families; we have been pleased to open a new office in Christies Beach, offering our Community Wellbeing programs to Aboriginal families in the southern suburbs. This expansion to our services provides programs that are varied and offer information, develop parenting skills and build strength and capacity in our parents and families.

In addition our Crisis Accommodation services premises have been upgraded to provide enhanced accommodation to our young clients.

You will have also noticed that AFSS has been in the process of rebranding, ensuring that our materials and promotions reflect the professionalism that AFSS provides in its services across the State. Keep your eyes open for our new website, which will be launched in the near future.

Staff training and professional development has remained high on the AFSS agenda to ensure that we continue to provide the best possible service to Aboriginal families and children.

Training undertaken this year includes:

- Maybo – safer physical intervention
- Circle of Security
- Child Safe Environments (as regular refreshers)
- WHS Committee members training
- Self care
- Trauma informed practice
- Statewide forum for all AFSS staff in Out of Home Care and Family Based Care.

AFSS continues to go from strength to strength as we strive to better connect to our carers and community, to relate positively to government at all levels and build solid partnerships with like-minded organisations across the State and nation.

You will read of some of these outcomes as detailed in the Senior Managers' reports on the following pages of this Annual Report.

We have had a productive year this year and look forward to positively facing the challenges that 2014-15 will present us with.

Sharron Williams  
Chief Executive Officer



# Regional Services

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## Introduction

The last 12 months has been a busy period for AFSS Regional Services. A snapshot of key outcomes is provided below.

AFSS continues to work closely with the Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) through all program areas. Australian Government funding for Safe Pathways (AFSS family violence program in Coober Pedy), the Strong Men, Strong Families program in Port Augusta and Emergency Relief (Port Augusta and Coober Pedy) were all up for renewal in June 2014. However, all three program areas were extended until December 2014 pending the release of the Australian Government's new Aboriginal funding strategy – the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) to which AFSS will apply to secure the funding for these important community programs.

Significant partnerships were also renewed or established during the 2013-2014 period. These include formal agreements with Uniting Care Wesley Country SA, the Service to Youth Council, the Coober Pedy Multicultural Community Forum and the North West Regional Residential Rehabilitation Service. Details of these Memoranda are detailed throughout this report.

## Aboriginal Gambling Help Service

AFSS currently provides Aboriginal Gambling Help Services in Adelaide, Berri, Murray Bridge and Port Augusta. During the 2013-2014 period AFSS took a lead role in a South Australian Aboriginal Gambling

Help Service presentation to the annual National Association of Gambling Studies (NAGS) Conference that was held in Sydney in November 2013. AFSS worked closely with Ceduna Koonibba Health, the Port Lincoln Aboriginal Health Service, Statewide Gambling Therapy Services and the Office of Problem Gambling in the development and presentation of this important piece of work. It provided conference participants with insight into how South Australian Aboriginal organisations and Aboriginal Gambling Help Services are delivering the gamble responsibly message and how they are working closely with Aboriginal communities to reduce problem gambling. Significant work has also been completed since January this year on a total review of AFSS Aboriginal Gambling Help Service. AFSS's former program, A Safe Bet, had been operational for almost eight years and it was timely to review the program. At the time of writing, the review has been completed and a new program is in its final stages of approval. Some of the new elements include a refocus away from just pokie machines (a prevalent form of gambling) to newer, faster-growing forms of gambling, including access to gambling through mobile gambling.



*Tony Lawrence, AFSS Gambling Program Coordinator, shares his knowledge with the attendees at the National Association of Gambling Studies Conference.*

## Out of Home Care - Family Based Foster Care

The growth of foster carer households across AFSS regional sites has been slow. There are real challenges for all agencies involved in the recruitment of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal carer households. AFSS Regional Services continue to look at more creative ways in which to encourage Aboriginal families to become foster carers. This is increasingly a challenge because many Aboriginal families already care for members of their extended families through informal arrangements. This, coupled with unacceptably high rates of removal of Aboriginal children and young people from their families and communities, has meant that foster care for Aboriginal children and young people has reached crisis proportions.

The 2013-2014 period culminated in an AFSS convened statewide forum for all AFSS staff involved in the Out of Home Care - Family Based Foster Care program. Three days of workshops and presentations were held with a key outcome being the development of a single AFSS Statewide Foster Carer Recruitment Plan for 2014-2015. Presentations were provided by Families SA and in particular staff from Families SA Kinship Services attended and presented information that provided useful insights for AFSS staff.



*AFSS Murray Bridge Aboriginal Gambling Help Service worker Bronte Warnecke attends a Murray Bridge community event.*

On June 30 2014, the number of carer households and the total number of carers across AFSS's Regional Services are:

AFSS Region	Carer households	Number of carers
Ceduna (Western)	7	11
Coober Pedy (Far North)	6	9
Port Augusta (North)	12	21
Port Lincoln (Eyre)	12	18
Total	37	59

## Out of Home Care – Non Family Based Care (Residential Care)

AFSS Regional Services provide crisis accommodation services in Ceduna and Port Lincoln (with Ceduna having the capacity to cater for five children and Port Lincoln having the capacity to cater for three children). AFSS are liaising with DECD, Families SA (FSA) Port Lincoln and Housing SA on the relocation of AFSS Port Lincoln service to a larger property that accommodates the requirement for a minimum of four placements per residential service. Ideally residential care is short term until children and young people either return to family or are placed in family based care when a return to family is not possible.

Following annual licence inspections and a visit from the Office of the Guardian, significant improvements have been made to AFSS regional residential facilities, particularly at the Port Lincoln site where the environment was bland due to significant property damage from past clients. Notwithstanding, work has now

been completed and has included painting rooms inside the house, the purchase of both soft and hard furnishings and the installation of a trampoline, a kids' cubby house and a basketball ring.

Significant training has been provided to staff in AFSS Residential Services over the last 12 months including:

- AFSS Managers Workshop (Business SA, WorkCover, Gallagher Bassett, Beyond Blue)
- Hazardous Manual Tasks - AFSS Training Facilitator
- Infant Safe Training - AFSS Training Facilitator
- James Anglin Workshop (Working with Children and Young People in Residential Settings) - James Anglin
- Maybo Safer PI Training - Avoidance and Disengagement Workshop - Train the Trainer - Neil Warwick (Maybo)
- Maybo Safer PI Training - Avoidance and Disengagement Workshop – Staff Training
- Non Violent Resistance Workshop - Bower College
- Petrol and Other Substances - Sniffing Awareness Workshop - Aboriginal Drug and Alcohol Council
- Primary School Level Reading with Students – DECD
- Responding to Children and Young People who Disclose - AFSS Training Facilitator
- Sexualised Behaviour Workshop (Families SA /Bower Place)
- Trauma and Brain Development Training - AFSS Training Facilitator.



*AFSS Managers hard at work at a Managers' forum in Adelaide.*

## Emergency Relief

Funds continued to be provided through AFSS Port Augusta and Coober Pedy sites during the 2013-2014 period. Where possible, AFSS takes the opportunity to spend time with each client further exploring their financial issues and looking at options for longer term solutions. For example, Coober Pedy also provides a financial counselling service, made possible through funds provided by the Coober Pedy Multicultural Community Forum. AFSS is only able to provide small levels of Emergency Relief to assist families make ends meet until their next payment comes in.

During 2013-2014, 180 clients in Port Augusta and 72 clients in Coober Pedy were assisted with Emergency Relief and, in some cases, financial counselling and referrals to other more appropriate services.

## Strong Men, Strong Families

The Strong Men, Strong Families program works with Aboriginal men and other family members, assisting them to address issues such as anger management, positive parenting and self esteem.

The service is provided through AFSS Port Augusta and continues to provide much needed support services for Aboriginal men and their families in Port Augusta, Whyalla, Port Pirie and surrounding districts. Key

outcomes include the delivery of basic literacy and numeracy skills to Aboriginal men in the Port Augusta Prison, attendance as a cultural representative at Family Care Meetings, the delivery of Community Wellbeing programs and strong networking with other service providers in Port Augusta, particularly those that provide services to Aboriginal men.

During 2013-2014 a total of 47 Aboriginal men were assisted through the service. Numbers are down on the previous year due to the worker position being vacant for a period and due to some work with a number of clients requiring a more intensive approach.

### Safe Pathways

AFSS Safe Pathways (Coober Pedy) program continues to provide a focus on the provision of community education initiatives around family violence. AFSS actively participates with other local service providers in Coober Pedy to run a number of ongoing groups, including a Women's Group, an Active Girls and Boys Group, a Playgroup and a monthly Oodnadatta Women's Group where AFSS staff travel to Oodnadatta to spend a day with the community. AFSS has established pathways with the Courts Administration Authority and receives referrals to support men who may be engaged in family violence. AFSS also partners with Umoona Tjutagku Health in supporting the men's program to address health and wellbeing issues. The Safe Pathways staff have also partnered with other key agencies to promote White Ribbon Day, National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence and participated in a Youth Expo delivered at the Coober Pedy Area School.



*Our foster carers provide a safe and caring environment in which children can learn, grow and reach their potential.*

### Integrated Youth Housing (Service to Youth Council)

AFSS, through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Service to Youth Council, provides case work support up to four young Aboriginal people who are exiting juvenile detention in South Australia. Two independent living units in Port Augusta are made available to these young people and AFSS works closely with the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion in terms of identifying and supporting tenants for this program.

AFSS role is to assist young people to set themselves up in accommodation which includes buying a house full of new furniture and appliances (which they take with them when they move on). Once the young people are set up, AFSS will provide case work for up to 12 months and assist the young person in terms of support, referrals and advocacy and in finding longer term accommodation.

### Financial Counselling

Offered in Coober Pedy, AFSS assists community members to address financial matters impacting on their quality of life. This may include debt consolidation, advocating with debt collectors and generally assisting clients to manage their income. This service is made available



through a long term partnership with the Coober Pedy Multicultural Community Forum which subcontracts an element of their service to AFSS, particularly as it relates to providing a service to Aboriginal community members.

### Coober Pedy Youth Support

The aim of the program is to establish options and pathways that can assist youth to engage in constructive activities in the community and with services and therefore minimise the risk of them engaging with the youth justice system. The program works at building awareness of current services in Coober Pedy, ensuring there are referral processes and support for youth to feel empowered to engage with those services. The program provides opportunities for young people to develop confidence and capacity to identify and access activities that are meaningful to them and therefore increase their community involvement.

The program has engaged 13 young people so far and is increasing the numbers of diversionary activities offered in the community with partnerships including the District Council of Coober Pedy, Uniting Care Wesley Country SA and the Remote School Attendance Strategy Team.

Twelve of the clients were involved in a mentoring day with a local Aboriginal Elder to promote respect and increase knowledge of their country and the exploration of protocols to instil a sense of pride and confidence.

### North West Regional Residential Rehabilitation Service

While not yet operational, AFSS exerted considerable effort, working closely with the Aboriginal Drug and Alcohol Council (ADAC) and the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia (AHCSA) in the

development of tender documents for the establishment of two Aboriginal specific rehabilitation services in South Australia, one covering the north of South Australia and the other covering southern Adelaide.

The Consortium (ADAC, AFSS and AHCSA) were successful in its bid for the northern service, which will be located at Ellis Close in Port Augusta. Uniting Communities was the successful tender for the southern service and both the Consortium and Uniting Communities will work closely on the development of the services provided at each of the facilities.

### Staff Training and Development

It has been an extremely busy year for the AFSS Training Facilitator. Significant training was undertaken during 2013-2014 across all program areas. General training delivered to AFSS staff has included Child Safe Environments, Infant Safe Care, Hazardous Manual Tasks, Self Care, Trauma Informed Practice and a number of AFSS specific induction packages including a generalist AFSS Induction and Residential Services Induction. In addition, the Training Facilitator was a driving force behind the following training sessions:

#### **Step by Step (Foster Carer Assessment Tool)**

The roll-out of DECD's Step by Step Foster Carer Assessment Tool was completed. This included repackaging the assessment tool in a way that made it easier for AFSS staff to work closely with potential Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal carer households across South Australia. All AFSS regions are now fully compliant with the Step by Step Assessment Tool and it is applied to all assessments of new foster carer households. It also included reformatting and printing of all

associated documentation that falls out of the Step by Step Assessment Tool.

### **Maybo Safer PI**

The Maybo Safer PI Assault Avoidance and Disengagement training also required significant efforts in terms of coordinating the Train the Trainer training for eight AFSS employees across all regions. As nationally accredited training, the process is much more demanding and requires a solid commitment from all participants, including annual refreshers and reaccreditation.

### **Seasons for Healing**

The AFSS Training Facilitator is also one step away from being able to teach others to deliver the Seasons for Healing Grief and Loss Education Program. The program is a significant partnership with Good Grief and the Healing Foundation. It builds upon the mainstream grief and counselling education program with a particular focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the extensive and ongoing grief and loss many Aboriginal people experience.

Warren Guppy  
Senior Manager  
Regional Services





# Metropolitan Services

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Metropolitan services provide a range of out of home care and support services to Aboriginal children, young people and their families across the Adelaide area.

The four service areas are provided across a life domains continuum from Out of Home Care, Residential Care, Youth Accommodation and Family Support.

Services are based where there is greatest demographic need. Over the past 12 months the focus across all the program areas has been to embed a culture that is based on partnership, is culturally safe, trauma and attachment informed. This has included developing and applying best practice approaches that maintain the client's wellbeing as the priority. Over this last 12 months there have been a number of Youth Work and Social Work placements across Metropolitan Services.

## Family Based Out of Home Care

The Family Based Out of Home Care Program is a family based foster care program for children and young people under the Guardianship of the Minister.

This year there has been a focus on staff development and training, which has seen the staff grow professionally. Staff have attended training in evidence-based models of practice that they are able to draw on in their support of carers.

Many challenges continue, including the high numbers of Aboriginal children and young people entering the child protection system and the ongoing complexities in the recruitment of Aboriginal carers. Issues

include the ongoing impact of intergenerational trauma on Aboriginal children and families, and this directly contributes to the over representation of Aboriginal children in the state's Child Protection System.

The team this year held carers forums and events to support the knowledge and skill development of our carers and to celebrate with them their strengths and the cultural knowledge they bring to their very important role.

Currently across the Metropolitan region there are 78 carer households, 15 new carers undertaking the Step by Step assessment and six assessments that have been completed and are awaiting approval from Families SA.

Recently the team were fortunate to attend the Australian Childhood Foundation International Trauma Conference in Melbourne. The conference brought experts from across the globe, in trauma, childhood development, neuroscience and best practice approaches in working with children and young people who have experienced abuse and neglect. It is our plan to roll out these learnings across the program to strengthen carers' and Workers' knowledge and skills to provide the best possible care to the children and young people we work with.

Training will soon roll out that will incorporate Solution Based Case Management principles for the Out of Home Care team to support the work they do with foster carers and the children and young people in their care.

Cultural connection for children and young people in out of home care remains a focus of the program, with plans to incorporate

and utilise technology to engage young people with their culture. Our focus is to ensure that young people stay proud, strong and safe in their culture.

Finally, in the last part of 2013-2014 period, an out of home care forum was held in Pt Augusta where regional and metropolitan teams came together in Pt Augusta to discuss common themes and plan for the future direction of the program.

### Non Family Based Out of Home Care - Residential Care

AFSS Residential Care Service is based in Metropolitan Adelaide and incorporates two facilities that can provide for individual children and sibling groups.

Over the past 12 months the focus has been to embed trauma informed practice across the residential care service.

A new Manager was recently appointed, who is reviewing the structure and training of staff to support a developmental, trauma and attachment focus. This has included incorporating better matching principles for children so that younger children are not placed with older traumatised children, as this contributes to developing trauma in younger children.

Staff stability is also a focus, ensuring consistency and continuity for children.



*Our Community Wellbeing program supports Aboriginal families, providing a wide range of groups to help families connect to culture and build skills in daily living.*



*Staff members Rebecca Wiles and Jody Lynch get into the spirit of things as Santa's little helpers at the AFSS children's Christmas party.*

Staff training has focussed on attachment, trauma informed practice and child development. Ongoing staff training has included Maybo training and Bower Place training. Training that will be coming soon will include Trauma informed practice approaches from the Australian Childhood Foundation.

The facilities have had some refurbishment to promote a home-like environment for children and young people and to provide child friendly spaces that promote positive child development, including age appropriate play equipment and therapeutic environments.

The program has also incorporated care planning for all children who reside in the service to ensure timely and developmentally informed supports are put in place for each child.

### Community Wellbeing Program

The Community Wellbeing Program is a family support program based in the metropolitan region of Adelaide.

During the past 12 months a second site has been opened in the southern region of Adelaide to service the Aboriginal community in the southern Adelaide region.



*Recruitment of foster carers is a vital activity undertaken by the team. Our display at a recruitment event helps community members learn more about becoming an AFSS foster carer.*

Both the southern and northern community wellbeing teams have been delivering one-on-one support and group work programs. These programs have included:

- Circle of Security
- Seasons for Healing
- Mums' and Bubs' groups
- Dads groups
- Healthy cooking on a budget
- Artists workshop and exhibition
- Connection to Culture - delivered in middle schools
- Korka cooking group
- Children and Families group.

Much work has been done in collaboration with other service providers and networks to share knowledge and skills across the sector.

Community Wellbeing delivered a NAIDOC week breakfast and Family Fun Day in collaboration with Gawler Council and Gawler Health Services; over 80 guests attended the event.

## Youth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Specific Service

YAATSISS is a program for Aboriginal young people aged 15-25 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Two sites include Olga Fudge Lodge for young Aboriginal women and Narungga House for young Aboriginal men.

This year has seen an increased focus on case management and wrap around service approaches and trauma informed practice training for staff. Staff have been focussing on supporting young people to develop independent living skills and assessing individual client need to ensure that each young person receives meaningful supports.

A series of partnerships has been formed with a number of other services to ensure greater access for Aboriginal young people to services, including health, housing and education.

Group programs are being delivered focusing on living and life skills, parenting and self care.

Continual challenges remain including the over representation of Aboriginal young people experiencing homelessness, unemployment, poor educational outcomes and over representation in the child protection system.

Nina Mutton  
Senior Manager  
Metropolitan Services

# Therapeutic Services

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## Cultural consultancy program - Role summary

The Cultural Consultant position provides a written Cultural

Consultation Report in response to all Families SA Care and Protection Applications in the Youth Court of South Australia in relation to Aboriginal children. This service provides vital input to the process to ensure a focus on the cultural needs and interests of the child, affirm the importance of family self-determination and participation and to provide advice on how the requirements of the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle can be met.

The Cultural Consultant also attends Family Care Meetings as a cultural representative to ensure that meetings are run in a culturally appropriate and respectful manner. The Cultural Consultant has some access to other Aboriginal staff members' time in metro and regional locations to attend Family Care Meetings as Cultural Representatives in place of the Cultural Consultant. At the moment, there are nine Aboriginal AFSS staff members in both regional and metro locations that are able to undertake the Cultural Representative role.

## Care and Protection in South Australia

In South Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are 11.5 times more likely to be in Out-of-Home Care than non-Aboriginal children. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children constitute just 3.5%

of the population (*Source: ABS 2011 Census of Population and Housing*) but make up almost 30% of children in Out-of-Home Care (*Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Child Protection 2012-2013*).

There is currently only one full time position to provide the gazetted Cultural Consultancy service for all care and protection matters in South Australia. This workload presents significant challenges for the Cultural Consultant to work on program development tasks, as well as meeting the high day-to-day demand.

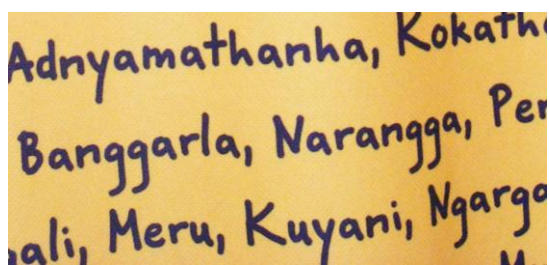
## Past 12 months

Over the past 12 months, the Cultural Consultant has been working on:

- Revising the template for the Cultural Consultation Report that is provided to the Department in response to Youth Court Applications to incorporate key principles of Aboriginal self-determination and cultural connection
- An Information Statement for Families SA staff outlining the Cultural Consultant's role, the Cultural Consultancy program's objectives and how to refer matters for cultural consultation
- Developing training and support structures for cultural representatives who attend Family Care Meetings.

The Cultural Consultant and Senior Manager, Therapeutic Services, also developed a presentation for the Child Aware Approaches Conference that was



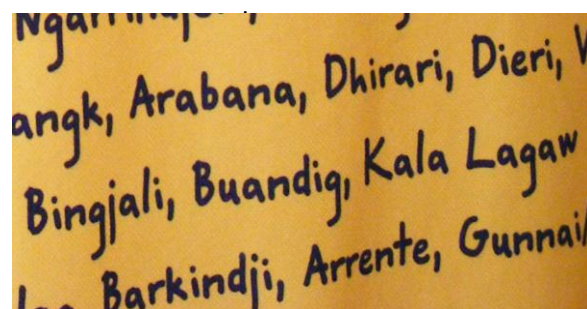


held in Melbourne from 31 March – 1 April 2014. The presentation, entitled “Interpretations of Meaning: The ‘white welfare’ voice and Aboriginal child, family and Community voices in the official dialogue of Cultural Consultancy”, was given a lot of positive feedback from conference participants. Several requests were made for the presentation to be filmed and uploaded to YouTube as a training guide for other practitioners working with Aboriginal people and families in child protection. The Cultural Consultant is currently in discussion with the Australian Centre for Child Protection to make this happen.

### Data summary

- Since 1 July 2013 until June 30 2014 there have been 134 Family Care Meeting referrals and 171 Youth Court application referrals that involved 555 children in total.
- Of those 305 referrals, 205 were responded to within 48 hours (approximately 67% of the total). A further 35 were responded to within three days.
- The 171 Youth Court application referrals were made of up:
  - 48 Investigation and Assessment Applications
  - 56 Guardianship of the Minister for 12-months Applications
  - 51 Guardianship of the Minister until 18 years Applications

- The remaining 16 were made up of Variation to Orders (three), Undertakings for 12 months (one), Guardianship for 6 months (three), Custody for 12 months (three), consideration for long-term family care meeting agreement (one), Extension of Investigation and Assessment Orders (one) and four instances where the Department was applying for different Orders for different children (from the same sibling group) in one Application.
- Of the 134 Family Care Meeting invitations, 110 meetings were attended by AFSS staff. On 11 of those occasions, the family did not attend the meeting.
- On the other 24 occasions:
  - The meeting was postponed or cancelled on behalf of the family or Families SA 14 times
  - AFSS did not attend three times due to staff absence/illness
  - A family member acted as the cultural representative on five occasions, when the meeting was held in Yalata, Ernabella or Amata
  - The family did not want a cultural representative on one occasion
  - The Conferencing Unit did not contact the cultural representative for a phone link



Program aims for the next 12 months are to:

- Finalise the revision of the Cultural Consultation template, to incorporate the principles of recently published key papers: “Child Aware Approaches”, “Aboriginal Child Placement Principle: Aims and Core Elements”, and “Whose Voice Counts?”
- Finalise the Information Statement for Families SA staff
- Develop a presentation for Families SA staff in regard to the program and its objectives
- Finalise and undertake training to cultural representatives who attend Family Care Meetings
- Develop networks with key stakeholders in Aboriginal Communities across the state
- Undertake a project on the interface of culture and attachment
- Produce a manual of practice to guide the program.

## Stronger Families program

It is an indictment on our society that the end stage of cultural disconnection, intergenerational trauma and extreme disadvantage results in many Aboriginal families becoming entrenched in the child protection system. The AFSS Stronger Families program is funded to provide family preservation and reunification services to Aboriginal families in Ceduna, Coober Pedy, Pt Lincoln, Pt Augusta, Riverland and the Adelaide metropolitan area who are in varying stages of contact with the child protection system. Families engage on a voluntary basis after a referral from Families SA. The AFSS worker then meets with the family to develop goals that address the child protection concerns but that are meaningful to the family and that the family see as their goals too. Work is undertaken both at a practical and therapeutic level. Staff may assist the family to help with financial and housing issues, to make the family home hygienic and more comfortable, to address debt and develop a financial management plan, to tackle problems of alcohol misuse, family violence or depression, and to build safe and nurturing parenting capacity. All intervention is undertaken on the basis of building a relationship of trust and respect with the family. The goal is to build family capacity to sustain progress once the service ends.

The program is led by a Senior Manager who is a qualified Social Worker and provides strengths based clinical leadership of the program. Eighteen staff around most of the State provide frontline services to families. In the last six months a program support role has been created to assist our



frontline staff with guidance for their work with families.

Development goals for the program over the past year have been:

- Further development of our model of practice to incorporate a solution-focussed approach
- Clarifying the case worker and case manager roles in new Job and Person specifications
- Recruiting more Aboriginal staff into our program
- Simplifying forms and case recording processes
- Producing practice guidelines and new tools for staff
- Extending the casework role into the provision of group work and practical skills and parenting programs.

Over the past year the program has aimed to get more detail into our case plans and to ensure that the work we do with our families helps address the underlying stresses and disadvantage that families are experiencing. All of our work aims to be grounded in an understanding of the ongoing dispossession and exclusion of Aboriginal families and loss of connection to family, community and culture. We work with the strengths that families already have to keep their children safe and their family strong, helping to keep children safe with family, but also to strengthen the family as a whole. We have recruited all our new staff primarily on the basis of their attitude and skill in understanding the issues facing Aboriginal families, being able to develop a relationship of trust, and to help in ways that empower and heal.

Our program achieves good engagement with families, including families that have had difficulty relating to mainstream



*We work with the strengths that families already have to keep their children safe and their family strong.*

agencies. We provide a friendly and safe environment in which worries and successes can be explored and shared. Children are able to be kept safely at home or returned home, often when others thought it was not possible. Sometimes we are not able to achieve this with the level of resources we have, or because intervention has come too late for the family. Family Preservation and Reunification services are based on a crisis intervention model that has limited value for Aboriginal families dealing with complex intergenerational trauma. Funding levels do not match the level or complexity of need. Wider systemic racism and disadvantage cannot be addressed by our service, so it is important that even modest outcomes are recognised as valuable interventions in the lives of the families we work with.

In our daily work we continue to advocate for the rights and interests of Aboriginal children, families and communities, our belief in the untapped potential of the families we work with, and the richness of Aboriginal culture that we all benefit from.

Anne Nicolaou  
Senior Manager  
Therapeutic Services

# Corporate Services

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The Corporate Services team is a small and diverse group providing a wide range of services and support.

Corporate Services

incorporates the following areas:

- Administrative Support
- Human Resources
- Accounts Payable/Receivable
- Payroll
- Information Technology (IT)
- Finance and Reporting
- Records Management
- Resources.

One of the major activities completed during the year was the review of our IT infrastructure. A review and scoping process was completed using two suppliers to gain the best options and pricing, before settling on the agreed structure. Over subsequent months, the components were delivered and installed, which has provided the organisation with an IT infrastructure that should see it through for the next three to five years. This was a significant investment but necessary given the speed of change and the relatively short useful life of servers and other hardware.

Other activities undertaken through the year included the progression of the Enterprise Agreement, with a committee of nominated staff and management representatives convened to undertake this process. The process was undertaken over a large number of meetings to ensure the thoughts and suggestions of all stakeholders were considered. By the end of the financial year,

a draft document had been agreed and was ready for distribution to staff, for consideration and voting. Thank you to the members of the committee who provided the link for all stakeholders to ensure that the final draft was acceptable to everyone

Our quality accreditation under the Australian Service Excellence Standards is due for renewal in March of 2015, so the process of reviewing and self-assessing was commenced with all Managers when we came together at the annual Managers' workshop in May. Managers were divided into groups and assigned some of the standards to enable them to seek input from their own team, work in groups across diverse areas of the organisation and to gain a good understanding of the requirements. This process will continue until the renewal date and external assessment is undertaken.

Another activity commenced during the year that will also progress across coming months is the gradual replacement and upgrade of some of our motor vehicles. This involves the disposal of older vehicles which will be replaced with vehicles under lease.

The three-year "*Seasons for Healing*" project funded by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Healing Foundation was finalised at the end of the financial year. This project, which was undertaken in partnership with Good Grief Ltd, provided a resource based on the well known "*Seasons for Growth*" Grief and Loss but contextualised for use in Aboriginal communities. Staff have been accredited to run the program and can now be run in each of our locations.

Peter Shattock  
Senior Manager  
Corporate Services

# Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2014

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**ABORIGINAL FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES INCORPORATED**

**STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
		<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Revenue</b>			
Grant revenue	2	9,946,967	9,400,672
Other revenues	2	257,135	272,796
Net Gain on Disposal of Non Current Assets	4	-	3,264
Employee benefits expenses		(8,072,586)	(8,012,268)
Goods and Services expenses	3	(1,721,683)	(1,828,248)
Finance Costs		-	-
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	8	(283,187)	(276,810)
<b>Current year surplus (deficit) before income tax</b>		<b>126,646</b>	<b>(440,594)</b>
Income tax expense		-	-
<b>Current year surplus (deficit) for the year</b>		<b>126,646</b>	<b>(440,594)</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>			
<b>Items that may be classified subsequently to profit or loss:</b>			
Fair value gains on available-for-sale financial assets		-	-
<b>Items that will not be re-classified subsequently to profit or loss:</b>			
Other comprehensive income for the year		-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>		<b>126,646</b>	<b>(440,594)</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income attributable to members of the equity</b>		<b>126,646</b>	<b>(440,594)</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

**ABORIGINAL FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES INCORPORATED**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>2014 \$</b>	<b>2013 \$</b>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	5	2,831,703	2,907,356
Accounts Receivable and Other Debtors	6	74,314	16,026
Other Current Assets	7	93,142	104,168
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>2,999,159</b>	<b>3,027,551</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, Plant and equipment	8	2,231,010	2,312,262
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>2,231,010</b>	<b>2,312,262</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>5,230,169</b>	<b>5,339,813</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Accounts Payable and Other Payables	9	2,497,172	2,792,956
Employee Benefits	10	479,458	376,567
Borrowings	11	-	-
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>2,976,630</b>	<b>3,169,523</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Employee Benefits	10	123,620	167,015
Borrowings	11	-	-
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>123,620</b>	<b>167,015</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>3,100,249</b>	<b>3,336,538</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>2,129,919</b>	<b>2,003,275</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Retained Surpluses		1,560,381	1,433,736
Asset Revaluation Reserve		569,538	569,538
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>2,129,919</b>	<b>2,003,273</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

**ABORIGINAL FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES INCORPORATED**

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014**

	<b>Retained Surpluses</b>	<b>Asset Revaluation Reserve</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Balance at 1 July 2012</b>	1,874,330	215,564	2,089,894
Net surplus (deficit) for the year	(440,594)	-	(440,594)
Other comprehensive income for the year	-	-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income attributable to members of the equity for the year</b>	<b>(440,594)</b>	<b>215,564</b>	<b>(440,594)</b>
Movement in Reserve		353,974	353,974
<b>Balance at 30 June 2013</b>	<b>1,433,736</b>	<b>569,538</b>	<b>2,003,274</b>
 <b>Balance at 1 July 2014</b>	 1,433,736	 569,538	 2,003,274
<b>Comprehensive income</b>			
Net surplus (deficit) for the year	126,645		126,645
Other comprehensive income for the year	-	-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income attributable to members of the equity for the year</b>	<b>126,645</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>126,645</b>
<b>Balance at 30 June 2014</b>	<b>1,560,381</b>	<b>569,538</b>	<b>2,129,919</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements



**ABORIGINAL FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES INCORPORATED**

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>2014 \$</b>	<b>2013 \$</b>
<b>CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Cash receipts in the course of operations		10,036,665	9,765,388
Cash payments in the course of operations		(10,026,961)	(9,769,592)
Finance Costs		-	-
Interest received		116,578	126,353
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>126,282</b>	<b>122,149</b>
<b>CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Payments for plant and equipment		(201,936)	(258,659)
Receipts from disposal of plant and equipment		-	9,614
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>		<b>(201,936)</b>	<b>(249,045)</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Repayment of Borrowings		-	-
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>NET INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN CASH HELD</b>		<b>(75,654)</b>	<b>(126,896)</b>
Cash at the beginning of the financial year		2,907,357	3,034,253
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2,831,703</b>	<b>2,907,357</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

**ABORIGINAL FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES INCORPORATED**

**STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

In the opinion of the committee the financial report as set out on pages 1 to 21:

- 1       Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of the Aboriginal Family Support Services Incorporated as at 30 June 2014 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements (including Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the Associations Incorporation Act 1985.
- 2       At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Aboriginal Family Support Services Incorporated will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the committee and is signed for and on behalf of the committee by:



Committee Member



Committee Member

Dated this 17th day of November 2014

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF  
ABORIGINAL FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES INCORPORATED**



**Report on the Financial Report**

We have audited the accompanying financial report of Aboriginal Family Support Services Incorporated (the association), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2014, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the statement by the members of the committee.

**Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report**

The committee of the association is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the Associations Incorporation Act 1985 and for such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

**Auditor's Responsibility**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the association's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control.

An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

**Independence**

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

Basso Newman & Co  
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approved under Professional  
Standards Legislation"

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF  
ABORIGINAL FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES INCORPORATED**

**Auditor's Opinion**

In our opinion, the financial report of Aboriginal Family Support Services Incorporated is in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Act 1985 including:

- i. giving a true and fair view of the association's financial position as at 30 June 2014 and of its performance for the year ended on that date; and
- ii. complying with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements



**Trevor Basso - Partner  
Basso Newman & Co  
Chartered Accountants  
Adelaide**

**Dated this 18<sup>th</sup> day of November 2014**

**basso  
& newman**  
chartered  
accountants

**ABORIGINAL FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES INCORPORATED**

**COMPILATION REPORT  
TO ABORIGINAL FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES INCORPORATED**



**Scope**

We have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statement of Aboriginal Family Support Services Incorporated which comprises the Income and Expenditure Statement.

The specific purpose for which the special purpose financial statement has been prepared is to provide information relating to the performance of the entity that satisfies the information needs of the committee.

*The Responsibility of the Committee for the financial report*

The committee is solely responsible for the information contained in the special purpose financial statement and has determined that the basis of accounting is appropriate to meet their needs and for the purpose that the financial statement was prepared.

*Our responsibility*

On the basis of information provided by the committee we have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statement in accordance with the basis of accounting adopted and APES 315: Compilation of Financial Information.

Our procedures used accounting expertise to collect, classify and summarise the financial information, which the committee provided, into compiling the financial statement. Our procedures do not include verification or validation procedures. No audit or review has been performed and accordingly no assurance is expressed.

The special purpose financial report was compiled exclusively for the benefit of the committee. We do not accept responsibility to any other person for the contents of the special purpose financial statement.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'T A Basso', written over a horizontal line.

**T A Basso - Partner  
Basso Newman & Co  
Chartered Accountants  
Adelaide  
18<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

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# Where to find us

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## Christies Beach

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## Smithfield

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## Coober Pedy

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