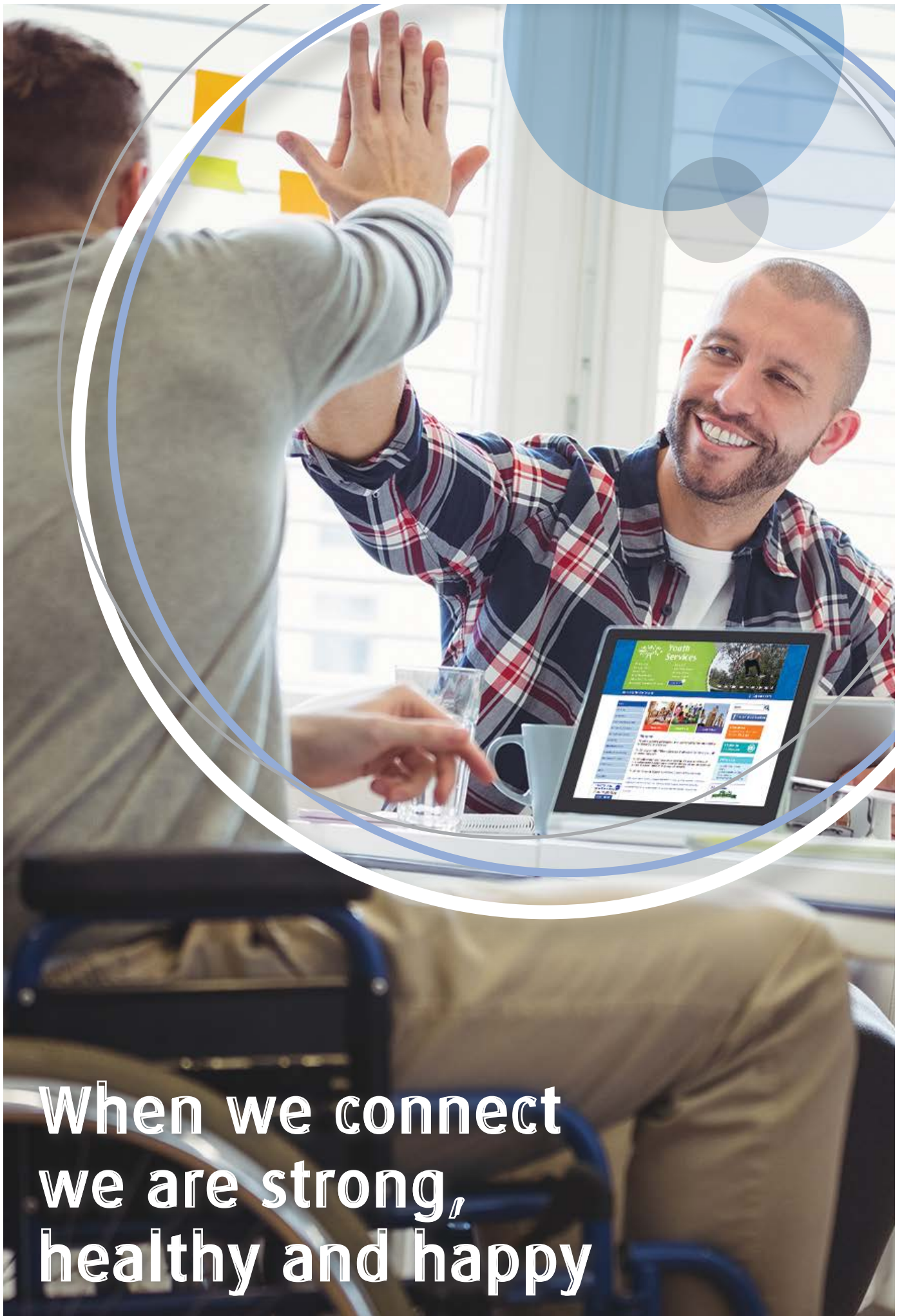




ANNUAL REPORT

2017-2018



**When we connect
we are strong,
healthy and happy**

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COMMUNITY LINKS WELLBEING

Our Vision

Community Links Wellbeing works in Wollondilly, Wingecarribee, Camden and Campbelltown Local Government Areas to build stronger, healthier and safer communities and families.

Our Mission

Community Links Wellbeing works with individuals, families and communities of the Wollondilly, Wingecarribee, Camden and Campbelltown Local Government Areas to build a strong and viable infrastructure that will support vulnerable members of the community and provide them with the capacity to effectively manage their lives.



Our History

Community Links Wollondilly was formed in 2006 when Wollondilly Community Development Committee (WCDC), Wollondilly Camden Family Support Service (WCFSS), Wollondilly Outreach Resource Service (WORS) and Wollondilly Youth Services Network (WYSN) amalgamated. The amalgamation was approved by the government departments, which funded these services.

In 2009, Community Links Wollondilly formed The Haven Project Consortium with Anglicare, The Disability Trust, BCD Community Care and Macarthur Disability Services to provide a respite coordination service to Mental Health Carers. As a result of this consortium, service delivery expanded to the Wingecarribee and Campbelltown Regions.

In 2011, CLW was offered the opportunity to manage Wingecarribee Family Support Service (WFSS).

In 2012, CLW applied for DGR status which meant that the organisation can source charitable donations to help fund programs.

In April 2018 Community Links Wollondilly merged with Wingecarribee Family Support Service and the service was renamed to Community Links Wellbeing.

SECTION 1 – An overview of Community Links Wellbeing

ABOUT US

Community Links Wellbeing has a long history in delivering a continuum of strength based services, across the lifespan of community members.

Community Links Wellbeing currently provides family support, events, activities, groups, educational programs, skills development workshops, opportunities for social engagement, allied health services, NDIS and mental health services. Services are offered to a diverse target group from families (including expectant parents), children and young people to seniors and the elderly.

The organisation is well respected in the sector and amongst government funding bodies as providing quality services at grassroots level; connecting and consulting with community to identify existing and emerging needs and delivering projects that meet those needs.

Our Direction

Community Links Wellbeing strives to work towards the following Community Outcomes:

- Communities are CONNECTED
- Families are RESILIENT
- Children DEVELOP TO THEIR POTENTIAL
- Young people are CONFIDENT

When outcomes are achieved within our direction the community will have the following:

- Community members that access the service will feel included, treated with respect and gain knowledge that is current and reflects best practice.

- Families that access the service will have skills that will enhance their wellbeing.
- Children and young people participating in activities will gain knowledge and skills to improve their social and emotional wellbeing.
- Young people engaged in services will have increased capacity to develop respectful relationships and make good choices.
- Community Links Wellbeing will have positive relationships with key stakeholders within the community.

Our Challenge

One of the many challenges faced by organisations like Community Links Wellbeing is sustaining a level of funding to deliver quality services to the community. With the significant increase in population across the Macarthur regions, our challenge is to work out what best suits the needs of our growing communities and maintaining the service within the financial constraints. There are many opportunities for Community Links Wellbeing to partner with external organisations to increase services however without adequate funding and infrastructure, balancing the wellbeing of staff with delivering a quality service is a continuous challenge.

Our Response

The organisation is clear about its goals and is strategically on track to deliver core services. Management is open to opportunities that allow the service to address community needs whilst maintaining a sustainable working environment.

OUR PEOPLE



Patron

Judy Hannan – Mayor Wollondilly Shire Council

GOVERNANCE BODY 2017 – 2018 FINANCIAL YEAR

Lyn Bright	Chair
Elizabeth Atkin	Vice Chair
Thomas Goodman	Treasurer
Arno Schaaf	Secretary
Keith Smith	Committee Member
Kelly Duncan	Committee Member – resigned in April 2018
Karen Adams	Committee Member – resigned in April 2018
Tony Jagicic	Committee Member
Gareth Jamieson	Committee Member
Julie Hoffmannbeck	Committee Member

EMPLOYEES 2017 – 2018 FINANCIAL YEAR

Greg Duffy	General Manager
Nicole Humphries	Operations Manager
Carmel Flavell	NDIS Manager
Larry Whipper	Community Engagement Manager
Martin Lumetzberger	Mental Health Clinical Co-Ordinator
Elizabeth Duffy	Allied Health Manager
Kyla Claydon	Casework Team Leader
Aimee Cramer	Speech Pathologist
Anne West	Occupational Therapist
Ashlee Cain	Speech Pathologist
Cherrie Willingham	Intake Worker
Christine Wilesmith	Right Start Project Coordinator
Corine de Man	Multicultural Resource Worker
Corinne Woolcocks	Generalist Family Support Worker
Dianne Rossteuscher	Finance Officer
Emily Simonato	Occupational Therapist
Emma Rowe	PHN Administration Worker
Hannah Pinkerton	Generalist Family Support Worker
Janet King	Administration Worker
Jessica Hobson	Reception

Karen Adams	Aboriginal Supported Playgroup Worker
Karen May	Mental Health Intake Worker
Karena Rowley	Generalist Family Support Worker
Kate White	EAP Counsellor
Kelly Duncan	Aboriginal Supported Playgroup Worker
Leah Di Sisto	Administration Worker
Luke Roki	Youth Engagement and Youth Homelessness Worker
Mikaela Bow	Speech Therapist
Patricia Otto	Administration Worker
Rebecca Levett	Generalist Family Support Worker
Renee Challenor	NDIS/Allied Health Intake Worker
Sally Waterford	Generalist Family Support Worker
Sara Field	Administration Co-ordinator
Sonia Caramanico	Administration Worker
Susan Clapson	Occupational Therapist
Tegan Clift	Community Development Worker
Troy Styman	Aboriginal Project Worker
Vida Carmody	Child and Family Worker



SECTION 2 – Governance

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

2018 has been an eventful year for the organisation with the successful completion of several major activities.

The merger with Wingecarribee Family Support has been finalised and the transition, once final agreement from the funding body was received, was smooth and completed in a timely manner.

With the merger came the need for the name of the organisation to truly reflect the service provision over multiple local government areas. We have retained the formal legal name of Community Links Wollondilly but now trade as Community Links Wellbeing. Thank you to the staff who recommended this new name. We have been able to retain the acronym of CLW thus saving costs of changing our promotional literature etc.

The successful tender for additional funds from the Primary Health Network will enable the organisation to expand the level of services provided to the community.

The team, and in particular Carmel, successfully completed the Third Party Verification under the Disability Standards. Congratulations to everyone, this is not an easy task but the outcome reflects the high level of service and duty of care provided by the organisation and all team members to the people to whom we provide service.

All programs have met the required KPIs for the year and whilst some have been slow to grow and enter the commercial world the commitment of all involved is inspiring.

To all team members be they paid or volunteer a very big thank you. Your commitment to the organisation and your community is obvious in the great work you have achieved.

To Greg and my fellow Board members, thank you. We have had some interesting discussions during the year and while these might be lively they always ensure all aspects of an issue are explored prior to an informed decision being made. Thank you it has been a pleasure working with you.

Lyn Bright - Chairperson

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

I look back over the 2017-2018 financial year and think that one small word sums it up best, WOW!! In my 14 years of being here I think, in terms of growth and change, Community Links has never seen a year quite like this one.

I don't normally quote stats of any description as they are normally further into the Annual Report but it would be remiss of me to not mention some significant numbers for the last twelve months. Our staffing levels have gone from 23 to 37 and our annual turnover has almost doubled from \$1.8 million to approximately \$3.5 million. Throw in a name change, a verification and a merger and you can gain a small idea of what we have been through. We now manage five office facilities across three LGA's and are in the throes of opening a Youth Facility in Bowral for our Youth Mental Health Project.

I wish to thank our partners of whom there are way too many to mention here but in particular FaCS and the PHN who have given CLW the opportunity to expand with their funding and support. After countless years of attempting to get the Wollondilly and Wingecarribee recognised in their own rights with funding it has finally happened which is a significant shift and creates great opportunities for our Communities.

Thanks to our Board who have spent countless hours strategically planning for now and the future and a special mention to the previous Management Committee of Wingecarribee Family Support Service who were instrumental in making the merger a smooth process. The voluntary hours spent by the people in these positions should never be taken for granted as I see firsthand

how dedicated they are and we have a tremendous skill set which ensures that we have a strong governance base from which to work.

Thank you also to the students and volunteers who generally bring such passion and energy to our service and enable the staff to cover so much more ground.

I can't quite find enough superlatives to describe what I feel about the staff and their efforts in what has been a massive year of change and uncertainty. I am humbled to be the Manager of such a diverse, highly skilled and motivated group of people who basically just get on with it and make a huge difference in so many people's lives. You should never underestimate what you are doing at CLW, I never do.

I would like to thank the people in our communities who enable us the privilege of working with them at so many different levels. We are excited to be able to now offer people so many programs locally as we understand the significant impact it can have on people to have to travel sometimes great distances to access services. I have no doubt that with the evidences backing us up we will continue to grow and in turn be able to provide more options at a local level.

Upon reflection it has been a huge year in the history of CLW, but for us now, that's what it becomes, history. It is as important now as it ever was to never lose sight of why CLW is here and to keep providing an innovative, supportive and meaningful service for our community members.

Thank you

Greg Duffy - General Manager

OPERATIONS

The position of Operations Manager was created in late 2017 based on the needs of a rapidly growing service. This year since being appointed to the position I will have to say it has been extremely busy, but very exciting.

Community Links Wellbeing (CLW) over the 2017-2018 financial year has remained focussed on maintaining its position in the community across both the Wollondilly and Camden LGAs. April 2018 saw the service grow with the merger with Wingecarribee Family Support Service (WFSS) and provided the opportunity to cement the facilities across all three LGAs. This merge included a name change from Community Links Wollondilly to its current name.

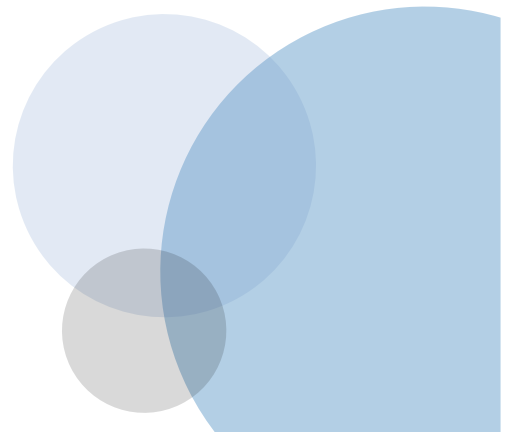
Operationally CLW has been busy managing the merging of the two services both from the legalities to the day to day operations of new staff, new procedures and the logistics of merging computer systems and databases. At the same time CLW welcomed the staff members of WFSS to the service increasing the capacity, skills and knowledge base of CLW staff.

Changes in the current sector such as the NDIS have meant that organisations like CLW now need to capitalise on their grass root experiences in the community to expand services to a more business driven and orientated model, while balancing the importance of remaining client focused and not losing sight of our core values. This financial year has seen CLW continue to expand its self funded, self sustaining programs such as Allied Health, Mental Health (You In Mind) and NDIS to enhance the current core funding programs. All of these programs have exceeded all

expectations from funding bodies, the service and the community.

Our exciting partnerships with other services have continued and with existing and new opportunities, I have no doubt that CLW will increase service provision and expansion in the future year. It has been a busy year for all teams and the staff have worked diligently to achieve great outcomes across a diverse range of tasks and programs, whilst at times enduring a difficult, challenging and changing workspace. With this I would like to acknowledge all staff in their combined efforts under Greg's leadership, as General Manager, and look forward to what the new financial year has to bring.

Nicole Humphries - *Operations Manager*



CHILD, YOUTH, FAMILY & COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

The Child, Youth and Family Team (CYFT) continues to hit the mark and provide not only quality service and support to the community but building improved partnerships and working closely with other agencies to provide capacity building opportunities. Evolving partnership and working relationships with Police Citizen Youth Club (PCYC), Picton High School, Local Health Districts (LHD) and Primary Health Network (PHN) are becoming more evident and productive.

Our Youth Worker Luke continues to provide numerous opportunities for youth engagement. Music Group is still a winner as well as Boys Drop In, School Holiday activities and Youth Week events. Luke has also worked alongside Wingecarribee Shire Council's Youth Worker to run "Love Bites" in High Schools throughout Wollondilly and Wingecarribee. This is a very powerful and important program which raises issues around Domestic Violence and education and empowerment for young people in the senior years of high school. Love Bites is always well received and also benefits from Police involvement.

The UpFront program has assisted 32 young people in Wollondilly and Wingecarribee to prevent homelessness through advocacy, skills development and family mediation. Young people have also started accessing the new Reframe program providing youth friendly engagement leading to mental health supports.

Our Community Development Worker Tegan continues to kick many goals and is working closely with Wollondilly Health Alliance and Wollondilly Council on a number of projects. One that has been

incredibly successful is Project GROW (Garden Regeneration of Wollondilly) Community Garden. The recent addition of a garden shed, water tank and shelter with help from the workers at Simec (Tahmoor Colliery), again highlights the importance of community engagement and local partnerships to meet residents needs.

Tegan represents CLW well at various meetings and interagency meetings. There has been a strong focus on making CLW a Healthy Workplace and Tegan has championed the Get Healthy @ Work Program. A few exciting events have been...the Golf day and Healthy cooking workshop for Staff Development days, a Community Links team in the Rumble Run obstacle challenge, five teams completed the Steptember Challenge (fundraiser for Cerebral Palsy) and the biggest challenge was our team of six that completed the Bloody Long Walk – 35km from Palm Beach to Manly (raising funds for Mitochondrial Disease). Also an upgrade on the vegetable garden for staff use and a regular walking group has been established.

Vida our Early Childhood Worker continues to provide a high quality playgroup which attracts large numbers throughout the year. So successful is the program that it had to be culled to make numbers manageable.

Rather than exclude anybody Vida established a Social Playgroup which is largely self sufficient, but overseen and facilitated by CLW through Vida. Vida's professional and expert approach to early childhood is not taken for granted. She provides service to young parents and infants that continue to inspire a consistent

approach to early childhood development that truly has become 'a bench mark'.

Vida also continued to facilitate our Grandparent Carers Group, which provides social and emotional support in a safe environment which also provides for peer support and advocacy.

The year has been extremely busy, challenging and exciting. The coming year appears to be no less challenging, nor exciting.

I am sincerely thankful of the efforts of the Child, Youth and Family Team. They each individually and collectively as a team are a force that continues to go above and beyond expectations in the service and interaction with the Community.

Increased funding for Mental Health Services has provided enormous opportunity and will allow for the expansion of the Team, with a focus on Community Engagement along with our legendary Service provision.

The merger with WFSS and significant amount of networking and promoting the new organisation of Community Links Wellbeing has been exciting, challenging and productive as we break new ground and expand into new areas of service delivery. As I work more closely with promotion of our new mental health services and our Mental Health Team, new opportunities of engagement continue to emerge.

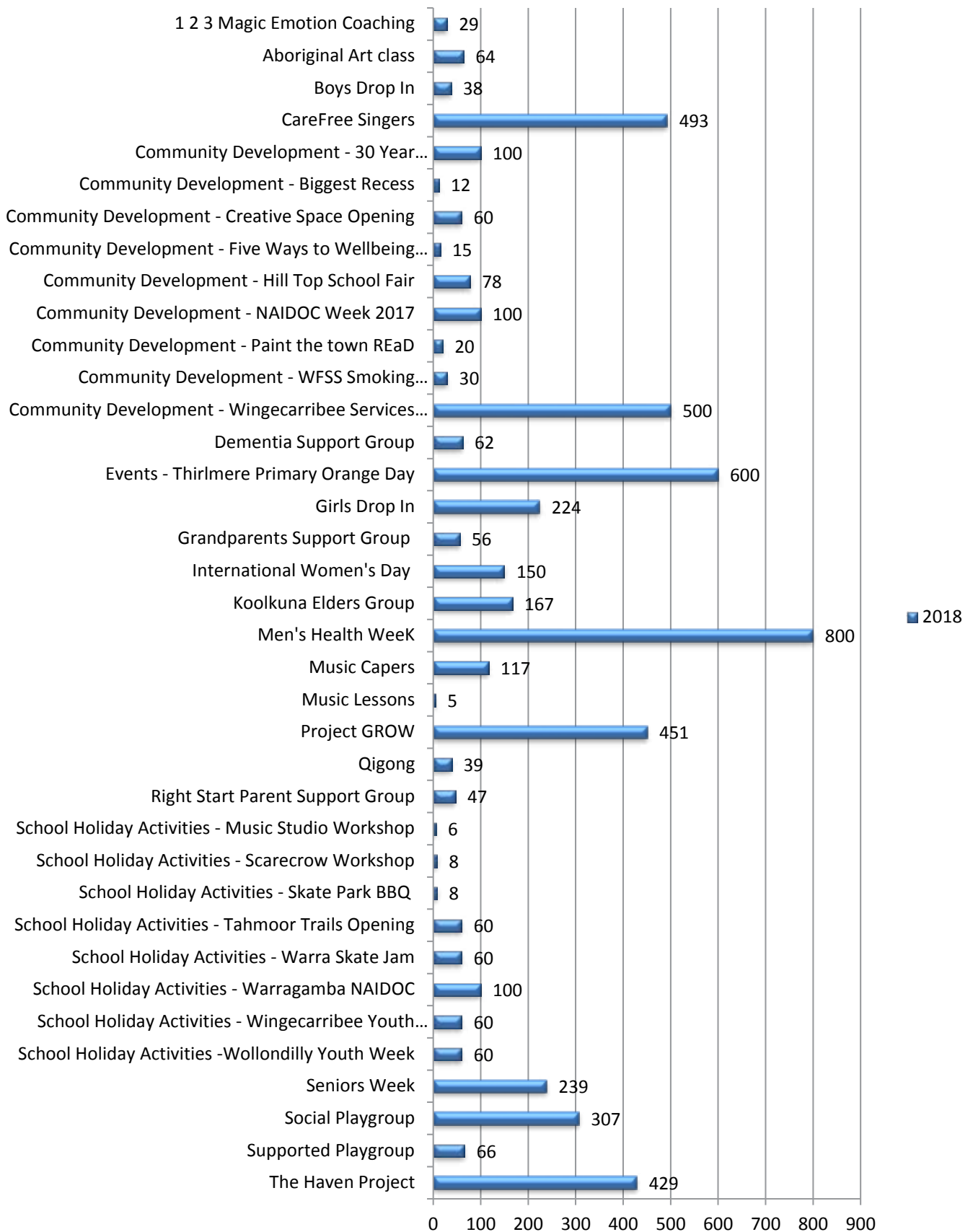
Having already established very strong and healthy working partnerships and credibility of the CLW label, in the mind of the community within the Wollondilly and Camden LGA'S, the recent merger with Wingecarribee Family Support Service, now provides even greater opportunity to burn the CLW label on the mind of the Wingecarribee LGA as well.

There will be more to report in relation to CLW Community Service and Engagement throughout the coming year, so watch this space.

Larry Whipper - *Team Manager*



CLW Group Activities



FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

When I think of the Family Support team the first things that comes to mind is we are extremely close knit and are supportive and understanding of one another. We all have similar attributes which complement one another in the work that we do. Given the emotionally challenging nature of the work we do we are fortunate that we are a part of such a supportive team and organisation.

The Family Support team is extremely passionate and motivated in supporting vulnerable families within the local community to develop skills and networks to increase their capacity to effectively manage their lives. The Family Support team work practice involves a strength based philosophy that focuses on a child and family centred practice.

CLW were given a wonderful opportunity to merge with Wingecarribee Family Support Service. What does this mean for family support? We have expanded as a team allowing us to provide various skill sets to address the needs of families across the three Local Government Areas Wollondilly, Wingecarribee and Camden.

We have been fortunate enough to gain two new roles and workers within the team, we now have an emergency relief worker and a casework trainee. Due to the expanding geographical location the number of intakes for family support is increasing often resulting in a wait list for families to access family support. The team consist of one intake officer, three full time caseworkers and three part time caseworkers.

The team has noticed an increase in the complexity of needs within the past twelve months. The top five areas of major presenting issues include:

1. Mental health concerns – children / young people
2. Financial distress
3. Peri-natal / post-natal support
4. Domestic and family violence
5. Education / School attendance

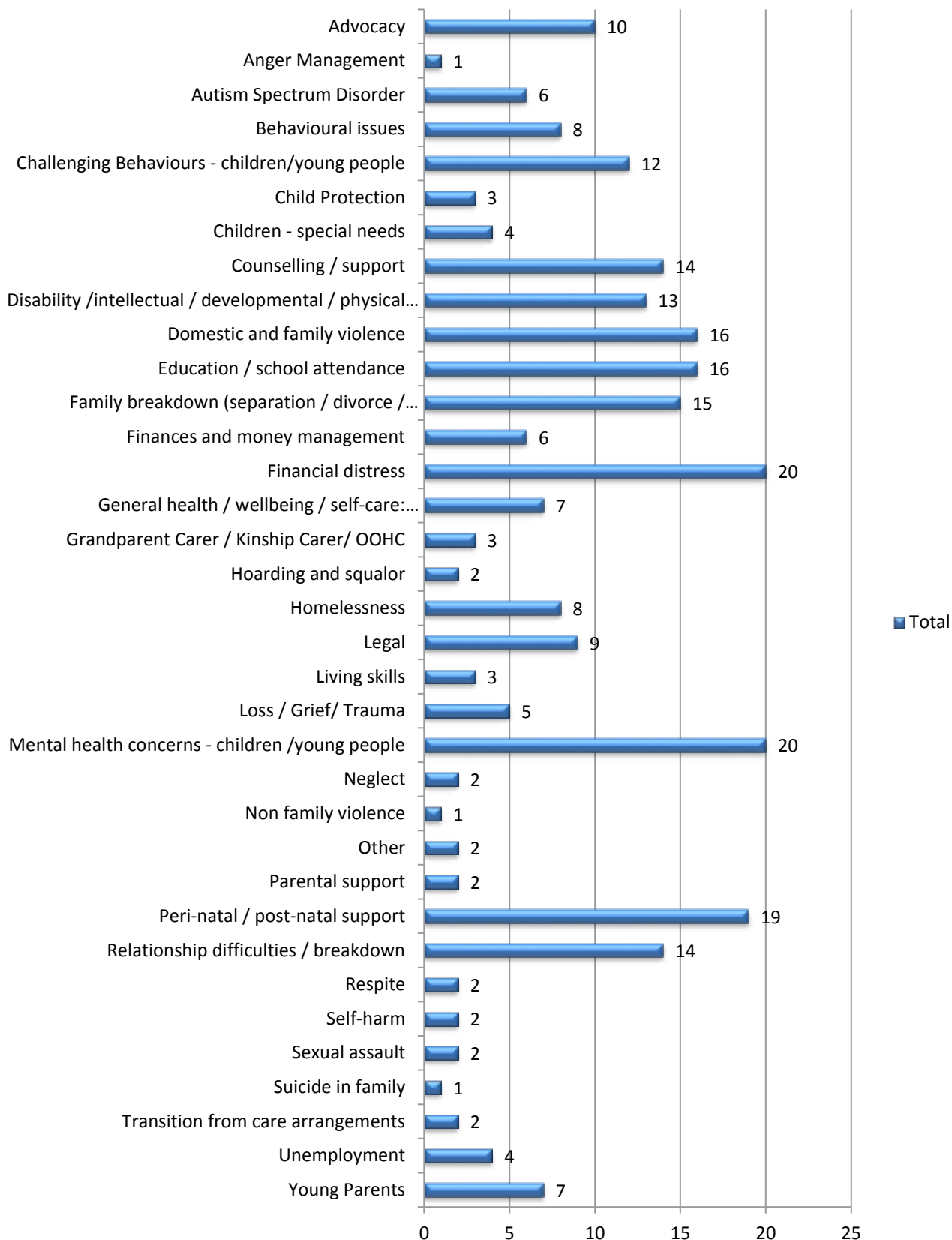
The assistance we provide to families consists of strength based, goal focused case planning and linking families to specialised supports from both internal and external sources to increase the capacity of families and assist them to get back on track. Outcomes are measured by completing scaling tools at the beginning and end of service delivery. The Personal Wellbeing Index (PWI) scale is an accredited measuring tool consisting of nine questions around quality of life indicators. Completing the PWI scaling tool at both the beginning and end of service delivery allows caseworkers to measure positive outcomes of clients who have accessed family support.

Kyla Claydon - Casework Team Leader



Client Christmas Party to Taronga Zoo

Major Presenting Issues of New Families



CLIENT FEEDBACK

"Everyone has been unbelievable in supporting and guiding us in a positive direction. My situation has been very dire and overwhelming and to be honest I don't know how we could get through all this if it wasn't for Community Links."

"I had no idea of what was available to us in the way of help and the service has benefited us in such a way that I feel I could never repay...."

"I just want to say that I am truly grateful and appreciative of all the help and support as well as the ongoing assistance that I have been receiving."

"Now that I know of this service and how much a support system like this is greatly needed in this community I can honestly say this type of service in this community is vital and very crucial in helping people in need of this service....my life would be a very different situation if it wasn't for this program..."

"I am forever in debt to Community Links and all the amazing people who are a very important part that makes this whole service function as well as it does."

ALLIED HEALTH PROGRAM

The Allied Health team have had its most successful year since commencing services in 2014. We have seen our team grow significantly over the last twelve months, with it currently consisting of three Occupational Therapists, three Speech Pathologists and a Psychologist. Our team has focused on not only providing a high standard of clinical support to our clients, but have additionally prioritised refining administration, improving team cohesion and expanding our networks.

The 2017/2018 financial year has been the Allied Health team's most profitable year to date. All clinicians have worked tirelessly to provide individual and group intervention across the Wingecarribee, Wollondilly and Camden/Campbelltown areas. With the NDIS in full swing, the services provided by our team have also broadened to include equipment prescription, adult intervention and school holiday social skills programs.

Our Speech Pathologists are continuing to run funded groups within Hilltop Public and are now providing weekly group therapy and teacher training at St. Anthony's Primary School. We have also continued our strong partnership with Uniting, providing Speech Pathology and Occupational Therapy services to families accessing their service. Throughout the year, our clinicians have also facilitated several parent and teacher information sessions at local preschools and schools. The team continue to attend training in order to keep their clinical skills up to date in the ever changing disability sector.

The Allied Health team have been busy attending community events such as Step Up for Down syndrome and the Camden Kids Fun Day. Each month, we continue to provide support to the Right Start Foundation group where clinicians run activities to assist children with Down syndrome in developing their motor, communication and social skills.

We look forward to an exciting year ahead!

Elizabeth Duffy - Team Manager



NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME (NDIS)

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has been considered the biggest national social change since the introduction of Medicare in the 1970's. It commenced roll out in this area in July 2016. Even though Community Links Wellbeing (CLW) did not know what to expect from this roll out, we decided to try this new and significant commercial, fee for service model.

With the commencement of this new scheme came many challenges, obstacles, and points of controversy, needs for strong advocacy and many learning curves. The NDIS program within the agency did not appear to be attracting any interest from the community so steps had to be taken to change the course of its direction. In order to increase NDIS referrals to Community Links Wellbeing, I undertook a wide-ranging promotion of our NDIS registered services that included sending emails, attending and informing networks, providing education one day per month to clients wanting information about applying for the NDIS at Macarthur Youth and Family services, Wingecarribee Family Support Services (both before and after the merger), and clients of our service and others. It appeared that people were very hungry for information on applying for the NDIS. This provided CLW with market advantage over competition because we were the only service in the Wollondilly LGA that was taking the time to assist people by giving them individual support to understand the scheme and apply for a plan.

This marketing approach resulted in the dramatic increase in referrals for the NDIS services that we are registered for.

With the increase of support coordination packages, referrals from these support coordination participants were generated to our Allied Health team for Speech and Occupational Therapy and creating increased income for the service other than from support coordination. While the support coordination promotion generated an incoming referral of approximately \$80,000 from new participants' 12-month NDIS plans, support coordination clients also needed allied health services. Approximately \$60,000 worth of referrals from these people's plans were passed on to administration for allied health team during May, June and July 2018 by support coordination. We had built a rapport with people with NDIS plans so they trusted us and selected us to provide other services to them.

People would access us for information on the NDIS then as trust had developed from that encounter; they then chose to use our services. Such was the success of the promotion that it created another problem and that was how we manage the unpredicted numbers of referrals that flooded the agency. It caught everyone by surprise, and meant we had to review our systems and improve the quality and efficiency of our production.

The administration team needed training in developing service agreements and service bookings for all the new referrals that were coming. The financial and data systems needed to adapt to the changes. Staff also needed updates in the ever-changing landscape of the NDIS. While simultaneously trying to provide support coordination and educating the community

on how to access the NDIS, I had to provide training to staff on how to engage the National Disability Insurance Agency, the portal, and update on developing NDIS policies.

So, while staff were not familiar with the administration work to accommodate the new influx of referrals, I also had to complete necessary administration requirements by preparing service agreements and bookings until the staff could take over the role.

Developing the Community Links Wellbeing NDIS program also meant we had to take up with opportunities that were presenting themselves. We had to be a registered service provider with the NDIA. We met these opportunities by the following measures:

Registrations with the NDIS of Community Links Wellbeing:

- Support Coordination
- Therapeutic supports
- Behaviour supports
- Exercise physiology
- Community Participation
- Early childhood supports
- Development - life skills
- Assist-life stage transition

In July 2018 the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission commenced its operations.

While the NDIS continued to provide engagement in planning, pricing, and payments, the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission is a regulatory government body.

Responsibilities of NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission:

- Complaints handling
- NDIS Code of Conduct
- Reportable Incidents
- Behaviour Supports
- Registration and Quality Assurance
- Compliance and Enforcement

As from 1st July 2018, Community Links Wellbeing registration with the NDIA has been transitioned along with other NDIS registered service providers to the National Quality and Safeguards Commission. With this change of registration came a change to the approved service categories for CLW and these are the following:

1. Support Coordination (specialist support coordination)

2. Improved Relationships consisting of:

- Specialist behavioural intervention support consisting of highly specialised intensive support intervention to address significantly harmful or persistent behaviours of concern. Development of behaviour support plans that temporarily use restrictive practices, with intention to minimise use of these practices.

- Behaviour management plan, including training in behaviour management strategies.
- Individual social skills development which is social skills development with an individual for participation in community and social activities.

So far in Australia there are only two states with this form of registration. Community Links Wellbeing is registered with the Commission to provide the Behaviour Support Category using Dr Steve Walker as the practitioner registered as recognised within the Commission as providing this intervention. So far there are 700 practitioner applications in NSW and SA and 200 have been accepted by the Commission. Dr Walker is number 89.

Service Implementation:

While engaging in promotion was the key to attracting access to the NDIS market, it was necessary for me to balance that responsibility with other roles. These have included:

- **Support coordination** with 30 participants. Assisting NDIS participants to use their plans to benefit them and meet their goals. All participants have complex, demanding, and intense intervention. At present I am leading a team of clinicians involved in a family that is currently being managed by the Integrated Response Service, a service overseeing government departments when government policy intersects with service provision.

- **Workshop presentations:** In conjunction with Nicole Humphries, presented three series of Challenging Behaviour Workshops for parents and carers.
- **Attend Networks:** Right Start Board, Integrated Response Service, Support Coordination forums, Wingecarribee Network meeting, NDIS/CEO Roundtable forums, Integrated Perinatal Care at Campbelltown Hospital, National Disability Services sub-committee for children, young persons and families, and information updates on NDIS Quality and Systems forums.

Training:

- Allied Health, supporting access and planning
- Health vs NDIS, who pays for what
- NDIS registration, the what, why, who and how
- Operationalising Preplanning and replanning
- Quality and Safeguard Framework
- The support coordinators' role in looking for housing.

Creating and supporting the development of the CLW/NDIS program has been demanding and not without its challenges. It has been exciting to see CLW engage in the processes of the development of the NDIS. It has also been satisfying to see that our service can engage in the newly created market and retain our reputation as leaders in the field of providing quality fee for service programs.

Carmel Flavell - Team Manager

RIGHT START PROJECT

A partnership between Community Links Wellbeing and the Right Start Foundation.

The Right Start Project offers services to families who have a family member with Down syndrome. These services include:

- Access to grants of financial assistance from the Right Start Foundation of up to \$4,000 per annum.
- A monthly family support group.
- Short-term counselling, referral and advocacy.
- Participation in community events.

The Right Start Family Group meets once per month on a Sunday at Tahmoor Community Centre. At this monthly meeting the Right Start Project Coordinator facilitates a parent/carer group that provides brief respite, social contact and educational presentations. The group acts as a forum for its members to exchange ideas with each other, gather new information and make new friendships.

While the parents and carers meet in one room, Allied Health staff from Community Links run an Activity Group for both children who have Down syndrome and for their siblings. The Activity Group works to provide a range of benefits for its members that include the following:

- **Physical Activity** - The children are engaged with structured movement based activities that focus on increasing their fine and gross motor skills.
- **Communication** - Speech and effective communication skills are focused upon by engaging the children in games that involve conversation with the staff and each other.

- **Social Skills** - The children are involved in games that incorporate sharing, taking turns and including others in play. Appropriate skills are role modelled by the staff.
- **Peer Support** - Siblings of children with additional needs are provided peer support via social contact with each other. These break down social isolation, siblings see that they are not on their own, friendships and bonds are formed.
- **FUN** - Of the greatest importance, the children are given the opportunity to have fun! A wide range of indoor and outdoor activities are offered. Each child chooses to take part in activities that appeal to them the most and that are best suited to their interests and abilities.

The response to the Right Start Family Group has been overwhelmingly positive since its inception in February, 2017 with participation levels increasing steadily since that time. Membership to the adult group includes male and female parents and carers as well as grandparents. Children attending are aged between newborn and 14 years. There are currently 25 families registered for the Right Start Family Group.

Chris Wilesmith - Co-ordinator

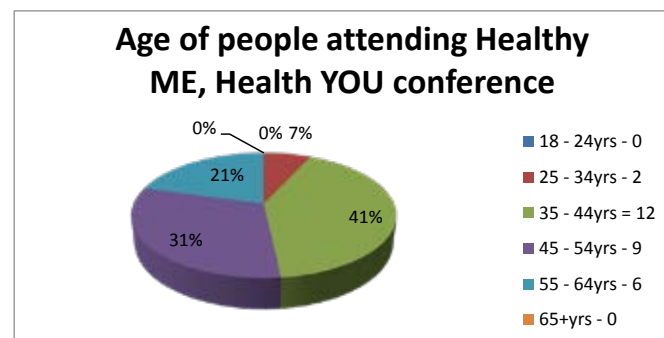
THE RIGHT START PROJECT HIGHLIGHT OF 2018:

Healthy ME, Healthy YOU - A Conference run in Collaboration with Down Syndrome NSW.

An asset to community based projects is to be found in maintaining positive working relationships with other organisations. In 2018, Down Syndrome NSW offered to collaborate on a project with the Right Start Foundation, in the Wollondilly Shire. This was an offer to “give back” to the community of Wollondilly for the support offered by the Right Start Project to their annual fundraiser “Step-Up for Down Syndrome.” “Step-Up for Down Syndrome” has been held annually in Picton Botanical Gardens, amongst other locations across Australia, for the past 5 years.

The outcome of this collaboration was a conference entitled Healthy ME, Healthy YOU, which was held in Picton on the 3rd August, 2018. The goals of the conference were to present specific topics of interest to a diverse audience that was concerned with special needs and to provide a forum for networking and gathering information. The target audience was parents and carers who have a child, teenage or adult family member with any type of disability. Professionals and interested members of the community were also welcome. Based on the premise that if you care for yourself you will always be in a better position to care for someone else, Healthy ME, Healthy YOU promoted a message of a positive cycle of caring.

The following graph indicates the age group of people who attended the conference.



The following guest speakers were engaged:

Katrina Langhorn: The Director and Principal Psychologist from At Full Potential, Camden, Katrina specialises in children and adolescents who have emotional and behavioural disorders, learning difficulties and disabilities. Katrina spoke about atypical sensory processing, its links to behavioural challenges and gave practical suggestions for managing these issues.

Belinda Russo: Belinda, the owner of Tiny Tummies Nutrition, Camden, is a Paediatric and Women's Health Nutritionist and Exercise Physiologist. She specialises in extreme fussy eating, feeding disorders, complex nutritional requirements and eating problems in children with developmental delays. Belinda spoke on the topic of navigating feeding and nutritional challenges in children with disabilities. Her most informative talk, although aimed towards the needs of children, was also applicable to older persons who have a disability.

Petrea King: Petrea King, the keynote speaker, gave an inspirational presentation about self-care. She also addressed issues that included building resilience in self and family and finding peace and wellbeing when faced with difficult challenges and traumas.

To complement the topics covered on the day, brief presentations were given on equine therapy and the benefits of stretching exercises; Allied Health staff from Community Links were available to answer questions about Speech Pathology and Occupational Therapy; an information stall was set up by Down Syndrome NSW and an extensive amount of written information about services and supports was provided by the Right Start Project Coordinator.

The conference was well received and well attended. Feedback received from evaluation forms handed out at the conclusion of the day was overwhelmingly positive.



Some of the individual comments received were:

"Brilliant day! Wonderful speakers. I learned so much. Great to have something like this local. It was very well run."

"Really useful information as a carer that I can put into use. All speakers excellent."

"Thanks for this day. I learned so much and these things have made me think in new ways about my child and myself and the importance of caring for myself."

"As a professional this was the best conference I have attended over the past 8 years."

"It was a pleasure to attend this conference. The speakers were high quality. The presentations on equine therapy and stretching were interesting and informative. A really well run day. Thankyou for holding this event."



MENTAL HEALTH CLINICAL CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

You In Mind is a community based voluntary outreach mental health service for people aged 12 and above whom present with a range of concerns such as anxiety and low mood. CLW serves to maintain referral pathways between GPs and the broader community by allocating clients to the CLW mental health clinicians and private practitioners across Wollondilly and Wingecarribee. To date there is 4 clinicians employed by CLW and 25 private practitioners whom sub contract to CLW. With referral numbers for the program increasing at a steady rate and from a wide range of referral pathways the PHN, as the federal funding body, extended this contract by a further 2 years.

Community partnerships have been enhanced and created via CLW clinicians and employees developing and maintaining healthy and robust collaboration by such means as regular professionals meetings, presentations and case collaborations, ensuring the ease of open and accessible referral pathways.

Therapeutic groups have also received funding and increasingly local mental health clinicians have expressed interest in facilitating groups covering topics such as trauma, attachment, anxiety and relationships and group facilitators come from across varied experience and settings providing a rich and diverse experience for our clients and community members.

It is envisaged You In Mind will continue its healthy growth due to a renewed focus on GP collaboration over the next 12 months at least via staff maintaining ongoing direct involvement with doctors and practices and also from the imminent promotion of the new youth mental health service, ReFrame.

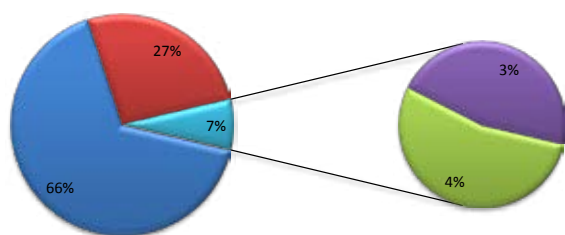
I would like to thank the Mental Health team for their hard work, dedication and passion to not just the program, but to the clients and each other. They challenge themselves constantly to achieve the outcomes and exceed the services and funding bodies expectations.

Martin Lumetzberger - *Mental Health Clinical Co-ordinator*

COMMUNITY PROGRAM & PARTNER STATISTICS

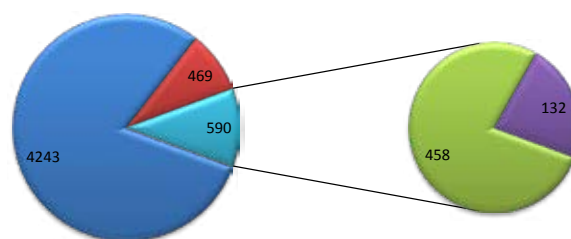
Program Activity

Community Strengthening Families NSW (C4K) CLW Haven Consortium



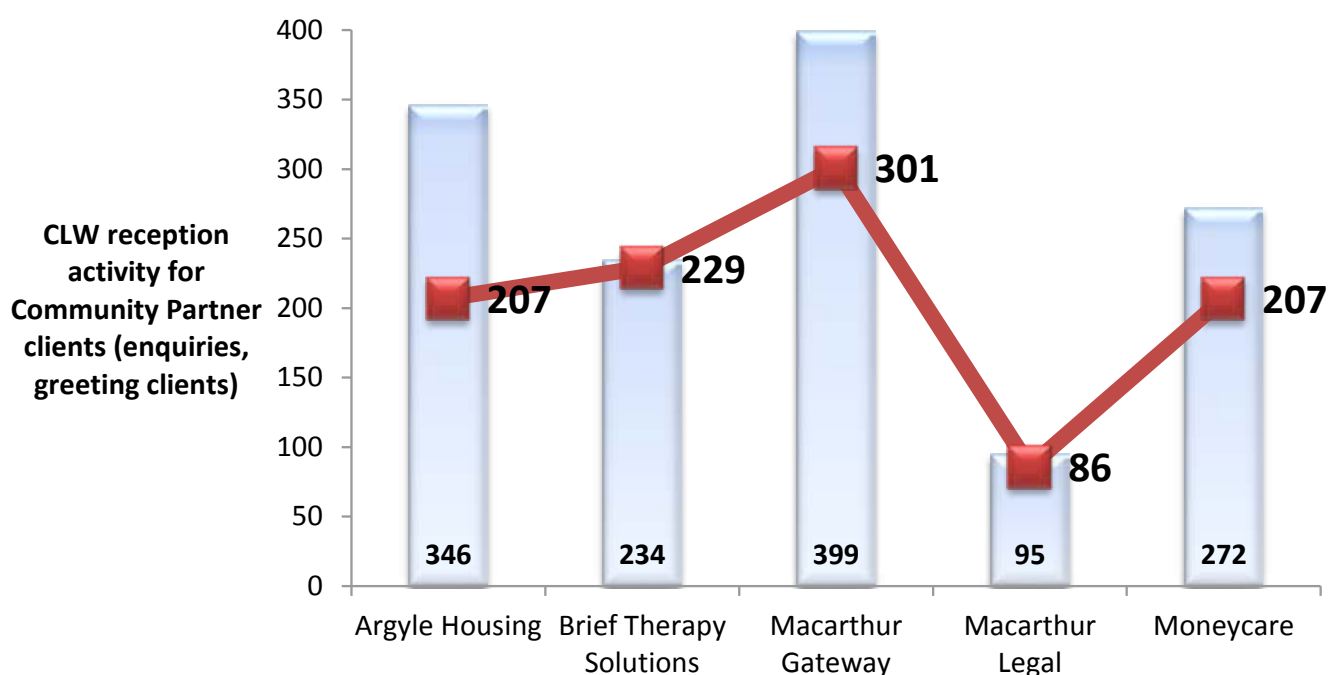
Number of Program Participants

Community Strengthening Haven Consortium Families NSW (C4K) CLW



**Community Partners
FY17 vs FY18**

2017 2018



SECTION 3 – Our Finances

TREASURER'S REPORT 2018

The income for the year was \$2,171,726 which included funding carried over from last year. This was an increase of \$409,596 compared to the income of \$1,762,180 for 2017. This represented an increase of 23% on the previous year.

The business of Community Links Wollondilly continues to be changing and the direction of the business is evolving. The year gave the organisation a chance to become involved with South Western Sydney PHN and the provision of services associated with mental health. This is a new area of service for the organisation and in the first year contributed \$315,212 to the income of the organisation employing specialist staff and psychologists. This area of business now sits well next to the allied health area of our business and soon will be the dominate area of business outside of our traditional funded areas. It comes to the organisation as we are developing the Speech and Occupational Therapy areas as well as the opportunities that the NDIS brings. The Therapy arm of the allied health area of business contributed \$312,363 to the organisation which is an increase of \$196,302 or 169%. The advent of the NDIS played an important role in bringing this additional income to the organisation. We are now well positioned in our region supporting this with the division bringing a combined income of \$771,803 which now represents 35% of our income. These three areas will play an important role in the future development of services that are to be provided by Community Links Wollondilly.

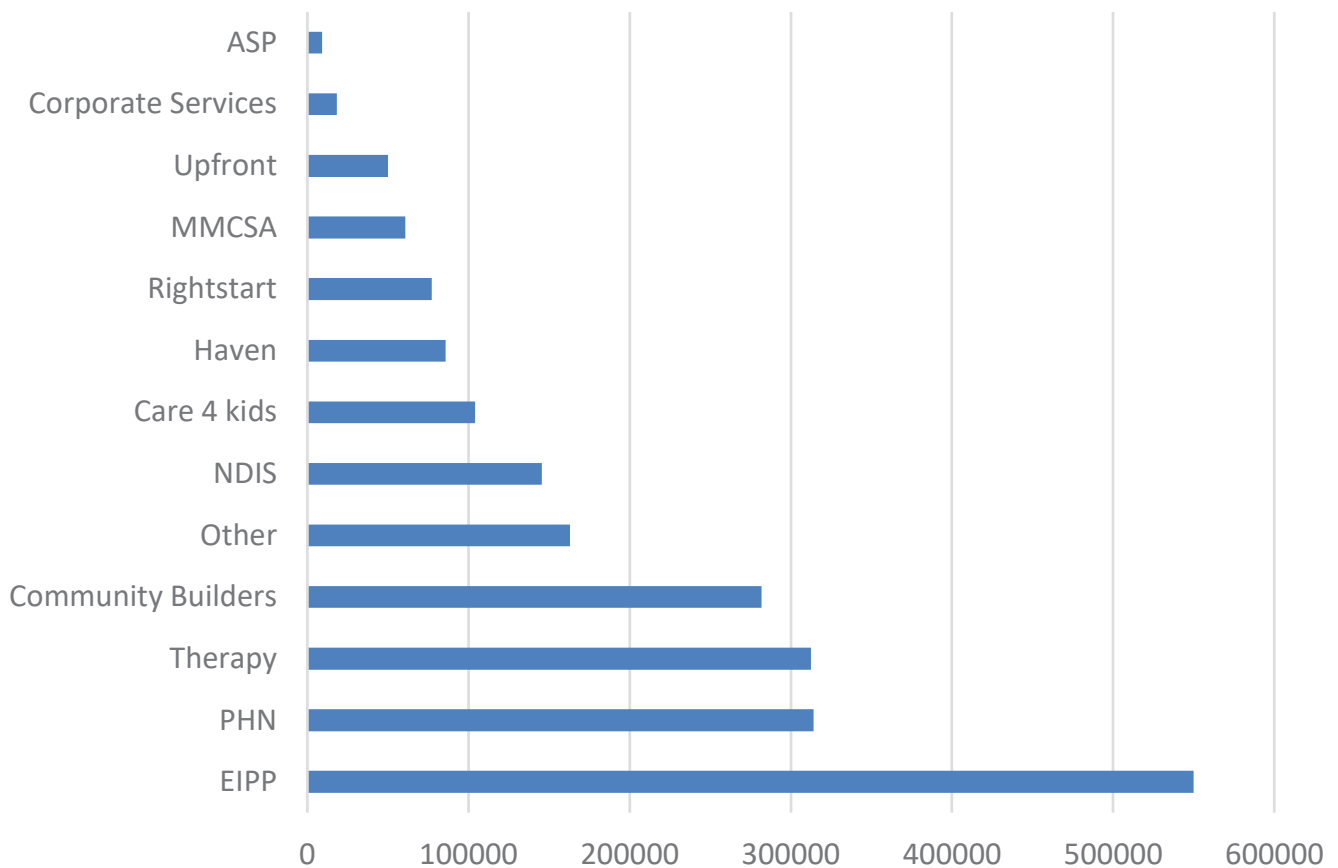
During the year the organisation merged with 2 other organisations. Those being Macarthur Multinational Community Services Inc and Wingecarribee Family Support Services Inc. The committees of both these organisations decided that it would be best for their services if they were managed and run by Community Links Wollondilly Inc. This has given the organisation a greater presence in both the Macarthur and Wingecarribee LGAs. The MMCS was again new to our organisation but it is now well established and has strong funding behind it from the Department of Education. WFSS Inc was a natural merge as we have been managing the organisation since 2012.

Operating expenses were \$2,261,413 compared to \$1,786,170 the previous year an increase of \$475,243 on the previous year. This has resulted in a deficit of \$90,106 on operations and \$95,684 after year-end adjustments for minor programs carried into the next year. The deficit, although larger than last year, enabled the organisation to train staff and prepare for the new business areas that we were now involved in. It is seriously an investment in our future.

Cash and equivalents are \$925,139 up \$35,571 on last year. Whilst we would have expected a reduction in cash this year as a result of the deficit, the increase in cash resulted from the merger of the other 2 organisations.

Thomas Goodman - Treasurer

Community Links Wollondilly Inc. Income Split 2018

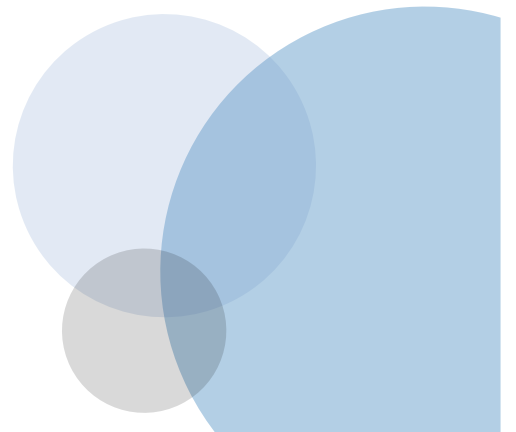


Income by Area 2018

EIPP	\$549,925
PHN	\$314,070
Therapy	\$312,363
Community Builders	\$281,798
Other	\$163,086
NDIS	\$145,370
Care 4 kids	\$104,060
Haven	\$85,851
Rightstart	\$77,116
MMCSA	\$60,723
Upfront	\$49,998
Corporate Services	\$18,245
ASP	\$9,121
	\$2,171,726

AUDITOR'S REPORT

Please see attached document



SECTION 4 – Our Other Important Information

Acknowledgements

Monica Page Volunteer Reception

Elaine Chaseling Volunteer Reception

Merilynne Wilson Volunteer Worker

Christine Koster Volunteer Worker

Our Supporters

Argyle Housing
Bargo Sports Club
Braemar Steel Fabrications
Brief Therapy Solutions
Bundanoon Markets
Bunnings
Burrawang Primary School
Cabramatta Community Centre
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints - Blair Athol
Cobbitty Market
Colo Vale Public School
C3 Church Wollondilly
Elders Real Estate Picton
Family and Community Services
Films in the Southern Highlands (independent film group)
Girl Guides Mittagong
Grayco's Food
Highlands Fresh
Joanne Fraser
Jumpy Monkey Bouncing Castles
Knitting for Others (from Uniting Church)
Lions Club
SWSLHD
Macarthur Gateway
Macathur Legal Centre
Margaret Smith (from Seventh-Day Adventist)

Mittagong Primary School
Mittagong RSL
MP Angus Taylor
MP Jai Rowell
Oxley Cottage
Oz Harvest
Picton Bowling Club
Picton High School
Primary Health Network
Rotary Club of Narellan
Rotary Club of Picton
Rotary Club of Wollondilly North
Sally Waterford
Salvation Army Moneycare
Sarah's Theatre & Dance School (STADS)
Simec Mines
Southern Crowe Excavations
Stocklands – Waratah Highlands Village
Stonequarry Quilters
Tahmoor Public School
Tasker Plumbing
The Oaks Preschool
Uniting Church
Uniting
Wilton Public School
Wollondilly Shire Council





**Let's continue to provide
and expand services to
our local community**



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