



FAN

Family Access Network

Organisational Strategic Plan

2011 – 2014

FAN's vision is for a community which acknowledges and values the dignity and worth of all citizens and enables individuals to deal positively with adverse situations in their lives



INTRODUCTION

FAN is committed to a vision which is philosophically underpinned by housing as a basic human right and the eradication of homelessness. This commitment extends to participating in the creation of a service system response for young people which is client focussed, relationship based, wrap around and holistic, age and developmentally appropriate. A service system which acknowledges and addresses the diversity of responses required to address vulnerability, family relationships, social connection and creating a place of belonging – a “home”.

Based on the principles of community development FAN’s early years service responses were innovative and grounded in the notion of promoting young people’s ‘connectedness’ to family and community. The community development model, so richly embedded in the formation of the organisation, has continued through the past 30 years of operation and laid the foundation for many of the values and practice principles still held strongly at FAN today. These include building sustainable community connections for young people and fostering the involvement of the community.

Organisational Overview

Originally formed in 1981 from the efforts of the local Box Hill community to respond to the increasing numbers of homeless young people in the area, FAN first began with a community placement service, shared private rental model and a volunteer support mentoring program. While thirty years of operation has passed since the organisations inception, the core principles which first underpinned FAN’s approach remain both relevant and active today.

FAN is underpinned by a strong client focused, rights-based approach that seeks to maximise positive outcomes for young people through timely intervention and strategic responses. FAN provides a range of services for young people, young families and accompanying children who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness including:

- Homeless Support Services, incorporating
 - a Transitional Support Program;
 - the Creating Connections Private Rental Brokerage Program;
 - Children’s Program – Early Years; and
 - the ‘*alsorts*’ Same Sex Attracted Transgender Intersex (SSATI) young people Program
- Counselling and Family Mediation Services
- Dual Diagnosis Program
- Life Skills and Volunteer Program
- Equity Support Program

Mission Statement

Family Access Network will provide support to young people who are experiencing homelessness and those at risk of homelessness in the form of:

- Access to accommodation and support options including therapeutic interventions for both young people and accompanying children.
- Development of resources for young people, children and staff.
- Provision of social skill development opportunities for at risk young people and accompanying children.
- Engaging in high quality research while conducting in-house research on best practice and innovation

Vision

FAN's vision is work towards a 'community which acknowledges and values the dignity and worth of all citizens and enables individuals to deal positively with adverse situations in their lives'. We do this through:

Supporting young people's right to self-determination

In recognition of the needs of homeless and at risk young people, young families and accompanying children, FAN provides services that offer individual support according to their identified needs;

Assisting young people toward independence and empowerment over their own lives

To reduce homelessness, FAN supports and assists young people, young families and accompanying children who are experiencing homelessness to achieve independence and empowerment;

Advocating for, on behalf of and with young people on the public and political stage

FAN undertakes advocacy and develops public awareness of the issues relating to homelessness in general, underpinned by our commitment to housing as a basic human right.

Core Values

FAN board, staff and volunteers embrace, support and contribute to the following core values;

- Client empowerment, social inclusion and participation embedded in programs and services
- Upholding and promoting a rights based approach
- Person centred practice
- Respectful and embracing diversity
- Trust, honesty and integrity
- Improvement, innovation and best practice.

State and Federal Homelessness Policy Context

There are two important Government policy directions that have been considered in the development of the FAN Strategic Plan key directions. The first of these is the Homelessness 2020 Strategy, released in October 2010, which targets the prevention of homelessness, minimising the harm caused by homelessness and providing pathways out of homelessness. A core component of the new Strategy is the use of a 'life stage' approach which recognises that people at different stages of life often become homeless for different reasons, face different circumstances and have different needs. While the life stage categories are not absolute they aim to provide a broad framework for ensuring that all people at risk of or experiencing homelessness will receive appropriate service responses to meet their individual needs.

Another important policy direction is the Federal Governments White Paper on Homelessness – 'The Road Home – A National Approach to Reducing Homelessness' which aims to halve homelessness by 2020. Released in 2008, this policy is built around three key strategies: prevention of homelessness (particularly for children, families and young people); improving the response of mainstream services to homeless people; and 'boosting' specialist models of supported accommodation.

As part of the national strategy, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to a major reform of the long standing Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) Agreement. Funding for specialist homelessness services now continues under the new National Affordable Housing Agreement (replacing the SAAP Agreement) which commenced on January 1st 2009. The COAG reforms make it clear that the states and territories are responsible for the day-to-day delivery of services including responsibility for specialist homelessness services as well as mainstream services.

KEY STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The following five key directions have been developed in the context of FAN's history and roots, its commitment to a human rights framework and ensuring that the voice of young people is heard on the public and political stage.

Key Direction 1 Direct Services

Ensure that FAN's programs and services for young people are responsive to their needs and delivered within a strengths-based, client centred approach, continually seeking better ways to identify emerging or 'hidden' need/issues.

- Goal 1:** Continue to strengthen and foster FAN's specialist response to young families and accompanying children, ensuring the needs of children are maintained as a central tenet in breaking the cycle of homelessness and enabling young parents and children to fulfil their potential.
- Goal 2:** Continue to foster improvements and best practice for Same Sex Attracted Transgender Intersex Young People (SSATI) who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, both within the 'alsorts' program as well as in the broader service context.
- Goal 3:** Further develop FAN's capacity to identify, respond to, and advocate for the unmet need of young people, young families and accompanying children who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- Goal 4:** Ensure that the unique needs of young people with dual diagnosis who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness are appropriately met.

Key Direction 2 People and Culture

Cultivate FAN's learning culture and workforce capacity ensuring that organisational structures promote a best practice approach to leadership and workforce development, community participation and community connectedness.

- Goal 1:** Further develop and build the leadership capacity within the organisation ensuring that leadership development is driven and underpinned by FAN's mission, vision, values and philosophical principles.
- Goal 2:** Continue to investigate ways to foster and further develop FAN's organisational culture and style ensuring that staff, volunteers and young people are active participants in the process.
- Goal 3:** Continue to further strengthen FAN's capacity to attract and retain committed, skilled and innovative workers (including volunteers) who share – and can add value to - the FAN vision and mission.
- Goal 4:** Ensure that FAN's long term commitment to community connection and community capacity building is fostered and further developed.

Key Direction 3 Organisational Capacity

Expand and enhance FAN's capacity to advocate on behalf of young people, young families and accompanying children and promote FAN's model and practice wisdom to policy makers and the sector.

- Goal 1:** Continue to foster the involvement and participation of volunteers ensuring that they are appropriately supported and guided in their activities and work with young people.
- Goal 2:** Continue to seek out organisational growth opportunities ensuring that such activities are strategically managed in line with FAN's mission, vision, historical roots within the community and organisational capacity.
- Goal 3:** Maintain FAN's commitment to continuous quality improvement including participation in appropriate accreditation processes and reviews.
- Goal 4:** Build on current activities that support organisational sustainability and resilience ensuring that FAN's resources are adequate to meet organisational goals and assets are used to their maximum potential.

Key Direction 4 Strategic Alliances and Partnerships

Strategically develop new alliances and partnerships as well as maintain and foster current community sector and corporate relationships that enhance FAN's range of services and organisational capacity.

- Goal 1:** Ensure that all current organisational partnerships are appropriately assessed for their value and/or contribution to FAN's mission, vision and strategic goals.
- Goal 2:** Develop and implement a risk management assessment tool for partnership development ensuring all future partnerships are appropriately assessed for risk and value to the organisation.
- Goal 3:** Further develop partnerships and alliances with appropriate external organisations, (including corporate business) within a framework of strategic selection for partnerships that will add value to FAN's mission, vision and strategic goals.

Key Direction 5 Research and Development

Continue to expand and promote innovation in service development and research through participating in key research initiatives both as a lead organisation as well as in partnership with other organisations and research bodies.

- Goal 1:** Continue to build on FAN's reputation as an innovator in service development and best practice through the pursuit of funding and resourcing of both short and longer term research and development initiatives.
- Goal 2:** Further develop FAN's organisational profile and capacity to advocate for and on behalf of young people, promoting their participation and voice in internal and external research and development initiatives.
- Goal 3:** Further strengthen and foster internal research and development into FAN's model, programs and services ensuring that learnings and findings are published where possible, and contribute to the knowledge base of young people and homelessness.