



*Transforming
lives for stronger
communities*



**CELEBRATING
50 YEARS**

Annual Report
2020/21



Who We Are

Family Life has been working with vulnerable children, families and communities since 1970.

At the core of our organisation is our vision to build capable communities, strong families and thriving children.

We take an all of family, all of community approach to build resilience and healthy relationships and are committed to improving responses to child vulnerability and family violence by achieving better outcomes for survivors and communities.

Family Life recognises how important it is to ensure that voices of children are heard and their best interests are always served. This is driven by an evidence-based response to the needs of traumatised children and their families.

Our Vision

Capable
Communities

Adults, young people and children learn and participate within supportive communities.

Family Life works in partnership with communities to understand and address place based needs. When communities work together, families are strengthened, communities are connected and inclusive, and individuals have a positive sense of culture and belonging. Community members support each other and participate in work, education and volunteering. Children and young people grow up in safe and supportive neighbourhoods.



Strong Families

Families experience positive wellbeing and strong and respectful relationships.

Family Life recognises the importance of individuals' wellbeing and relationships and its impact on families. When individuals are healthy and resilient they lead a full life and can overcome personal challenges. They form and sustain positive relationships with family, friends, peers and intimate partners. Individuals are safe and conflict and violence are reduced.

Thriving Children

Children and young people experience optimal development and are safe from harm.

Family Life recognises that for children to thrive, their physical, mental, emotional and social needs must be met. When parents are skilled and confident they form a warm and secure bond with their children and meet their developmental needs. Parents create a nurturing environment for their children to grow up in, that is free from violence. Children and young people achieve developmental milestones, feel good about themselves and have a strong sense of self-identity.

Looking Back Over 50 Years



1970

After community consultation about pressures on families, a volunteer group set up Southern Family Life Services Association Inc. to provide family services funded by local government and community groups.

1971

Volunteers open an Opportunity Shop in Hampton to raise funds.



1980

Family Service Centre opens, purpose built on community land at 197 Bluff Rd Sandringham.

1983/84

Programs expand with Family Therapy and group programs for adolescents, parenting and young mothers.

1990

Changes in government grants increased the focus on families with children at risk and less availability for the general community.

1990-95

Reductions and changes in government funding challenged the survival of smaller community agencies, including Southern Family Life.

1995/96

A comprehensive review and new leadership reset alignment to community needs, best practice and support for the most vulnerable.

1970s

1980s

1990s

1972

First funding grant from the Victorian Government due to demand for the family home visiting service.

1973

Community and local government fund six part-time social workers.

1974

Volunteer Family Aid training program developed, later published as *'For Love not Money'*.

1977

Family Aid program recognised nationally for response to child maltreatment.

1986

Launched a pioneering male family violence prevention service.

1989-90

Group program expanded for social support, blended families and parenting.



1996-98

Renewed relationships with community groups and trusts provided funding for innovative youth services with mediation, school based counselling, youth family violence prevention programs, breakfast and afterschool clubs, and drug and alcohol counselling.

1998

School Focused Youth Services tender awarded.

1999

Received an Australian Heads of Government Award for the project *Families and Violence: a Holistic, Family Centred Approach*.

2000

Major capital appeal funded expanded service centre at 197 Bluff Road opened by the Governor of Victoria.

2001/2002

Creating Capable Communities program developed.

2002

YouthWorx and KnockOut Violence programs developed.

2003

Community Bubs pilot program began.

2005

Southern Family Life organisation name changed to Family Life.

2006

Family Life services expanded to Frankston and Mornington Peninsula following opening of Federal Government Family Relationship Centre (FRC).

2012/13

Expansion of SHINE program to City of Casey and Greater Dandenong.

Family Law Children's Contact Services and Parenting Orders Programs established for the southern and eastern regions of Melbourne.

2014

Relocated Hampton Op Shop to larger premise in Highett.

Opened a Social Enterprise Children's Contact Service to meet demand for services.

Site certification in NMT and delivery of Trauma informed services.

2015

Delivery of the Department of Social Services funded Relationship Review and Renew (RRR) program.

2017

Hampton Street, Hampton Op Shop opens.



Therapeutic Family Violence Service Strength2Strength and Cradle to Kinder Bayside Peninsula partnership services commence.

2018

Relocated Cheltenham Op Shop.

Received a second Top 10 NFP ranking for Innovation Performance.

Received Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Award for Together We Can.

Developed several new programs including: Reboot, Catch Up 4 Women, Here4U, Unite.

2000s

2010s

2020

2006

Tootgarook Community House opens.

Family Life Annual Open Garden Day Awarded the City of Bayside 2006 Australia Day Community Event of the Year award.

PeopleWorx program developed.

2007

Cheltenham Op Shop relocated to larger premises.

2008

SHINE Mental Health Program receives Federal funding for a two year pilot program.

2009

Chelsea Op Shop Opened.



2010

Acquired 199 Bluff Road to be used as a Community House.

Family Life changed from an association to a company limited by guarantee.

Black Rock 'Pop-up' Op Shop opened.



Cheltenham Service centre opens.

Collective Impact Family Violence Project - *Together We Can* commenced.

2016

Expanded service expertise to include Neurosequential Model of Education, for assisting teachers and schools.

Received Top 10 NFP ranking for Innovation Performance.

2017

Social Enterprise counselling and educational service. (*Heartlinks*) launched.

2019

Launched Dads in Focus program.

Black Rock Op Shop moves to permanent location.

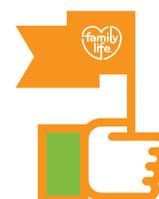
Received a third Top 10 NFP ranking for Innovation Performance for 2019.

2020

Court Mandated Mens Behavioural Change Groups.

50 Year Birthday celebrations [online](#).

Online model of service delivery



1970 to 2020 - Our Journey

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world, indeed it’s the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead



1970 - 1974

Family Life was created by concerned citizens taking action to support families under pressure in the bayside suburbs of Melbourne. Community consultations revealed that a key concern in society at the time was family breakdown.

Volunteers decided to set up a counselling and support agency to help families and secured donations from local government and community groups. Family Life opened its first income raising Op Shop in 1971.

The services offered at this time were for everyone, with professional counsellors assisted by trained volunteers. As requests increased so did the services on offer. The Victorian Government - Health Department saw the value and provided funding as statistics underpinned the calls for support. But it was the community feedback that established the organisation’s reputation as a great place to go for help, as well as to donate and get involved.

1975 - 1979

In 1975 Family Life’s first Director, Margaret McGregor, expanded volunteering into an inspiring Family Aid program. This attracted national interest and federal government funding.

The issues the organisation assisted with were largely taboo. Margaret was a passionate leader and ensured that confidentiality was strictly maintained as volunteers went into family homes, helped with parenting and family routines and gave particular attention to supporting low income families.

1980 - 1984

The passion and professionalism of the initial pioneers of the program built strong support for the service. They were able to rally local government, philanthropists and community groups to provide a very important secure home for the service. In 1980 a purpose built family service centre opened at 197 Bluff Road Sandringham, where the offices still sit to this day.

Volunteer numbers grew. Their responsibilities included running client reception and maintenance programs as well as managing the ever growing Op Shop operations.

The training program used for volunteers, now well tested and developed, was published as a guide for sharing with other organisations and later published internationally under the title, *‘For Love Not Money’*.

The team of social workers expanded services to include counselling and home visits. They were able to offer skills and support groups for parents as well as adolescents with separated parents and isolated single mums.

1985 - 1989

In 1985 the State Government transferred funding responsibility from the Health Department to Community Services Victoria. A period of significant cuts followed, which threatened the viability of the service.

Local professionals advocated successfully to support the service, affirming the strong and diverse community support to retain Family Life as a community owned and independent organisation focussed on generalist and specialist services for families.

At this time family therapy services were introduced and the organisation became a strong advocate for protecting, where appropriate, the confidentiality of children in family and children’s court disputes.

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CELEBRATING
50 YEARS

1990 - 1994

Funding insecurity continued as an annual challenge. Staff and volunteers continued to collect data to demonstrate the wider community demand for counselling and support services.

This data also identified the increasing problems of violence in the home. A pilot program was developed for men 'overcome violent emotions', followed by therapeutic and practical support programs for women experiencing abuse and violence.

Despite this groundbreaking move, which would later become widely embraced, government funding was increasingly directed away from a universal family prevention service. The impact of de-institutionalisation of out-of-home care for vulnerable children set new funding priorities aligned to the growing child protection system.

1995 - 1999

In 1995 an organisation review set a new mission statement giving priority to clients who were 'at risk' and financially disadvantaged. Community consultation confirmed an overwhelming demand for low-cost counselling and waiting lists for services grew. Competitive tendering and pressures for organisation amalgamations also intensified.

The Committee of Management resolved to preserve their valued community service and recruited the organisation's first CEO to ensure Family Life would continue to meet the needs of families in the expanding bayside suburbs and communities. This role was given to Jo Cavanagh OAM, who would continue in this role for the following 25 years.

With a new vision the organisation applied research and local knowledge to re-ignite the community support base, implemented practice knowledge to strengthen service quality, and drew on business skills to secure new government contracts for child, youth and family services.

2000 - 2004

By 2000 the organisation had grown significantly and a major capital raising campaign, led by community volunteers, culminated in the opening of an extension of two community rooms and facilities for a Youth Services Centre at Bluff Road.

Expanded services included pilots for youth led anti bullying programs, family violence prevention, men's outreach, family mediation, breakfast and afterschool clubs and youth counselling and volunteering.

Local service clubs and philanthropy matched government funding for Family Life to innovate and test new approaches for preventing problems whilst still growing therapeutic services for healing and recovery.

Family Life received a national Heads of Government award for a whole of family approach to preventing family violence as well as Victorian Government best practice awards for family violence pilot initiatives to take services and support into public housing neighbourhoods. This evolved to become the Creating Capable Communities program.

In 2003, Pat and Roger Riordan AM of the Cybec Foundation committed to three years funding to trial and evaluate an intensive, community supported home visiting program to strengthen vulnerable parents with infants. The Community Bubs Program, which the Cybec Foundation continues to fund, is based on the evidence of children remaining and growing up safely in the care of their families.



2005 - 2009

Family Life was now recognised and funded by all levels of government as well as supported by a loyal local community, philanthropy and social enterprise, including volunteers and expanding opportunity shops.

Leadership and advocacy to support community sector and government policy directions was driven through peak bodies, national submissions, published research and articles, conference presentations and knowledge sharing. Family Life maintained its community consultation history and engaged in the wider southern suburbs to understand what role it might contribute to meeting emerging community needs.

In 2006 this led to a successful submission to provide the new Federal Family Law Services for the communities of Frankston and Mornington Peninsula. Family Life now served seven local government areas. Further pilot programs were successfully proposed to support the National Mental Health reforms with funding to intervene early to promote children’s mental health. The SHINE program, delivered in partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, was one such initiative. Family Life commenced a whole of organisation culturally sensitive practice training and proactively engaged in the shared journey towards closing the gap for Indigenous equality.

2010 - 2014

By now government funding had grown significantly for State and Federally funded Child, Youth and Family Services. However, to support best practice for an efficient and effective community serving organisation, access to capital was needed to invest for service continuity, innovation, and infrastructure.

Independent discretionary revenue and a strong balance sheet was essential to grow the capacity of the organisation to deliver the services. Hence, when the opportunity arose in 2010, 199 Bluff Road was purchased to accommodate further service growth and strengthen the asset base. With external endorsement scoring Family Life 100% for governance and financial management, social impact investment loans were provided to support a Community House acquisition for outreach services on the Mornington Peninsula as well as the Highett retail store. This Highett acquisition provided a secure home for social enterprise which integrated an opportunity shop, volunteers and retailing with skills and employment pathways through the YouthWorx and PeopleWorx programs.

In 2013 the Family Law Children’s Contact Centres and Separating Parent Services transferred from the former Gordon Care, expanding Family Life into the cities of Casey and Cardinia, the major Melbourne south east growth corridors.



2015 - 2019

In 2015 Family Life Ltd, a not for profit company limited by guarantee, was formed and a new constitution was adopted by the members.

The Board's strategic planning took a long horizon view for growth of impact through sharing, partnerships and replication whilst remaining deeply embedded and responsive to the communities served. Strategic investments were incrementally made to grow internal research and evaluation, the systems and infrastructure for data collection to track and measure change and the expertise to transparently report performance and the impact of services and programs.

Family Life's internal research project to test the translation of knowledge into practice to protect children from the risks associated with parents perpetrating filicide (child homicide) proved valuable to the international research community and was published in 2018. Family Life now had a track record for the integration of research and practice to inform prevention and early intervention efforts to strengthen families and communities.

A whole of organisation review commenced in 2017 to evolve a strategy for digital transformation as the pace of technological change increased. International accreditation with the Child Trauma Academy, USA and partnership with the Tamarack Institute in Canada, expanded expertise for evidence informed ways of working for individual, family, community and systems change.

A national crime prevention award for reducing family violence in Cardinia Shire by more than 20 percent was received in 2019, and for the third year Family Life was included in the Top 10 organisations for Not for Profit Innovation.

2020 and onwards..

The leadership succession plan came to fruition in January 2020, with the decision made by Jo Cavanagh OAM, to step down from the role as CEO. The objectives of a strong leadership team, healthy organisational culture and affirmed strategic directions were in place and the organisation welcomed Allison Wainwright to lead Family Life into the future.

As the aftermath of an extreme bushfire season was felt, by March the profound impact of the COVID-19 virus was emerging. Working as a team with the incoming CEO and the wider management group, Family Life was able to adapt quickly and effectively to transition to a distributed workforce and online service delivery. Looking after people - clients, staff, volunteers, communities - was the central focus.



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CELEBRATING
50 YEARS

On the 5th April 2020, Jo Cavanagh OAM and I concluded our long term planned transition and I commenced my role as the new CEO at Family Life.



What a challenging and inspiring time to step in as the leader of this community built organisation.

The 2019/20 year seems to have thrown everything at us - devastating bushfires affecting so many communities, followed by the COVID-19 pandemic that continues to impact upon us.

Throughout all the hardship and trauma we have also witnessed tremendous generosity and strength of the human spirit. These difficult events have revealed what power can be found from communities coming together, an acute reminder that we need each other and community more than ever before.

I am immensely proud to lead an organisation which has been able to respond to need and vulnerability throughout this period. Stepping up to the role of CEO for Family Life has been a privilege. I feel honoured to be part of an organisation whose entire purpose is to serve and help people when they are in their greatest need.

Family Life is a living legacy of community strength. This year we celebrate 50 years of operation, a tremendous achievement. Mirroring what we have seen over the last 12 months, this organisation was founded on community mobilisation, where a group of people came together and acknowledged hardship and then, most importantly, did something about it. We remain committed to those same values. We have a deep alignment with place based solutions and believe in the value of family and building relationships, connections and networks that enables and empowers people to make change in their lives.

This past year our organisation has seen some important strategic work come to fruition. Our decision to invest in technology was vital in our

ability to respond to the restrictions imposed as a result of COVID. The work that had been done through investment in the organisation ensured that not only our staff had the resources they needed, but also that our clients and communities were not left behind. We were poised and ready, supported by our investments in practice, communications, innovation and continuous quality improvement.

We are here to help people in tough times, this is what we do and why we exist. This tumultuous period has been our time to shine and our services are more important than ever. We continue to innovate, co-design and expand the support we offer to our community. We deeply value our partnerships with funders, sector partners, volunteers and all other allies as we seek to create fair, just communities that offer hope and opportunity to all.

The year ahead will be difficult for the individuals, families and communities we support. As we look toward the future we will remain committed to better understand what COVID and other issues will mean to communities. We have a future focus to meet the needs of clients and support the recovery of our Social Enterprise after a particularly tough year. In 2020/21 we will be co-designing a new strategic plan that will take us through this post COVID period and beyond.

Just like 50 years ago, we remain with you. We believe in our community's strength and will continue to walk with you on this journey of recovery.

Allison Wainwright
CEO - Family Life

Founding CEO Report

By the end of 2019 I knew my contribution to Family Life was reaching its grand finale.



Across the organisation we had capable people living our values and realising our purpose for transforming lives for stronger communities. We were prepared for our 50th year, we had embedded evaluation, learning and impact reporting, and our future focussed digital transformation strategy was progressing. Together with the Chair, Grant Douglas, and the Board, our leadership and governance succession plan had matured.

Hence in January 2020, after 25 extraordinary, challenging, and meaningful years, I tendered my resignation. And then the COVID-19 global pandemic struck. The following months brought new meaning and urgency to staying safe, evidence and science informed decision making, collective action for public health, and the value of community.

Immediately we experienced an exponential return on our capacity building investments made over the preceding years. I celebrate our Board who supported recommended investments from our financial reserves to ensure Family Life grew our people, skills, tools and capacity to remain innovative, relevant and future focussed. This meant we adapted quickly to operating as a distributed workforce (with offices in their homes) and continued to deliver high impact, quality services. Executed strategy and strong financial management over many years enabled these investments and results.

As we activated our Crisis Management protocols, teams across the organisation worked to ensure children, families and communities remained in focus and supported to adapt and stay safe. We completed an audit of clients' access to devices and digital skills to stay connected with practitioners through new online services; we sadly had to stand down our volunteers and close all direct service centres and community stores (Op Shops). This was a major change to achieve in a short period of time. We also attended to the wellbeing of staff as employees, individuals, parents, carers and

family members. Changes to work was but one aspect of what was happening for them. I congratulate everyone for all that was achieved through those months. Our people demonstrated strength, expertise and resilience as well as readiness to operate in the online world.

In the context of our strategic and operating strength, a unanimous vote of the Board appointed Allison Wainwright, our very able Deputy CEO to be the incoming CEO of Family Life completing our handover in May 2020. During the implementation of our COVID response the strength of our leadership succession plan was tested and proven. In addition to her own abilities, Allison is surrounded by a capable team of diverse, skilled people who hold Family Life true to its purpose.

Over 25 years there are so many who have generously given me their trust and support, and helped me to learn and grow our organisation from one at risk for even surviving in 1995, to the valuable and valued organisation of 2020. Community members, clients, staff, volunteers, Directors, philanthropists, business people, community groups, donors, and colleagues: thank you all.

In closing, I particularly thank my wonderful husband Robert and our four adult children Sam, Katy, Lucy and Abi. Our children grew up with Family Life. My own family's support through the good days and the stressful kept me going as needed. They nourished me and regenerated my spirit and sustained my belief in the value and purpose of Family Life.

Happy 50th birthday Family Life and here's cheers to continued success for supporting children, young people and families, and transforming lives for stronger communities.

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Jo Cavanagh OAM CF MAICD
 Founding CEO - Family Life

Chairperson Report

On behalf of the Board, I am pleased to report that 2019/20 has been another year in which Family Life has made significant positive impacts to the lives of so many people.



It has been a year of unprecedented events for our communities and our organisation. The governance implications and the complexity of the COVID-19 pandemic response has been a large part of our role as Board members over this period.

I am proud of the decisions that the organisation made over recent years to drive investment in technology. This foresight enabled us to quickly respond and pivot to a virtual environment when the pandemic struck, our offices were closed and our face-to-face services were suspended, but the delivery of much needed individual, family and community services were maintained.

In May of this year we farewelled our long-serving Founding CEO, Jo Cavanagh OAM, after 25 years at the helm of our organisation. Her wealth of knowledge, history, expertise, thought leadership and vision led Family Life to be recognised as one of the leading community service providers in Victoria. The Board would like to thank Jo for all her years of untiring focus on the vision and values of the organisation and the communities it supports.

The CEO succession plan the Board put in place some time ago enabled the seamless transition that welcomed Allison Wainwright to the role of CEO. Allison has led Family Life with strength and compassion since stepping into the role in April. Under Allison's leadership Family Life continues to successfully navigate the tremendous upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and provide the road map to lead the organisation into the post COVID environment.

Some significant achievements of 2019/20:

Our COVID-19 Response - We seamlessly pivoted the entire organisation to an online model of service delivery. We were able to keep supporting families virtually and scale up our emergency relief to ensure that all clients were connected to technology and could continue accessing services.

Our Court Mandated Counselling Orders Program - Implemented from January 2020, onboarding this program almost doubled the size of Family Life's Men's Behaviour Change offering, making us the largest provider of Men's Behaviour Change programs in Victoria.

Our Social Enterprises - For 50 years Family Life has fostered the growth and development of social enterprises. This year has seen this area of the organisation face its most significant challenge. This has put pressure on our volunteer program, which is a significant driver of Family Life's success. Family Life has been working hard to support this area of the business throughout the pandemic and is committed to rebuilding the social enterprises throughout 2020/21.

After 13 years on the Board of Family Life it is time for me to step down. I am extremely proud of the achievements of the organisation and all the people associated with it. Family Life is in an extremely strong position to continue to grow and serve individuals, families, and communities in need.

Great people, great times, great culture, great outcomes.

Thank you.

.....
Grant Douglas
Chairperson

Forward Plan - 2020 Update

For the full overview of our growth and progress over the last three years click on [this link](#).

Looking Forward 2020/2021

Evidence and Outcomes



All services are implemented under the requirements for evidence informed practice, transparent performance and measured outcomes.

Contribute to the evidence base supporting children and families in the post COVID-19 pandemic and transfer this knowledge into practice.

Knowledge and skills



Outcomes are achieved by an engaged workforce resourced to deliver the best customer experiences for diverse beneficiaries and stakeholders.

Redevelop Family Services approaches into evidence informed care modules which achieve improved outcomes across a range of domains to improve parenting capacity.

Review and enhance Family Violence models to promote integration across systems.

Transition from COVID-19 remote service delivery to hybrid service delivery models.

Families Benefit



Families have improved social and economic outcomes from our model for prevention and earlier intervention, integrated whole of family services and community support.

Continue to support and facilitate trauma repair for our community, particularly in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Ongoing development of partnerships with local and international best practice organisations.

Innovation



We contribute thought and practice leadership embracing new technologies and approaches to solving complex social problems.

Continue to engage in collaborative partnerships to achieve systems change.

Implement an enhanced therapeutic care model across Family Law Services.

Establish targeted Mental Health responses in the Southern Melbourne Area to support Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities.

Social Change



Through collaboration and communication we work to support better outcomes for vulnerable and disadvantaged families and children in diverse communities in Australia.

Continue our work with communities that reflects our deep-seated ethical commitment to inclusion and collaboration.

Implement a volunteering strategy to empower the community to achieve social change, enhance early intervention approaches and create a long-term connection post Family Life intervention.

Develop an organisational Diversity and Inclusion strategy.

Financial Resilience



We have built the financial sustainability of our purpose by diversifying income, connecting with empowering networks and ensuring best value business systems and processes.

Continue to build and develop our philanthropic relationships to increase our innovative capacity.

Revised Social Enterprise retail strategy.

Recognition



Awarded the Court Mandated Counselling Orders Program.

Making Family Life the largest provider of Mens Behaviour Change programs statewide.

Therapeutic Family Violence service funding extended following successful pilot

2019/20 Achievements



Opened a Online Opportunity Shop



Initiated 6 Community of Practice events

for organisations and professionals interested in social and community change.

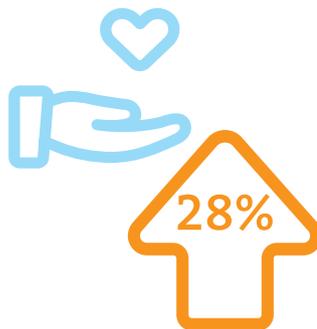


3 x Creating Capable Communities Listening & Learning Tours delivered

Expanded our Collective Impact approach into the Mornington Peninsula to understand, call out and work (with the community and local partners) to reduce family violence and its impacts.

People

14,287
people we've supported this year



39,577
volunteering hours



269
volunteers



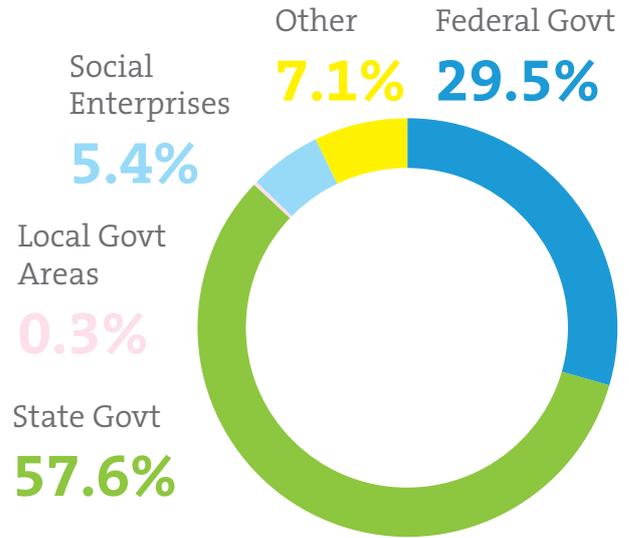
188
number of staff



2018-19 Financial Summary

Revenue

\$15,841,346



Connections

619,723

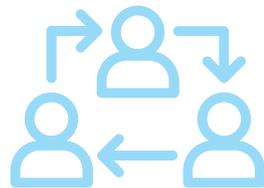
Impressions throughout the year



Results

Shared our Trauma informed practice with

1,589
people
(professionals,
teachers, students,
individuals)



14,329
hours
of integrated
family support



8,025
of client cases
were provided with a focused
intervention



3,882
participants
attended Family Life
Community Capability
interventions





Family Engagement

Overview

The Family Engagement Program is a trauma informed suite of services that focuses on the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable families.

These services include the *Orange Door Intake*, *Family Relationship Centre (FRC)*, *Childrens' Contact Service (CCS)*, *Parenting Orders Program (POP)*, *Family and Relationship Services (FaRS)* and UNITE. Each of these teams of committed professionals have successfully supported families by implementing innovative ways to meet the rapidly changing needs of families in 2019/20.

Prior to March this year, the Family Engagement teams provided specialised counselling, family violence services, family dispute resolution (mediation), supervised contact visits and support for prisoners and their families in 'face to face' sessions. All of these services swiftly moved to online service delivery within weeks of the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this major impact on services, the teams have made regular contact with families to keep them informed and safe. They have also designed alternative ways to deliver these complex programs using a range of digital platforms and newly developed evidence informed practice guidelines.

Family Engagement also delivers psychoeducational groups for parents who have separated, and where Family Court orders are in place. The *Stand By Me* and Family Relationships Centre Information groups aim to assist families to move from high levels of conflict around their post separation parenting arrangements, to insightful, sensitive and competent parenting, focusing on their children at all times.

The teams have embraced the use of new technology, through CoviU and Zoom video platforms, to deliver these groups as well as counselling and family dispute resolution (mediation). Many families have spoken of how well supported they feel by the teams during such a challenging time in their lives.



Case Study



The below case study provides a separated family's one year journey through the Family Engagement services at Family Life.

A distressed mother of two primary school aged children made the difficult decision to separate from their father due to ongoing family violence. The separated family's circumstances were very complex and there were concerns for the children's safety, so *Family Dispute Resolution* (mediation) was not suitable in their case. Instead, their lawyers referred them to the Family Court to obtain a resolution. The Judge ordered the family to attend the Family Life *Children's Contact Service* (CCS) for regular supervised visits between the father and children. The children had not seen their father for almost six months and were afraid to spend time with him.

The CCS referred the family to Family Life's *Parenting Orders Program* (POP). POP strengthens the connections between children and their parents. Specialist therapeutic counselling was provided to each family member. Reunification therapy between the children and their father helped to ease the children's fears before they commenced visits at the CCS. At first, the children really struggled to reconnect with their father and became very upset, but over time their relationship strengthened.

Both parents successfully completed the POP '*Stand by Me*' post-separation group where they learned strategies that reduce parental conflict and improve communication. The group also helped the parents to gain a better understanding of the harm that children may experience when they are exposed to ongoing family violence.

The children's mother was referred to the *Family Violence Case Management* (FVCM) counselling team by the *Orange Door* family violence service. Their father was referred to the *Dads In Focus* counselling program. Each parent received counselling via our CoviU telehealth platform as 'in person' sessions could not be provided due to the challenges of COVID-19.

After one year, the Family Engagement teams were able to support a safe, child-focused transition out of the services for this family. The children are now thriving, and the family have moved on to managing their own parenting arrangements which is a great outcome.



Family Safety & Wellbeing

Overview

The Family Safety & Wellbeing Program has a therapeutic and mental health focus.

It delivers a range of case support, counselling, therapeutic and peer support approaches working with families who have experienced family violence and mental health issues.

Over 2019/20 *Men's Behaviour Change* saw a successful implementation of the *Court Mandated Counselling Orders Program*, a service developed for Court Mandated Men's Behaviour Change, complementing the Corrections and DHHS voluntary streams for a more holistic approach.

Women and Children's Counselling continues to offer short term family violence counselling focussing on relationship issues, life transitions, family violence, traumatic life experiences and managing grief, loss and stress.

Following demonstrated outcomes through a successful pilot, the therapeutic family violence intervention service *Strength2Strength* received ongoing funding in September 2019 as the primary Bayside Peninsula Therapeutic Family Violence Intervention Service. The service will be established as a core service over many years to come in partnership with South Easter Centre Against Sexual Assault (SECASA), Peninsula Health, Good Shepherd and The Salvation Army. *Strength2Strength's* Peer Support Coordinator and Sexual Assault Counsellor introduced the program's first ever 'pre-readiness groups', which ran online, to provide victim/survivors with psychoeducation in a peer supported space, to gain further insight into their experiences in preparation for intensive therapy.

Specialist Family Violence Service, *Dads in Focus*, has been developed for fathers who have used violence and complements the suite of services offered within the Family Safety & Wellbeing team. *Dads in Focus* has shown some significantly positive results where 'whole of family' work has been completed.

The Family Safety & Wellbeing team supported a collective total of

1,267

cases/groups in the last financial year.

Connect is a free peer support service offering caring, evidence-informed interventions to improve wellbeing, decrease emotional distress and improve connections to those who live, work or study in the Greater Dandenong community. *Connect* successfully facilitated online peer-led support groups during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has now been requested as a recurring part of service delivery as word has spread amongst other service providers in the community.

SHINE is an early intervention program, assisting children and their families who are feeling the effects of challenging situations or experiences. It aims to reduce the risk of a child developing a mental health problem by helping them to strengthen their resilience and coping skills. *SHINE* has been working closely with the *Connect* program in the Greater Dandenong community.

Case Study

Michelle and her two children were referred to *Strength2Strength* (S2S) following events of significant physical violence in the family home.

The violence was perpetrated against Michelle and her children, by her husband and the children's father, John. The referral was received roughly one month after John physically threatened the children with a weapon. Michelle fled the house and John was arrested and removed from the home.

Michelle and her children engaged in family therapy outreach visits through S2S fortnightly for 11 consecutive months. John resided with his extended family and completed a *Men's Behaviour Change Program*.

It was determined that further support was required for John for a 'whole of family intervention' based on his decline in mental health. Through internal secondary consults with Family Law Services (*UNITE*), Family Safety and Relationship Services (now Family Safety & Wellbeing) and Heartlinks, a series of internal referrals were made to support John, Michelle and the children which included individual therapy for each family member including visits to a *Heartlinks* Family Therapist, a Clinical Family Therapist as well as John participating in *Dads In Focus* and *Parenting Under Pressure*.

Michelle and the children have continued with the *Strength2Strength* program and each family member was referred to Family Life's *Heartlinks* program for individual therapy sessions as well as to *Child Youth Mental Health Service (CYMHS)*. John has been referred for mental health support.

Both John and Michelle keep in contact with the Manager of *Strength2Strength* and receive ongoing support as they continue to navigate challenges and work towards positive reunification. The family remains together and acknowledges that while the work can be hard, it is worth trying and continuing to work on their trauma repair.





Families & Community

Overview

The Families and Community Program comprises the Family Services and Community Development teams.

Within Family Services sits *Integrated Family Services*, *Cradle to Kinder* and *Community Bubs*. The focus is on supporting families with parenting needs to improve developmental outcomes for children and adolescents. This ranges from setting boundaries, teen parenting, working through attachment issues, providing practical needs and crisis management.

Throughout 2019/20 we have seen complex family violence issues dominate, with rates of children being removed from Family Care and placed in Out of Home Care continuing to increase. This reinforces Family Life's focus on the importance of early intervention.

During this past year the *Integrated Family Services* team has intensified its focus on early intervention to vulnerable children and families or 'those at risk of vulnerability' with the introduction of the *Brief Entry Team*. This team aims to divert vulnerable families from requiring more intensive, case management services and therefore reducing the risk of requiring statutory intervention in the future. Though still in its early stages, the model is proving to be effective in achieving the intended goals and will continue to be evaluated into the next financial year.

Family Support Services Teams have adapted well to COVID-19 restrictions with the majority of work shifting to virtual support. While the practitioners' preferred mode of service delivery remains face to face interaction, they have seen and reported growth in their own skill development increasing their creativity and adopting higher levels of empowerment for the clients.

The Community Development Teams include the *School Focused Youth Service* (SFYS), who work in schools to improve school engagement and the *Creating Capable Communities* (CCC) team, who work with communities to empower and strengthen community connectedness and leadership skills.



The two teams mostly deliver their services through groups and training workshops. SFYS has supported schools and parents through homeschooling during COVID-19, in partnership with *Heartlinks*, and also continued to support virtual service delivery in other trauma informed activities. The CCC coordinators have developed a virtual version of these programs and have maintained contact with clients. Although COVID-19 has impacted the way the teams deliver their service, new creative ideas and online delivery models of the services continue to develop.

Families and Community Services meets clients' and communities' needs as identified by the people themselves. This shift in the way we practice has meant that families are more empowered to utilise the resources surrounding them and as a result are stronger. It is always our aim to transform lives from the nuclear families to bigger communities and we believe that despite all odds, we have impacted a great number of lives.



Case Study



In recent years Family Life has expanded community strengthening projects in the Hastings / Mornington Peninsula area.

The *Stronger and Resilient Communities* (SARC) project, funded by the Department of Social Services, aims to increase the social and economic participation of vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals and families within the Hastings communities to enhance their life-time well being and sense of community belonging. As part of this program Family Life delivers *Creating Capable Leaders* and *Map Your World Young Voices for Change*. Both are key programs from our Creating Capable Communities suite of proven effective programs.

Listening Tours were conducted in the Hastings community over October and November 2019 to understand the needs, gaps and opportunities that exist in the area. These tours engaged 27 representatives including young mothers, community members and various community agencies providing an opportunity to capture the attitudes, issues, needs and opportunities of the community.

Listed below are the issues that came across as the most important and relevant by the three groups that participated in the Listening Tours:

- Intergenerational trauma
- Food security for families who are unemployed or under-employed
- Women's wellbeing
- Disengagement from education
- Lack of transportation options
- Limited integration across sectors
- Volunteering is a community strength but more opportunities need to be provided

There is much more that needs to be heard, understood and analysed to create a comprehensive picture of the experiences of community members. This includes unearthing or bringing to life the local treasures such as community pride, environmental assets and volunteering. As such, the project continues to work with the community to support them and empower them in addressing these issues.

Community Change Initiative

Following Family Life's strong commitment to *Creating Capable Communities* (CCC) since 1998, this financial year has seen further investment in a Community Change Initiative.

In August 2019 Family Life appointed a Community Change Manager. One of the first tasks of this appointment involved undertaking a review to map the strengths of CCC alongside community values and needs. Following this, a framework and business plan was developed to bring to life our goals around systemic change.

Ambitious goals were set for the first 12 months, including:

- Developing and implementing a series of Communities of Practice (COP) events: COP provides a forum that empowers community stakeholders to build on expertise to work collaboratively to design and deliver place based solutions to social issues.
- Developing and implementing ChangeMaker (CM) Professional Development Training: CM is a joint initiative between Family Life and the Tamarack Institute to help professionals understand how to design and deliver place based community initiatives using collective impact principles and practice frameworks.
- Leading Community Change events that built our networks, connections and fundraising.

The impact of the 2019/20 bushfire season and COVID-19 tuned our worlds upside down. Planning for the support of trauma informed community resilience

has pivoted to ensure effective responses to complex community experiences.

The initial goal to deliver four Communities of Practice events across 2019/20 to 200 participants was exceeded. Initially intended to be face-to-face forums but adapted to webinar presentations as a result of COVID, six events were conducted over a nine month period, with more than 400 professionals from the government, community and philanthropic sectors attending. Attendance at these events reflects the interest by community professionals in building and strengthening knowledge, expertise and the need to remain connected.

Investment in Community Change has enabled Family Life to build and deepen relationships within communities including with organisations, business, government (local, state and federal government) and philanthropy.

Family Life envisages that the need for Community Change programs will grow exponentially as people, communities and sectors are required to respond to the long term impact of COVID-19. Never in our history will there be a more important time for all parts of the system, all sectors, professionals and community members to come together to learn and establish community projects/initiatives that work with and for communities to address local, social issues.



Social Enterprise - Heartlinks

This year saw Heartlinks enter its fourth year of operation. Building on the foundational years, Heartlinks was in a strong growth phase and focused on cementing its reputation for providing quality fee for service counselling services, professional development training and group workshops across the Bayside and Mornington Peninsula regions. Then COVID-19 struck and, like many services and small businesses, Heartlinks was significantly impacted.

In early 2020, Heartlinks was forced to review its business plan, implement necessary cost cutting measures and momentarily pause delivery of some services. Thanks to strong leadership and direction, Heartlinks was able to successfully pivot its focus, re-confirm its vision and core purpose, and a new business model was developed.

A move to telehealth services allowed Heartlinks to quickly recommence supporting clients, at a time when many families were feeling the strain of living with the impact of the pandemic. A partnership with Family Life's School *Focused Youth Services* (SFYS) team and funding from the City of Kingston provided Heartlinks with the ability to provide direct support to school communities, greatly impacted by remote learning. Free counselling for children and their families was provided along with a number of COVID-19 focused workshops, including 'Looking After You' for students, parents and teachers, 'Teaching During COVID-19' and 'Parenting During COVID-19'.

With online training becoming the new norm, all of Heartlinks' professional development training and group workshop programs have been redesigned to work within a virtual environment and we have

continued to provide cost effective, trauma informed training across our region including: Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) Collaborative Practice, Positive Parenting the Early Years (0-4 years), Positive Parenting Child to Pre-Teens (5-12 years), Positive Parenting Teens (13-18 years), Looking After You, Engaging Fathers and Here4U (active bystander).

During 2019/20, utilising funding from Australian Communities Foundation's South Eastern Primary Care Fund, Heartlinks was able to provide free professional development training to General Practitioners and Allied Health Professionals in 'identifying and recognising domestic abuse'. With incidents of family violence on the rise during pandemic restrictions and the risk, predominantly to women and their children, heightened due to financial and emotional stressors, this training was seen as vital for our medical communities and was well received. The training, adapted from the community co-designed Here4U program, has now become a core fee for service offering of Heartlinks.

As we look towards 2020/21 and our transition out of restrictions in Melbourne, Heartlinks is looking to expand its therapeutic services and will be working towards offering a total wrap around, trauma informed service to families. This will establish Heartlinks as a destination for support for families, of all shapes and sizes, across Bayside and the Mornington Peninsula region. We will also continue to develop new and innovative professional development programs, provide parenting education and family relationship group workshops.



Social Enterprise Retail - Community Stores



Nearly 50 years ago our first Family Life Opportunity Shop opened in Bluff Road, Hampton East by a group of dynamic volunteers.

This provided a foundation for half a century of successful social enterprise activity and a vibrant volunteering program. Our five Community Stores in Highett, Hampton, Black Rock, Cheltenham and Chelsea and warehouse have been hubs of social inclusiveness, skills development and environmental sustainability. This year was focused on continued consolidation of the Community Store concept, offering community programs including digital skills development, mentoring training, and craft classes; and special events including fashion shows and promotional events to further provide social connection for the community.

The success of the stores is a direct result of local community support of the public who donate, shop and volunteer. Approximately 250 volunteers who supported our Community Stores and warehouse contributed almost 40,000 hours to our Social Enterprise over the past year and are the bedrock of our social enterprise program.

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on our Community Stores since March 2020 when the stores were compelled to close for the safety of our customers, volunteers and staff. Being fully self-funded, the impact of Victoria's business restrictions has been felt keenly on the financial bottom line. With the support of landlords and Jobkeeper funding, and the goodwill of staff accepting reductions in work hours and restructuring of positions, we continue to manage the enterprise with a strong trading plan for when stores are able to reopen.

Within a month of closing the stores in March, our online store was launched which has produced steady sales over this period and a steep digital learning curve for staff. Utilising the Shopify and eBay platforms, supported by strong social media promotion, our online presence has attracted new audiences around Victoria and interstate and has shared the Family Life brand more widely amongst the 'op shopping' community.

www.familylifeonlineopportunityshop.com

During this period we planned for the closing of the Chelsea and Cheltenham stores at the end of their lease periods and are focused on a more dynamic 'pop-up' store model for implementation as COVID-19 restrictions ease. Maintaining a continued strong presence in both the Bayside and Kingston areas is a priority and we are actively seeking opportunities to replace these sites and continue this strong and rich social enterprise and volunteering journey.

Volunteers

The volunteering team commenced the year with a move from Social Enterprise to the People & Culture Team. This significant step acknowledges the integral role volunteers play in making Family Life the wonderful organisation it is, by recognising volunteers as 'people of Family Life' alongside our paid staff.

This year we saw hundreds of volunteers actively contributing across our Social Enterprise sites, as well as supporting our Business and Services teams. We welcomed the support of Deloitte in November during the Deloitte Impact Day and were pleased to bring the Bayside Glen Eira Kingston Local Learning and Employment Network (BGKLEN) team behind the curtain at our Hampton Opportunity Shop for a corporate team building day.

The Volunteer Christmas Party was held at Sandringham and was the last formal volunteer function with former CEO Jo Cavanagh OAM. Together we celebrated the contributions and valuable connections that volunteers made with the broader community.

Volunteering has gone digital! There has been a big focus on shifting from hardcopy to digital processes and record keeping. This leap into the digital space positioned us well to respond to the unprecedented COVID-19 environment, enabling us to continue to engage with volunteers remotely while site based volunteering is on hold.

In May we launched the Volunteer Pulse Check survey that over 50 percent of volunteers participated in. This survey provided valuable insights and the responses informed the development of our Volunteer Strategy.

In addition to traditional means of communication like telephone calls, we have been leveraging our use of digital tools by providing volunteers with engagement opportunities such as Zoom meetings, surveys, emails, and our Facebook Volunteer Group. We are working busily behind the scenes to ensure all volunteers are COVID Safe and ready to go back to site when restrictions allow, and they feel comfortable.

39,577 volunteering hours were delivered over this financial year. We truly appreciate the support of our volunteers and the valuable contributions they make to the community, in particular their ongoing commitment to Family Life during these trying times.

Board Members

Family Life is a not-for-profit incorporated company limited by guarantee, governed by a voluntary Board.

Chair of the Board and Director -

Mr Grant Douglas

Vice Chairs and Directors -

Ms Georgina Cohen and Mr David Stewart

Treasurer and Director -

Mr Jeff Phillips

Company Secretary and Director-

Mr Steve Walsh

Directors -

Ms Lesley Coleman, Mr Len Gill, Ms Judy Pridmore

Biographies of Family Life Board Members are available on our website, [click here](#).

"Nothing (could be done differently), I felt welcome from day one and continue to feel respected and a vital member of the team."



"I enjoy my time at Family Life. I have met wonderful people and I feel useful in being able to give back to the community."

The Founding Volunteers



Our 50 year history is made up of the thousands of stories of individuals who have left an indelible mark on our community.

Over five decades ago a group of concerned citizens including Shirley James, Albert James, Doris Carter, David Allison, Joan Gerrand and Fen Gerrand decided to do something constructive to help address the issues of the time.

The prevailing community difficulties seemed to centre around family and relationship challenges and changing social conditions. Families were struggling with personal and relationship problems, children were suffering and teenagers needed support. Community support was enlisted to address these concerns. Once this was established, a constitution was written, the governance committee appointed and a lease signed for the consulting rooms on the corner of Reserve and Balcombe Roads, Beaumaris. Mr David Allison was appointed as the first President of Family Life, then called 'Southern Family Life Association Incorporated', a non-profit, non-denominational family counselling agency.

Many of our pioneering volunteers were capable women whose own children had started school and they were ready to roll up their sleeves and contribute to driving community change. According to one of our very first volunteers in the early 1970s, Marian Lucas recalled, *"Social attitudes were slowly changing, particularly for many women who had been subordinated for centuries, and it was heady stuff to feel heard and needed."*

The agency's initial meagre funds were used to employ Margaret McGregor OAM, a qualified social worker, as the first Director. All other roles and duties were undertaken by volunteers. Following its initial inception, and for more than ten years, John Wise was Family Life's Treasurer, *"John had very good common sense and he did a wonderful job of budgeting the limited funds,"* recalled Founding Volunteer, Margaret Parsonson. Other key figures included Joyce (Joy) Iggulden, Billie Hosken and Helen Stutchberry.



50

CELEBRATING
50 YEARS

A Visionary Move

Family Life was one of the first in its field to tap into the benefits social enterprise could provide to not-for-profit organisations. The visionary pioneering volunteers set up the first opportunity shop to fund paid counsellors.

It was 1971 and funds were scarce. Margaret McGregor, the first Director, had heard about an innovative way to raise money and it was determined that the income generated could support the work that was being undertaken. One of our fabulous volunteers, Joy Iggulden, who had been organising the family visiting service, recruited volunteers specifically for the project and soon the first opportunity shop was opened.

“We hope to provide a working fellowship for people who need the fun of working together for a common interest. We hope to make some urgently needed money, but also to provide a happy place to meet and work and make friendships,” Joy Iggulden said at the time.

The income was a major asset in keeping the agency afloat. Over the years thousands of volunteers have worked tirelessly at our opportunity shops sorting, pricing, labelling the goods and serving the public. It is not possible to mention all who have given their time and expertise over the years, but each and every one has had an impact on how the shop has grown and how successful it has been.

Sharing Knowledge

In 1982, founding volunteers, Shirley James, Joan Gerrand and Doris Cater, together with Margaret McGregor published a handbook for volunteers, titled ‘For Love Not Money’. The book proved to be a significant resource for similar agencies and other volunteers, sharing their accumulated experience and wisdom from the life and times of volunteers. Demand was such that it was reprinted and also translated into Japanese.

Growing and Adapting

Long-standing volunteers including Sandra Maher, Lou Baulsom, Gill Deeley and Alicia Fogarty wore multiple volunteering hats in their time with the organisation. Their roles encompassed family support, op shop duties, reception, steering committee, mentors to PeopleWorx just to name a few. These long serving volunteers grew and adapted with us to support Family Life as we grew.

As was often the case volunteers became part of the Family Life family and so did their family members. One example of this has been Alicia Fogarty. Alicia, who is retiring this year after volunteering for 23 years, was joined by her husband, The Honourable Mr John Fogarty AM. John, a retired Family Court Judge and passionate advocate for the wellbeing of children, was Family Life’s Patron from 2000 until 2013. We are so grateful for your amazing contribution, thank-you.



Pioneering Service Development

Men's Behaviour Change Program

Family Life is a pioneer in the family violence sector, leading the way in male family violence prevention services. Family Life's *Men's Behavioural Change Program* began in 1986 with the MATES (Moving Ahead To Establish Change) group. Established to assist men who had used violence towards women and children. A key aim of the group was for the participants to achieve positive sustained changes in behaviour and attitudes via increasing responsibility and accountability.

This revolutionary Family Violence Prevention Program has developed over time in response to the needs of the families drawn from the local community. Our origins as a 'whole of family' service agency has influenced our approach to family violence, seeing the needs for all parties involved.



SHINE - Children's Mental Health Program

In July 2006, the Council of Australian Governments endorsed a National Action Plan on mental health to improve services for people with a mental illness, their families and carers. In January 2008 Family Life, having received federal funding, commenced the SHINE (*Support Help Information Networks Education*) Children's Mental Health Pilot Projects in two southern metropolitan regions of Melbourne. In mid-2010, the initial two and a half years of pilot funding was extended for another year.

The SHINE program provides promotion, prevention and an early intervention service for children and young people aged between 5-16 years and their families. At that time, this was a fundamentally different approach from many initiatives by seeking to expand the mental health expertise and responsiveness of a family support agency, rather than looking to expand the child and family sensitivity of a mental health service.

The SHINE project teams include family support practitioners, community education workers, group facilitators and volunteers. These professionals and volunteers provide case management and support to children and families, and facilitate universal and targeted group work in schools and the community, alongside various other community education activities.

The two-year SHINE pilot initially focused services in the local government areas of Frankston, Mornington Peninsula, Kingston, Bayside and Glen Eira. Services in following years were expanded to the Greater Dandenong and City of Casey areas.

Community Bubs

Established in 2004, Community Bubs is a philanthropically-funded program which supports families in the community to ensure babies thrive and develop in a safe and supportive environment.

The 12-month program assists families where parents might be struggling with parenting or experiencing complex issues such as homelessness, family violence and drug and alcohol issues. The families may be at-risk of child protection removing children from their care.

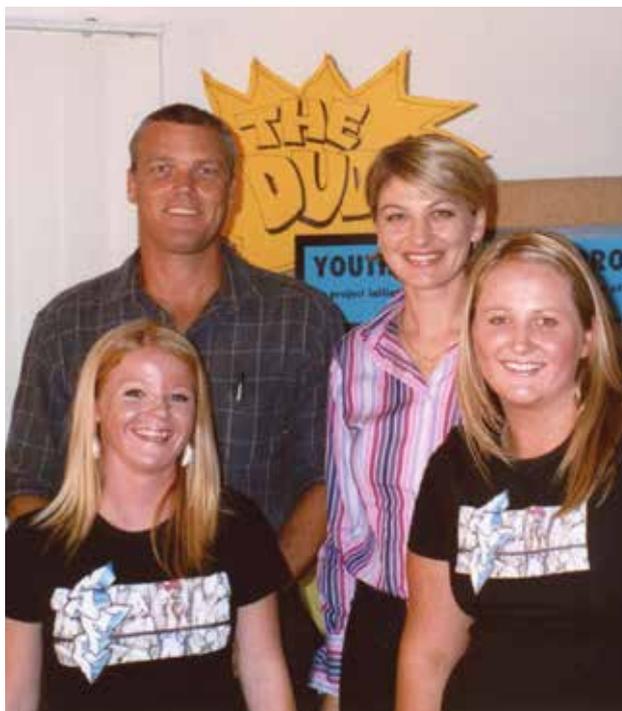
Community Bubs recognises that families and individuals recover best from trauma when they are connected to their community. The program ingrains this philosophy in the model by working with specially trained volunteers. Each volunteer is professionally supervised to ensure that the introduction of a volunteer is timely and to support ongoing quality assurance of service delivery.

Initially piloted as a three year project, 16 years later this program through the generosity of the Cybec Foundation, Cabrini Health and the Barr Family Foundation has continued to increase parenting capacity and enhanced wellbeing for the children of families who participate.

Knock Out Violence

Knock Out Violence Program (KOV) was an initiative developed in 2002 by Family Life following the suicide of a local young man. During counselling, his friends revealed that they had been concerned about him but did not know where to go for help.

The *Knock Out Violence* was developed by young people for young people. Two Youth Project Workers aged between 18 and 22 presented sessions in schools on the themes of violence and bullying. The overall aim of the program was to reduce damaging and hurtful behaviour by young people. It was the first school based anti bullying program designed and led by Family Life trained youth workers.



The program was designed to increase the awareness of destruction and violence associated with bullying in schools, and encourage participation in positive social activities, directing young people to healthier community engagement. It empowered teachers and parents to ensure a legacy of change in life course development.

The program was subsequently taken on by two sisters, Rosie and Lucy Thomas, who went on to launch *Project Rockit*. Together they have worked with hundreds of thousands of young people all over the world, growing Australia's youth-driven movement against bullying, hate and prejudice.

A Whole of Community Approach

PeopleWorx - A Pathway to Employment

In 2003, reports showed that there were 4,000 unemployed teenagers living in Kingston. Unemployed teenagers are often lonely, may experience low self-esteem and are at risk of depression and homelessness.

Family Life undertook the proactive and innovative step of opening a supported pathway to community engagement, employment and volunteering. The program was established in one of Family Life's opportunity shops in Cheltenham where unemployed young people and adults could join the PeopleWorx program and get hands-on work experience, retail training, and personal support and mentoring from adult volunteers.

PeopleWorx helped more than 1,000 disadvantaged, unemployed people get the skills, work experience and support they need to progress to employment, further education or volunteering after completion of the program. The Bennelong and Barr Foundations have contributed greatly to this program and through this support it has been redesigned to support people from all walks of life through difficult life transitions while continuing to focus on relationship and employability skills.

High Need Community Programs

For many years long standing volunteers helped to run Family Life Breakfast Clubs and After School Clubs in high-need communities. While these clubs offered children a nutritious breakfast or afternoon snack, an opportunity for advice, support or assistance with homework, they also provided an important opportunity for staff and volunteers to oversee their wellbeing.

Over many years retired Senior Sergeant Gerry Lambourne's OAM dedication and commitment have also helped participants to have positive attitudes towards their community, the law and our police. Alongside Barb, Don and many others Gerry has been part of a team of long term volunteers committed to supporting social outcomes. Volunteers are crucial to the success of these types of programs; whether it be kicking the footy, having a chat or reading the 'reader' they help to provide much-needed structure and support for the children.





Building Community - Creating Capable Communities (CCC)

In 1998 three mothers who were living in public housing estates in Highett died under tragic circumstances. A group of local organisations came together to try to help the residents on these estates deal with the aftermath of loss, trauma and sadness. Family Life was one of the local organisations. To improve the safety and wellbeing of children Family Life worked with the families and local community members to develop a ‘whole-of-community’ approach to support and strengthen their vulnerable community. This was the beginning of the Creating Capable Communities (CCC) program.

CCC provides community-based support and intervention services, in vulnerable communities. The program operates in high-need neighbourhoods where people may be experiencing social isolation, have underdeveloped parenting skills or poor networks and support. Volunteers also play a vital role, working within our Community Houses, mentoring and supporting people and helping at Breakfast/ After School Clubs. Their support provides vulnerable families with a network while they develop the strength and skills to care for themselves and their loved ones.

More than 20 years on, CCC is still bringing teams of professional and volunteer staff together to engage the most vulnerable families where they live. Work continues on the development of this program with a new CCC framework underway to ensure we continue the benefits of this program into the future.

Healthy Little Rainbows Group

In 2013, Family Life received a grant from the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) Community Investment Program to deliver a round of Creating Capable Leaders training in partnership with Doveton College. The intention of the training was to increase parent engagement at the college and enable parent leadership amongst the school community. The training was delivered over eight sessions with key goals to address issues of self-esteem as well as sustainable community outcomes.

Eight individuals graduated from the training with increased community connectedness, self-confidence, leadership skills, community development knowledge plus confidence and motivation to seek out employment, study or volunteering opportunities. Four graduates went on to establish a program called ‘*Healthy Little Rainbows*’ which operates as a food co-op whereby the graduates visit the local market each Tuesday morning and buy bulk seasonal fruits and veggies. The produce is then delivered to the college where the graduates share and repack a selection of the fruit and veggies into bags for collection by parents later that afternoon. The cost to parents is \$10 and for this they receive a variety of staple ingredients that is cost-effective and nutritious.

This fabulous community initiative (that pre-COVID was still going strong) not only benefits their school community but also the volunteers themselves with their new found confidence and skills.

Gratitude for Generosity

Generous Partners

Family Life owes much of its success and impact to our generous partners. The strength of our services and innovation is largely due to those who support our work and provide us with the tools and resources we need to create community change.

Tamarack

Family Life started its relationship with the Tamarack Institute more than six years ago. Tamarack Co-CEO, Liz Weaver, led a highly successful place-based Collective Impact project in Canada. Driving what began as an experiment within 13 communities, to an initiative that expanded to 176 cities across the country. In the first 10 years, the initiative delivered unprecedented poverty reducing benefits to more than 200,000 households. We are fortunate to have an ongoing relationship with Liz and Tamarack who we continue to work with to deliver our Community of Practice and Change Maker training.

Swinburne

Family Life was selected to collaborate with researchers from Swinburne's Centre for Social Impact to pilot a tool for evaluating and sharing the social economic effects of social enterprises and enterprising community initiatives in Australia. The Social Enterprise Impact Lab three year project involves evaluation design and implementation to more effectively measure the social and economic impacts of Family Life's social enterprises.

Better Life Mobile

Russell and the team at Better Life Mobile have donated mobile phones with call and data packages for us to distribute to women who were vulnerable, or at a risk of family violence. Increasing the safety of our clients and keeping them connected. A generous contribution with instantaneous benefits for our clients.

KSafeKids

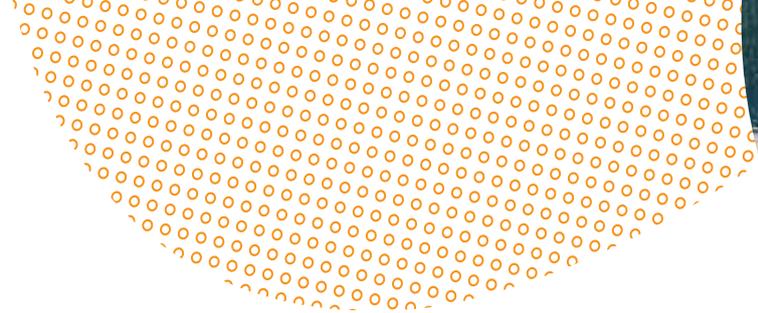
KSafeKids provided 30 courses of basic first aid training and family support to enhance health literacy free of charge to Family Life clients. KSafeKids provided training to vulnerable families across the Bayside Peninsula, to the value of more than \$20,000. Individuals participated in a two hour safety session focussing on the delivery of basic skills and knowledge relating to what to do in a first aid emergency. Many of whom would not be able to access this important service if not for the generosity of KSafeKids.

Glen Eira Kinder Association (GEKA)

Early in 2019, Family Life partnered with the Glen Eira Kinder Association to explore supporting their community with training support for young parents and families. Over time this presented mutual benefit for both organisations as training was delivered and awareness opportunities were provided for Family Life to promote it's work in the community.

City of Kingston and Mornington Peninsula Shire

Family Life is fortunate to have a strong relationship with many local government areas in which services we provide. Our relationship with the City of Kingston presents many opportunities for collaboration and partnership. Their support of our work as part of the Partnership Grant is invaluable and vital to the work we do. Our ongoing work in the community with Mornington Peninsula Shire in addressing family violence and healthy masculinities is a valued and respected partnership we feel very fortunate to have.



Child Trauma Academy

Under the guidance of The Child Trauma Academy, USA, Family Life has applied a trauma-informed lens across all our work. One program that has been developed in response to this understanding is Strength2Strength, a State Government funded integrated family violence response for women and children, in partnership with Good Shepherd, South Eastern CASA, Peninsula Health and the Salvation Army.

Long Term Supporters

Family Life is very fortunate so have many funders who have generously contributed to Family Life’s journey and impact on the community. This includes the Cybec Foundation who have supported our Community Bubs program since 2003 and continue to do so. We are also grateful to the Bennelong, Barr and Jack Brockhoff Foundations who have contributed greatly to our PeopleWorx program. Family Life were also thrilled to be one of the recipients of The Gaudry Foundation’s “Give 52” program which donated to a different charity every week for a year. Anton Gaudry has had a relationship with Family Life for over 20 years.

There are so many other contributors who have generously supported Family Life, and we acknowledge and thank them all. A full list of our donors has been included page 38.



Patrons

Family Life Patrons

Our valued Patrons help draw attention to the important work of Family Life and we are sincerely grateful for their involvement with our organisation. Family Life is fortunate to have the support of these respected individuals who are so passionate about supporting families, children and young people in our communities.

Dr Roger Riordan AM - Patron and Philanthropist

Dr Roger Riordan AM (who passed away in January 2019) was Patron of Family Life from 2012 to 2019. Since 2003, Roger together with his wife Pat, via the Cybec Foundation, were the major philanthropic benefactors for Community Bubs and Community Houses in the Bayside Peninsula region. This contribution has supported hundreds of babies, children and families. Roger embraced the research findings for the impact of the Family Life model of intensive home visitation combined with growing strong community connections to transform the lives of vulnerable children and parents. Roger left a legacy that will continue to influence the most vulnerable members of our community. His extraordinary support of our Community Bubs program changed the lives of many and has given support and hope to those who needed it most. This work continues through the ongoing and generous support of the Cybec Foundation.

A long-term volunteer becomes our newest Patron

Family Life was delighted to announce the appointment of Malcolm Parks OAM to the position of Patron in December 2019. Malcolm has been involved with the work of Family Life for more than 22 years in a variety of volunteer roles, encompassing mentoring homeless youth to being an active Board member. Malcolm joins Mr Graeme Disney OAM and Heather Spooner LLB as Patrons of Family Life

Biographies of Family Life Patrons are available on our [website](#).

Our People

2019/2020 has been a year of changing and optimising our people processes and frameworks.

The rollout of a new Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) system commenced, which proved invaluable in the context of the unprecedented workplace challenges presented by COVID-19.

Access to key COVID specific health and safety protocols were developed and are now housed on our new 'COVID-19 portal' to provide critical guidance throughout the continuing complex and staged resumption of work process. These protocols are complemented by a comprehensive suite of health and wellbeing initiatives to enable successful and safe remote working in the COVID19 environment.

A 'Self Care Day' (one day away from the virtual office for each employee to focus on health and wellbeing), fitness challenges, book clubs, daily meeting free hours, a focus on flexible working hours and virtual team building initiatives are just some of the supports that have been offered to our diverse workforce - to meet varying circumstances and needs.

While our focus has been diverted in responding to the COVID environment, we have continued our journey of augmenting the way we work through technology by expanding our digitisation of people data to our valued volunteers. The exciting implementation of digital volunteer processes has been an important step in facilitating continued operations in this environment. A new volunteer strategy is providing refreshed focus for the volunteer team and provides a clear framework for enhancing volunteer engagement and participation.

Moving to a digital platform for employee hiring has allowed seamless integration with our digital onboarding process. As well as significant efficiencies and increased collaboration, this new platform has also allowed recruitment to continue with ease whilst remote working. Optimisation of the human resources information system has also facilitated a move to online performance reviews and goal setting - providing real time goal updates for managers, more frequent streamlined reviews, and efficient peer feedback functionality.

Work has continued in developing a targeted Learning and Development Program to position us for success in delivering on our strategic priorities. We are committed to increasing the ability and capability of our 148 staff.

We want staff to feel supported and nurtured through having access to a variety of health and wellbeing initiatives.

Continuous Improvement

We continued to tighten systems over the 2019/20 financial year. Family Life was successful in our annual International Standards Organisation external audit, we completed 'How To' Rainbow Tick accreditation and are preparing to launch our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy in 2020/21. This is in addition to enhanced clinical governance: complex case panels, reflective practice and practice reviews, supervision framework and ongoing consumer participation.

Growth and Development of the Impact and Strategy Team

Family Life's Impact and Strategy Team support the whole of the organisation, by actively collaborating to implement and sustain best practice and the maintenance of resilient processes and systems.

Growth and consolidation within this team in the 2019/20 financial year has seen the team now encompassing Quality and Compliance, Practice Quality, Research and Outcome Measurement, Risk, Innovation, Community Change, Projects and Corporate Management, as well as now incorporating *Heartlinks* and Social Enterprise Community Stores.

This structure facilitates the team to work as an incubation hub to set strategy, undertake planning and use technology to ensure streamlined, efficient approaches to new projects and collaboration, while avoiding duplication. Key roles of the team include consolidating, monitoring and evaluating processes and practice; fostering positive community change and innovative service models; and innovating growth and business development in 'for purpose' sustainable businesses.

During the challenges of the last two quarters of 2019/20, the Impact and Strategy Team were able to effectively collaborate with all staff to pivot Family Life's practice responses to the COVID-19 challenges, enabling innovative service delivery modalities and supporting the management of client risk through this period.



2019/20

Treasurer's Report



For the 2019/20 financial year Family Life completed external audits and achieved compliance with governance and management standards. In addition, we closely monitored recommendations from the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission and the Australian Institute of Company Directors, for ensuring our future readiness as a social purpose organisation. This has required continued strategic application of our finances to transition to new ways of technology-enabled working as well as the continual review of property and assets for efficiency and effectiveness.

Management has successfully promoted Family Life innovations to support government reform directions delivering expansion of our service footprint and revenue growth. This is reflected in our end of year result with \$15.8M, up from \$14.5M in 2018/19.

Planned capacity building investments have been rolled out across the past year and will continue over the next 12 months to support best practice in how we deliver our services. This is reflected in the planned three year investment and deficit result from all ordinary operating activities of -\$417K, following the previous -\$457K year's result. Family Life has been positioning to make these essential investments to improve our operating model and support for our people who are essential to delivering our results.

Investment has included enhanced cyber security and the provision of Information Technology upgrades which has been pivotal in our ability to respond to the global pandemic and virtual service provision. Strategic support of the Family Life Foundation raising awareness of our work with partners and the broader community as well as the onboarding of the Customer Relationship Management tool, Salesforce, to facilitate better management of our supporters, donors, volunteers and community has been another area of investment.

Performance

Government funding increased by \$1.3M, up 10.5% on last year. This funding reflects the core work of Family Life as well as innovations which have supported philanthropic and enterprise income. We project further income growth results in the coming financial year through both the state and federal governments.

Family Life's social enterprise offering delivers employment, social inclusion, environmental recycling as well as income generation. The COVID-19 pandemic has proven to be a very challenging environment for this area of our business. Restrictions on ability to trade and forced closure has seen a dramatic reduction in revenue across our stores. Management responded quickly to the conditions and launched an online store to allow trade to continue, while carefully managing staff expenses with the assistance of JobKeeper and negotiating our rent obligations with landlords. Whilst this generated income and reduced expenses throughout the period, it understandably was not able to replicate the expected revenue anticipated across our physical stores.

2019/20 has seen a challenging environment for attracting charitable donations, the devastating impact of bushfires and the pandemic have meant that available resources have been highly sought after. Despite this Family Life continues to prioritise generating income to fund innovation and support the community. We work to translate research into practice, allowing opportunities to intervene early where social needs are identified and work with the community to reduce and prevent social problems. Financially, this strategic approach to invest for the future and grow our impact is reflected in our expenditure of \$16.2M, an increase of 8.4%.

The Board and management have maintained a strong cash flow and balance sheet for Family Life. Family Life was solvent as at 30 June 2020 and the Board expects this trend to continue. We invite you to share in our meaningful work by making a personal tax deductible donation.

.....

Jeff Phillips
Treasurer

Financials

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

[Full Financials Here](#)

	2020 (\$)	2019 (\$)
<i>Income from Operating Activities</i>		
Federal Government funding	4,680,144	4,295,335
State Government funding	9,123,555	8,175,669
Local Government funding	54,375	68,522
Non-Government grants	242,834	234,539
Donations	150,537	138,191
Voluntary contributions	6,119	47,546
Social enterprises	861,417	1,119,741
Service income	174,622	188,777
Membership subscriptions	-	73
Interest	55,228	96,223
Government COVID assistance	176,150	-
Other income	61,950	162,860
Net gain on sale of fixed assets	254,415	9,855
	15,841,346	14,537,331
<i>Expenditure from Operating Activities</i>	934,375	379,798
Depreciation and amortisation expense	27,000	41,069
Audit and accounting fees	21,056	21,541
Bank charges	41,230	11,525
Finance costs	11,526,345	10,690,411
Staffing expenses	2,202,114	2,033,158
Program expenses	456,446	435,928
Operating expenses	1,050,608	1,381,468
Property expenses	16,259,174	14,994,898
Net (Deficit)/Surplus for the Year	(417,828)	(457,567)
<i>Other Comprehensive Income</i>		
Other Comprehensive Income	-	-
	-	-
Total Comprehensive (Loss)/Income for the Year	(417,828)	(457,567)

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report.

Planned capacity building investments have been rolled out across the past year and will continue over the next 12 months to support best practice in how we deliver our services. This is reflected in the planned three year investment and deficit result from all ordinary operating activities. A complete copy of Family Life Limited audited financial statements are distributed at our AGM. Our Annual Financial Report - For the Year Ended 30 June 2020 is available on our website with the detailed financials. This is the report Family Life Limited submit to our regulatory bodies.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**AS AT 30 JUNE 2020**

	2020 (\$)	2019 (\$)
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash & Cash Equivalents	1,686,787	487,742
Term Deposit Investments	3,000,000	3,000,000
Investments at fair value	341,550	247,891
Receivables - Trade & Other	438,060	180,930
Other Current Assets	280,327	219,193
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	5,746,724	4,135,756
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Property, Plant and Equipment	2,101,607	2,922,791
Right of use assets	881,487	-
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	2,983,094	2,922,791
TOTAL ASSETS	8,729,818	7,058,547
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade & Other Payables	1,267,942	764,270
Accrued Expenses	449,099	447,022
Unearned Income	1,470,391	739,542
Interest Bearing Loan	3,218	25,891
Provision for Employee Entitlements	756,557	622,117
Provision for Employee Entitlements - LSL	419,330	381,062
Lease liability	434,017	-
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	4,800,554	2,979,904
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Interest Bearing Loan	-	211,358
Provision for Employee Entitlements - LSL	25,027	45,334
Lease liability	500,114	-
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	525,141	256,692
TOTAL LIABILITIES	5,325,695	3,236,596
NET ASSETS	3,404,123	3,821,951
MEMBERS' FUNDS		
Accumulated Funds	3,189,001	3,606,829
Reserves	215,122	215,122
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS	3,404,123	3,821,951

Donor and Supporter Acknowledgements 2019/20

Family Life gratefully acknowledges the financial grants received from federal, state and local governments as well as funding support from philanthropic trusts, businesses, service clubs, community groups, schools and individuals. We would also like to acknowledge the pro-bono support of our professional services partners who have donated in-kind hours, the equivalent of \$22,650 to the work of Family Life.

Aurora Apartments	Deakin University	Merv and Vauna Jaensch
Australian Philanthropic Services Foundation	Deloitte Australia	Mr Walter Harris
Australian Communities Foundation	Dress For Success	Ms Eve Mahlab AO
Australian Government	D'Sassi	Ms Margaret Parsonson
• Attorney General's Department	EACH	Ms Robyn Ward
• Department of Social Services	Early Parenting Centre	Myer Community Fund
Australian Philanthropic Services Foundation	Epwol Properties	Neighbourhood Houses Victoria
Avril Henry and Associates	Freemasons Community Relief	Peninsula Health
Victorian Government	Gaudry Foundation	Philanthropy Australia
• Magistrates Court Victoria	Glen Eira Kindergarten Association (GEKA)	Rae and Peter Gunn Family Foundation
• Department of Health and Human Services	Good Start Early Learning Centres	Rotary Clubs (Beaumaris, Brighton North & Melbourne)
• Department of Education and Training	Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand	Safe and Together Institute
• Department of Justice and Community Safety	Good Things Foundation Australia	Sandy Beach Community Centre
Balfe and Webb	Hampton Community Centre	SECASA
Barr Family Foundation	Hampton Girl Guides	Social Enterprise Impact Lab
Bayside City Council	Hampton Traders Association	South Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network (SEMPHN)
Bayside U3A	Handled With Care	Southern Golf Club
Be Connected	Herbert Smith Freehills	Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre (SMRC)
Belle Property	HWL Ebsworth	Spark Health Australia
Bennelong Foundation	Intimo	Spotlight
Beta Sigma Phi	Impact Investing Australia	Swinburne University
Bethany Community Support	Jesuit Services	Tamarack Institute
Better Life Mobile	K&L Gates	TaskForce
B. Berenholtz	Koda Capital	The Child Trauma Academy
Blue Scope Steel	KSafeKids	The G.P. & M.D. Farrell Foundation
Brotherhood of St Laurence	Life Without Barriers	The Leonard Family Foundation
Cabrini Hospital	Lions Club (Sandringham)	The Mens Shed
Cardinia Shire Council	Lowe Design & Build and family	The Royal Children's Hospital
CE Family Lawyers	Mawarra YWCA Golf Club	The Salvation Army
Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Safety Victoria	Melbourne Women's Fund	The University of Melbourne
Family Welfare	Monash University	Upper Murray Family Care (UMFC)
City of Casey	Mornington Peninsula Shire Council	Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA)
City of Kingston	Mr Edward Ong	Victoria Police
Country Women's Association	Mr Fred and Mrs Monica Hofmann	Victorian Women's Trust
Court Services Victoria	Mr Geoff and Mrs Jane Thomas	Women's Health In the South East (WHISE)
Commonwealth Bank - CommBank	Mr Gregory Storer	Ziera Shoes
Staff Foundation Community Grant	Mr Jeff Phillips	
Cybec Foundation	Mr Len Gill	
	Mr Malcolm Parks OAM	
	Mr Mark Vassella	
	Mr Richard Ruth	
	Mr Steve Walsh	



Join the Family Life family

There are lots of different ways that you could help us to support vulnerable members of our community.

Giving so that we can support others:

- [Give](#) the gift of ongoing support by giving regular monthly amounts
- Gifts in celebration of a birthday, wedding or anniversary
- Give a gift in memory any time to celebrate the life of a loved one
- [Planned giving](#) (during your lifetime or a gift in your will)
- Workplace giving is a powerful yet easy way for employees to help
- Donate to our online fundraising appeals

Ways you can get involved:

- [Volunteer opportunities](#) directly supporting families, in our community or our Opportunity Shops
- Corporate and community [partnerships](#) to collaborate in a meaningful way
- Student Placement Partnership Opportunities for [Education Providers](#)
- Corporate Volunteering to help motivate and inspire your staff
- Become a Family Life [Ambassador](#)
- [Workshops, webinars and training courses](#) are available for individuals, community groups and for professional development

Other ways you can support:

- Support of Annual Community Christmas Appeal
- Nominate to be a Collection hub for Christmas food hampers
- Hear our latest news by following us of [social media](#)
- Stay up to date by subscribing to our [eNewsletter](#)
- Support us by donating your pre-loved items to our [Opportunity Shops](#)
- Interested to join our team? All current vacancies are listed on our [website](#)

If you can help or would like more information, please get in touch:

Family Life Community Engagement team

Phone: +61 3 8599 5433

Email: communityengagement@familylife.com.au

Visit us here: <https://www.familylife.com.au/>

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.



Family Life and all the individuals who make up our organisation respectfully acknowledge all Aboriginal people and their ancient and ongoing connections to culture and country. In particular we wish to acknowledge the Boonwurrung and Woiwurrung-Wurundjeri people of the larger Kulin nation in whose ancestral lands Family Life provides services to the Melbourne community.



*Transforming
lives for stronger
communities*

Family Life
197 Bluff Road
Sandringham, Victoria 3191
Phone: +61 3 8599 5433
Email: info@familylife.com.au
familylife.com.au

Follow us on Social Media



**For Family Life service centres
and locations visit**



Family Life Opportunity Shops



**Or Family Life's Online
Opportunity Shop**



Family Life Limited
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ACN: 606 542 590
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In relation to Victorian Government
Department of Health and Human
Services funded programs:

