

## Families Supporting Families Annual Report 2017

This has been another busy and successful year for Families Supporting Families. The committee have worked together to provide a great variety of opportunities for members to connect with other individuals and families who are travelling a similar journey. These events have included school holiday activities for the whole family, informal coffee mornings known as Carers Cafes, educational seminars with guest speakers (known as Carers Café Plus), a Carers Pampering Night and the annual Carers Dinner. Members have also connected with FSF and with peers through the FSF newsletter, website and Facebook page. Feedback following events and via social media indicates that members value the work FSF does and that we are making a positive difference to their lives.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our supporters: Newcastle Coal Infrastructure Group who sponsored the school holiday activities this year; Carers NSW and the Together program; nib foundation; Belmont 16Ft Sailing Club; Tomago Aluminium; Port Waratah Coal Services. Without their support FSF could not continue to run the events or offer the services that we provide.

A lot of hard work and energy goes into planning and running events, publishing the newsletter, managing the website, database and finances, fundraising and applying for grants. This work is summarised in the reports that follow. Thank you to all the committee members for the dedication and passion you bring to your role, it's been a pleasure to work with you this year.

Eilis Corrigan  
FSF Coordinator

### Treasurers Report

Total assets at 1/07/2016	\$20,598.13
Total assets at 1/07/2017	\$13,490.94
We had a trading deficit of	\$7,107.19

Major expenses included:

- Carers Café & Carers Café plus \$1,141.81
- Carers dinner \$2,710.00
- Holiday Activities \$2,085.00
- Web Management \$2,786.64
- Laptop purchase \$748.65
- Auditor's Fees \$533.50

There were also small amounts for our running costs e.g. Incorporation fees, post office box hire, postage, printing, insurance and stationery.

We received funds including \$1,500 grant from Newcastle Coal Infrastructure Group, \$606.89 from Carers NSW, \$522 from holiday activities and Carers Dinner, \$260 in membership fees and \$289.81 in interest.

Catriona Kazuno  
FSF Treasurer

## Carers Café Plus Report

2017 has been a year of partnerships for the Carers Café Plus Program, looking to form strategic partnerships with organisations active in the local disability community. Early in the year we had Stephanie Berick from Coffee and Possibilities, talk to us about her adult son's journey moving out of home. Newcastle Middle School have welcomed us to co-host their "Pop up Coffee Club" program opening the informative morning event up to our members, while at the same time offering an opportunity for FSF to reach out to the School community.

With the help of FSF committee member Amanda Linstrom, we have been able to arrange for Dr Lee Sturgeon, local Child Psychologist, to present to our members on building resilience. Dr Sturgeon is always a popular speaker and there was huge demand for this seminar with over 80 people attending. Our final event for the year, is a "Carer's Pampering Night" at the Redhead Wellness Centre which has been organized by committee member Jen Mills.

The Carers Café plus program has been made possible with the generous sponsorship of the nib Foundation. Events have covered a diverse range of topics with the aim of providing interesting and relevant information for Carers at accessible venues in the greater Newcastle area. I've collected quantitative and qualitative data via evaluation forms at our Carers Café Plus events. These results indicate that we are making a significant contribution to the wellbeing of people in our community and overwhelmingly reflect that members wish to continue attending FSF events.

28 <sup>th</sup> March 2017 at Merewether Bowling Club "Further down the Road" presented by Stephanie Berick. No. attending: 12
6 <sup>th</sup> June 2017 "Using PODDS to Communicate", Pratibha Harriram – Middle School Teacher & Christine Harrison – Speech Pathologist. Pop Up Coffee Club - Joint event with Newcastle Middle School on site. No. attending: 25
29 <sup>th</sup> August 2017 "Eating and Feeding Difficulties", Valerie Gent - speech pathologist specializing in eating/drinking issues Pop Up Coffee Club - Joint event with Newcastle Middle School on site. No. attending: 22
21 <sup>st</sup> November 2017 Talk by Fiona Campbell on her journey since receiving a kidney transplant. Pop Up Coffee Club - Joint event with Newcastle Middle School on site. No. attending: 10
22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2017 "Building Resilience and Social Inclusion in School", Dr Lee Sturgeon, Charlestown Bowling Club, 5 Lincoln Street, Charlestown. No. attending: 83
28 <sup>th</sup> November 2017 "Carer's Pampering Night" Redhead Wellness Sanctuary, 29 Kalaroo Rd, Redhead. No. attending: 15

Kind Regards,  
Natalie Atherton.

## Carers Café Report

It's been another busy but fabulous year of Carer's Cafe's and we just celebrated Carer's Week with a lovely dinner and evening for all that attended. Coffee mornings are a great chance to relax and meet with like-minded people for support and fabulous conversations. The benefits of talking with people that "get it" can never be underestimated. FSF look forward to celebrating 15 years in 2018. Now, that will be something to celebrate. Please follow FSF Facebook page for regular updates.

### ***Carers Cafes - 2017***

2<sup>nd</sup> March 2017 - The Barracks, Waratah. No. attending: 10

4<sup>th</sup> May 2017 - Café Tempest, Wallsend. No. attending: 10

29<sup>th</sup> June 2017 – Euro Patisserie, New Lambton. No. attending: 10

16<sup>th</sup> August 2017 - Sal's on the Lake, Speers Point. No. attending: 5

14<sup>th</sup> September 2017 – Pegs, Whitebridge. No. attending: 11 (1 male)

2<sup>nd</sup> November 2017 - Awaba House, Booragul. No. attending: 4

### ***Carers Dinner***

20<sup>th</sup> October 2017 - Belmont 16Ft Sailing Club. No. attending: 31 (6 male).

Regards,  
Katie Reedman.

## School Holiday Activities

The following school holiday events were run this year:

Date	Activity	Venue	Number Attending
14 <sup>th</sup> April 2017	Ten Pin Bowling	Strike Bowling, Warners Bay	20 children
4 <sup>th</sup> July 2017	Movie – Despicable Me 3	Event Cinemas, Glendale	33 children and 14 Carers
25 <sup>th</sup> September 2017	Sailing with Sailors with disAbility	On board "Kayle" 54 ft yacht in Newcastle Harbour	8 children and 7 Carers
8 <sup>th</sup> October 2017	Sports Party	Hunter Sports Centre, Glendale	24 children

Feedback from all events was very positive with families really appreciating the opportunity for parents/Carers, children with additional needs and their siblings to come along and enjoy a fun activity together at minimal cost.

## Secretary's Report

Listed below are the key activities fulfilled in the role of secretary for 2017:

1. Taking minutes at the monthly meetings & distributing to committee.
2. Updating the membership database with new members & updating members status to paid membership for 2017 when advised by Treasurer.

3. Checking FSF inbox approx. on weekly basis and forwarding relevant emails to our members (this is the previous email which we are still using to send bulk emails to members as we transition across to new email platform.
4. Answering & responding to messages left on the FSF phone and specifically collating RSVP's for FSF events and forwarding to FSF Coordinator.
5. Collecting mail from the Post Office box regularly and distributing this to relevant committee members.

Along with these roles, I also helped to organise a school holiday activity for FSF -the Sports Party at Hunter Sports Centre Glendale on 8th October by collating RSVP's and liaising with the team at Hunter Sports to organise catering.

Regards,  
Louisa Boyle

### Grants & Fundraising

The following grants were applied for this year –

Grant Name	Outcome
Newcastle Coal Foundation Community Support Program	Successful
Commonwealth Bank Staff Community Grants Program	Unsuccessful
Newcastle Area ClubGRANTS	Unsuccessful
Lake Macquarie ClubGRANTS	Unsuccessful
Stockland Community Grants Program	Unsuccessful
Carers NSW Carers Week Grant	Successful
Suez Community Grants	Unsuccessful
Aurizon Community Fund	Not yet known
Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation	Not yet known

We also received funds from the Carers NSW Together Program which was used towards the cost of insurance and printing. We have communicated regularly with funding bodies throughout the year to keep them informed of the progress of projects and to seek new sources of funding. A fundraising opportunity was identified with Grill'd, The Junction Local Matters Program and this initiative resulted in \$100 being raised. A donation of \$400 was also received from Port Waratah Coal Services.

Regards,  
Amanda Linstrom & Ellis Corrigan.

### Media Officer Report

Upon taking over the Media Officer Role I started filing all previous newsletters, flyers, photos etc. into labelled folders to make searching for documents easier & to clean up the data.

I've updated the newsletter process & flyer creation by moving over from Word to Publisher which makes it a lot easier to produce.

Since being involved with the Facebook page we have increased page views, likes, post engagements and reach. We have had 10 new followers and page likes this week alone. The number of followers have increased since the start of this year from approximately 350 to 561. I have started creating Facebook events beginning with the Lee Sturgeon Carer's Cafe Plus event to help promote it and will create events for all our cafe's, holiday activities and the like.

I assisted with the Sports Party, Sailing Outing and Carers Dinner and I am organising the Carers Pampering Night which will be held on November 28th.

I have also been promoting FSF whenever the opportunity arises and encouraging Carers I meet to join.

Kind Regards,  
Jennifer Mills.

