

2016-2017... the year of



because women deserve nothing less

Bonnie
Support Services



by women and with women

.....
Annual Report 2016-17
.....

OUR VISION

A safe world where women and children flourish and reach their full potential.

OUR PURPOSE

We deliver quality services to women and strive to ensure the rights of women and their children are protected, women's choices are respected and women reach their full potential through the support of our programs, advocacy and commitment to social justice.

OUR VALUES

- > Advocate courageously
- > Empower women and children
- > Act with integrity
- > Deliver quality services
- > Promote collaboration
- > Work respectfully





CONTENTS

Chair's Report	4
Executive Officer's Report	5
Program Manager's Report	8
What we do and how we support	9
Programs and Projects	10
Group Programs	11
Organisational Chart	24
Our Board	25
Donations Received	26
Some stats about the people we are working with	27
Bonnie's at a Glance	28
Five Year Financial Summary	30



Chair's Report



It is with great pleasure I submit this report on behalf of the Board of Directors.

Bonnie's has established itself as a leading provider of support services to

women and children who have been impacted by domestic violence.

It has been disturbing to see that the prevalence of family homicide has increased in our communities. There is great comfort in knowing that a service such as Bonnie's can offer safe refuge to women and children. Bonnie's has an excellent understanding of domestic and family violence and what constitutes

effective responses and this is reflected in our service delivery. Our safety assessments enhance access and promote a quality framework to support clients.

My praise to the service for acknowledging the need for us to work towards safer futures for Indigenous families who are often over-represented in services.

This year saw Bonnie's enter into its first partnership with

Sunnyhaven Disability services to secure funding for women who have encountered violence. Whilst we were not successful with the initial grant application we are persevering to provide support to this minority group of women.

My sincere thanks to our corporate partners who have funded specific projects for Bonnie Support Services; and my thanks also to FACS who have worked alongside us to develop services.

My accolades to our staff at Bonnie's who are committed to and often go well beyond their roles.

My thanks also to Heike who has submitted comprehensive financial report to the Board and who has kept the organisation on a steady financial path.

My personal thanks to Tracy, who has led the organisation into a better future and developed strong and sustaining relationships in the sector.

Last but not least thanks also to my fellow board members who are all volunteers, who set the service's strategic direction and have a strong and committed allegiance to women and children who have been impacted by domestic violence.

Maree Mullins
CHAIR

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Executive Officer's Report



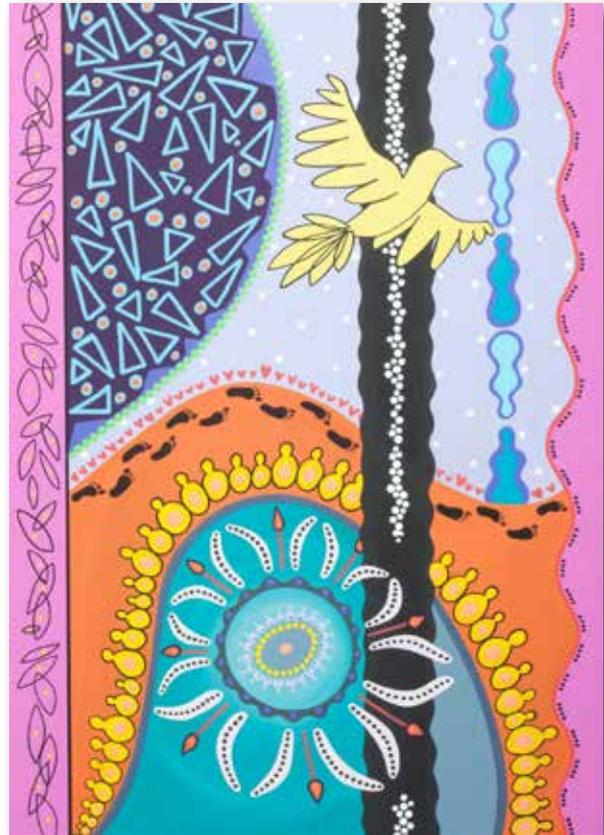
Welcome to Bonnie Support Services' Annual Report for the financial year 2016-2017. I am delighted to be reporting on another successful and positive

year for Bonnie's and importantly, the women and children we work with. It has been a busy and productive time with increased reach supported by a number of projects aimed at enhancing the work we do.

While the challenges of domestic and family violence and homelessness and housing pressure remain large we are confident that the direction we are taking to address these issues is having an impact.

Through our Outreach Project, based at Liverpool Women's Health Centre's Safety Hub, we have developed new networks and built new relationships in the Liverpool LGA. The project undertook important work with Aboriginal workers, services and clients, to enable us to provide appropriate, accessible services to Aboriginal women and children. The development of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is well under way and we are grateful for the learning we have gained from the Aboriginal representatives on our RAP committee who have been generous with their time and knowledge.

The results of the mural workshop were launched and add a unique and beautiful focus to our office while telling a great story of Indigenous and non-Indigenous women sharing in a positive, cross cultural experience. The mural is a daily reminder of what a group of women can do together. Bonnie's involvement with sister services Liverpool Women's Resource Centre and Liverpool Women's Health Centre in the inaugural Kate Nickolas Community Women's Service Award has been an honour. The renaming of the Women's Services Award in the Milpra Art Exhibition to the Kate Nickolas Award also, recognises Kate's contribution to the community and has given us a great opportunity to support



The beautiful mural image created by Danielle Mate Sullivan.

Indigenous women artists. Bonnie's has been involved in the Aboriginal Awareness Education and Prevention Shield (AAEPS) and will soon be undertaking further cultural competency training that is mandatory for all staff. I feel confident that we have made many inroads to positive work with the Aboriginal community in this past year.

We are ten months into the Domestic Violence Response Enhancement (DVRE) program funded last year via the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH). This has been a successful enhancement to our services and provided support

While the challenges of domestic and family violence and homelessness and housing pressure remain large we are confident that the direction we are taking to address these issues is having an impact.

at times that have been identified by the police as “high risk”.

The Early Intervention Project and the Tenancy Support Project are short term projects that are adding value and new perspectives to our core work of supporting women and children wherever they are at on their journey to safety.

We aim to foster a healthy and engaging workplace and the hard working, resilient and committed staff are a testament to this aim. We have high staff retention, workers are professional, well trained, well supported and always go the extra mile to assist the women and children we work with to achieve

their goals; and importantly, they support each other. The successful outcomes for the women and children are the evidence of their great work and I am very grateful to be able to work for an organisation with such a positive, diverse and dynamic culture as Bonnie’s. I thank all the staff for creating and growing such a thriving workplace.

The increased support from individuals, corporates and funding bodies has been very promising and encouraging and, as we tell these generous donors, they enable us to do

the extra things that are not covered in our core funding. These enhancements add to the experience of our clients. Thanks so much to our donors and funders. Grants from Community Building Partnership have enabled us to carry out much needed capital works to improve the amenity of our buildings. Our new office staircase and children’s playroom at Mimosa House are much needed additions.

We have high staff retention, workers are professional, well trained, well supported and always go the extra mile to assist the women and children we work with to achieve their goals; and importantly, they support each other.

Later this year we will be launching our book, **Home Free: women’s journeys to safety from domestic violence**. The book is an amazing collection of women’s strength based stories of their escape from domestic violence and we and our partners in the project are eagerly awaiting the publication and distribution of this wonderful resource. We are very grateful to all the women who have so generously shared their stories and their wisdom for the benefit of others.

You can read in more detail about all these activities within the report but I am confident to report that Bonnie’s is achieving our purpose.

I thank the Board of Directors for their hard work and commitment also. I am fortunate to have a Board that is interested, committed and involved with the organisation it governs.

I would also like to thank all the women and children who come to Bonnie’s. It takes courage to seek help, move away from the familiar and trust strangers with your story, your hopes for the future and your fears. We assure you we will do our best to ensure you and your children have a better future.

Tracy Phillips
EXECUTIVE OFFICER





Bonnie's and Liverpool Women's Health Centre staff @ the Safety Hub



Aunty Mae Robinson giving a warm welcome at the Launch of the Aboriginal Mural Project



Bunnings Villawood delivering a donation



Visit from Guy Zangari Member for Fairfield on completion of staircase renovation

Program Manager's Report

At the end of my first full financial year as Program Manager at Bonnie's, I am pleased to report that this has been a year of collaboration for us, starting with the launch of the Safety Hub and us becoming a permanent fixture at Liverpool Women's Health Centre. We worked closely in collaboration with Community First Step, NSW Police and local schools to run Healthy Relationship Workshops; and partnered with the Youth Creative Group at the Liverpool Women's Resource Centre, and with Cara House to run the Wrapped in Angels therapy sessions. We continue to embrace our ongoing partnership with Rosebank in the Creative Art Therapy space; working alongside staff at CORE to run the Vietnamese Women's Group and having the Hindi/Urdu Women's Health group once again at Liverpool Women's Health Centre. These partnerships are crucial for us at Bonnie's; these

As the team has grown and Bonnie's has a full complement of staff, our commitment to advocate and promote safety for all women and children has strengthened. My job was made easy due to the extraordinary women I work alongside every day...

partnerships enable us to enhance our existing support to women and children in the community. We also welcome having Selina from Centrelink and Joanne from the Salvation Army (Moneycare Financial Capacity Caseworker) here at Bonnie's monthly; this has provided for much needed, immediate access to external financial supports for the women who are accessing our service.

The successful implementation of the Domestic Violence Response Enhancement (DVRE) Program this year enabled Bonnie's to provide weekend and after-hours responses to women and children

escaping domestic and family violence at those times identified as high risk. This program opened up new avenues for us to work more closely with Hume Community Housing and our local Housing NSW offices. This enhancement program allowed for

a timely response and much needed face-to-face support over the weekend, so women do not have to wait until Monday to access support. This has broadened the scope for earlier intervention work with women who otherwise would have a higher likelihood of returning to abusive relationships.

As the referrals come through our doors, we continue to support women and children in our crisis accommodation, in our transitional properties and on an outreach basis. I can report we are working with a higher number of outreach clients; this brings a higher level of consideration when we conduct risk assessment and safety planning. We as a team have been developing and implementing better ways of responding to a higher rate of referrals. We always aim to support the women and children in our service until they inform us they can now travel on their own, but this does not come without its challenges. When the referrals are coming in thick and fast and the team is at full capacity, it can be hard to turn away women who are in need, so somehow, with either support from our sister agencies or with the team banding together for joint case management, we face the challenge and find creative ways to work so that we are able to take another family.

As the team has grown and Bonnie's has a full complement of staff, our commitment to advocate and promote safety for all women and children has strengthened. My job was made easy due to the extraordinary women I work alongside every day; their dedication, passion for change and enduring commitment to supporting the women and children we work with is unwavering. As we celebrate working together in the new financial year, we hope to deepen our connection with our current partners and welcome new connections. This is because at Bonnie's, we acknowledge that the way to create the best possible outcome for the women and children we are working with, is to work in collaboration.

An Le
PROGRAM MANAGER

What we do and how we support

Bonnie's is a Specialist Homelessness Service (SHS) and knows that to find a place in the world often means finding safe and sustainable housing first. We provide crisis accommodation, transitional housing and a range of other housing related services. Our specialist area is domestic and family violence.

And at the same time, we work with women to build their skills, knowledge and capacity so they can make their own decisions and go on to live the lives they choose, safe and violence free.

Our team is made up of highly trained, kind and experienced women from many different backgrounds. Staff make-up reflects the diversity of our clients and collectively staff speak fourteen different languages and come from many and diverse cultural backgrounds.

Bonnie's offers a range of specialist services including casework support, information and referrals, counselling, children's services, and advocacy. We run group programs; from creative to cooking to information and referral and we have a number of programs located in the community for easy access to our services and support.

Additionally, our Rapid Response team provides weekend support and follow-up referral and placement for women experiencing domestic violence and requiring urgent assistance outside of office hours.

Bonnie's welcomes women of all nationalities and ages. That's why we're here... and like our Vision Statement says, we're seeking... ***A safe world where women and children flourish and reach their full potential.***

Are things not right in your relationship?

- > Are you unable to access your own money?
- > Feel restricted? Controlled?
- > Walking on eggshells?
- > Know there's something wrong but you're not sure what?

Bonnie Support Services are now at Liverpool Women's Health Centre. Early expert DV advice from one of Australia's oldest women's support centres. On the spot and drop in.

Domestic Violence doesn't just happen to other women.

Bonnie Support Services

LIVERPOOL WOMEN'S HEALTH CENTRE

Bonnie's @ The Safety Hub
Liverpool Women's Health Centre
26 Bathurst St Liverpool NSW
(opens from Westfield)
02 9601 3555

Domestic violence doesn't stop on the weekend.

And neither do we.

Help us to help them sooner – remember to refer

DV Line 1800 65 64 63 Link2home 1800 152 152

DV crisis support is again available for women and children when they need it most

Friday 5:00pm to Monday 9:00am

We cover Fairfield, Liverpool, Campbelltown, Camden and Wollondilly and Wingecarribee LGAs.

Rapid Response Team

Vinnies good world

Bonnie Support Services

Programs and Projects

Crisis Accommodation

We are able to house 8 families at any given time, across our two refuges. Women and children are able to stay in the refuge for up to 3 months while they begin their journey of healing and recovery after trauma. During this time, families receive intensive support from their Family Worker and Child and Youth Worker to enable them to move through the crisis and develop a plan for moving forward.

Transitional Accommodation

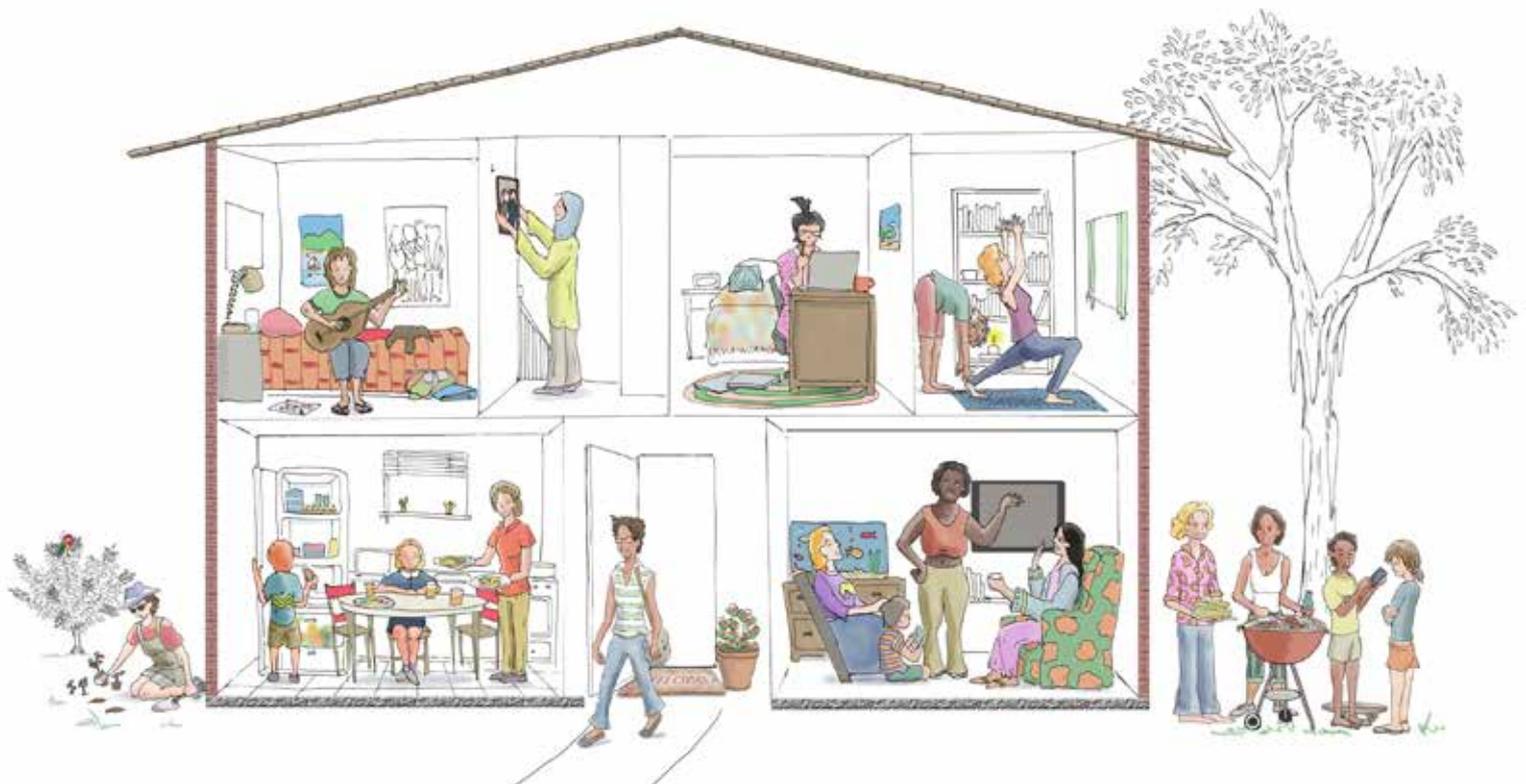
We have 20 properties in our portfolio and access to an additional ten through other partnerships that give us nomination and sub-letting rights. Families are able to stay for between 3 and 12 months, depending on their need and ongoing engagement with Bonnie's. A Tenancy Officer is also allocated to each family to assist them to sustain their tenancy and to move on to sustainable accommodation.

Outreach Services

Our outreach service provides support to women and children if they are experiencing domestic violence, at any time along their journey – so they might not be living in Bonnie's housing. Outreach can be provided to women who are seeking to leave a dangerous situation at home or are first considering making such a move and need to test the waters and gain knowledge and information about their options.

Counselling and Psychological services

Clinical Psychologist, Jo Gravina, provides counselling and other psychological services weekly, on site at Bonnie's. The women find Jo's professional, caring and supportive style extremely helpful and her appointments book up quickly.



Group Programs

As well as our core business of housing and case management, we have a number of early intervention programs and group activities which support the clients of the service.

Women's Group – Community First Step

Community First Step engaged Bonnie Support Services to run a series of workshops for their group called "Support Sisters" which was a project created through a Club Grant aimed at gathering and empowering women to make healthy choices in relationships and for social support. Bonnie Support Services' staff – Zual, Susan and Alison facilitated workshops on the topics of self-care (including meditation, mindfulness, creating time for yourself and discovering your interests), healthy relationships (looking at the equality wheel, mapping a healthy relationship and talking about values) and parenting (managing your own emotions, challenges through a child's life, strategies for coping with some behaviours, parenting styles and reflections on how they were parented). The group comprised between 4 and 8 women each session, several of the women identified as experiencing domestic violence currently or in the past during an intimate relationship. At the end of the three sessions, each woman shared some valuable messages they took away from the sessions and expressed interest in more sessions occurring.

Cooking Group

Over the course of several months, on a Friday evening an OzHarvest box was used in the crisis refuges for all of the families currently accommodated to come together, talk, learn new cooking skills and bond with other families over different cultural dishes. Some of the meals created during this time were a pork stir fry, potato bake, macaroni and cheese, pesto pasta with vegetables, fruit salad with yoghurt, marinated chicken wings and other healthy food options. All produce used was provided through OzHarvest which Bonnie's is very fortunate to be a part of and allowed for

discussion on other topics and relationship building between families who mostly spend time in their individual rooms. Families were often very excited to be able to spend social time with others in the house and to be able to share their cooking skills/ tips and dishes.

Healthy Relationships Group (Schools)

Throughout our lives we are all exposed to numerous and diverse relationships i.e. friendships, professional relationships, intimate relationships etc. As a service we do our very best to explore what a healthy relationship means and how to recognise signs that may put the relationship at risk.

This financial year we were able to work in partnership with Community First Step as they created an eight-week workshop that would expose students from Fairfield High School intensive English centre to topics such as healthy relationships, family planning and sexual education.

Bonnie's was asked to speak to a group of 12 girls each term, aged 11-13 years who were new arrivals and have only been in Australia for a short period of time. These students have had interrupted schooling and very little exposure to healthy relationships talks so Bonnie's felt it was a good opportunity to provide early intervention support so that they



could participate in open discussions about healthy relationships and what they felt was appropriate. The workshops initiated respectful discussions in a safe space about cultural expectations, intimate relationships and consent as well as raising awareness about domestic violence and what services could be accessed by themselves, their friends, family members etc.

The workshop was welcomed by the group. This was evident by the many discussions had and by participants enthusiastically writing Bonnie's contact details in their books and diaries and at times taking photos with their phones. Being a witness to this was a positive sign that Bonnie's is planting the seed of knowledge and awareness for the younger generation. We hope our workshops will influence them to respectfully challenge everyday statements and societal attitudes that may not correlate with what is a healthy relationship.

Hindi and Urdu Speaking Women's Health Group

The group is held at Liverpool Women's Health Centre (LWHC) on Fridays from 10.00am-12.30pm during school terms. Additionally, we ran the group in the April school holidays this year and fourteen women attended. This is an extremely successful project in partnership with LWHC. The group facilitator describes it as an "absolute pleasure" to have an average of 20-25 women attend the group every Friday throughout the year. The group has a health topic every week and starts with an hour of health and community information. There have been frequent guest speakers throughout the year which provides an opportunity for the women to ask questions. Gentle exercise is a part of the weekly program and so is singing, drumming and dancing. The last half an hour each week is spent eating a light meal together. This is what strengthens the friendship and culture. Together these women are a TEAM. The group says "Thanks to Bonnie Support Services and Liverpool Women's Health Centre for this wonderful project."

Vietnamese Women's Group

Bonnie's continues the partnership with CORE Community Services to run a Vietnamese women's support group. Our partnership has allowed the group to run at CORE's centre – an outreach location which is accessible to the women.

We structure the programs in consultation with the women in the group. We have domestic and family violence (DFV) related topics with a view to awareness raising and educating. The workshops cover Family Law, Immigration Law, DV unit, Centrelink, housing and domestic violence services. We also have parenting sessions for parents and carers to help them to understand and manage difficult behaviour in children from 2 to 17 years old. We see that this knowledge promotes self-confidence and self-esteem and decreases a sense of isolation for parents. Providing childcare has also helped young women to attend the group.

We are also able to offer these women additional support by way of one-to-one support and case management. This provides a safe place for them to engage with the community and expand their support networks.



Bonnie's Creative Space

Bonnie's Creative Space is facilitated by Bonnie Support Services and Rosebank. Alison and Ruth facilitate the group and childcare is provided.

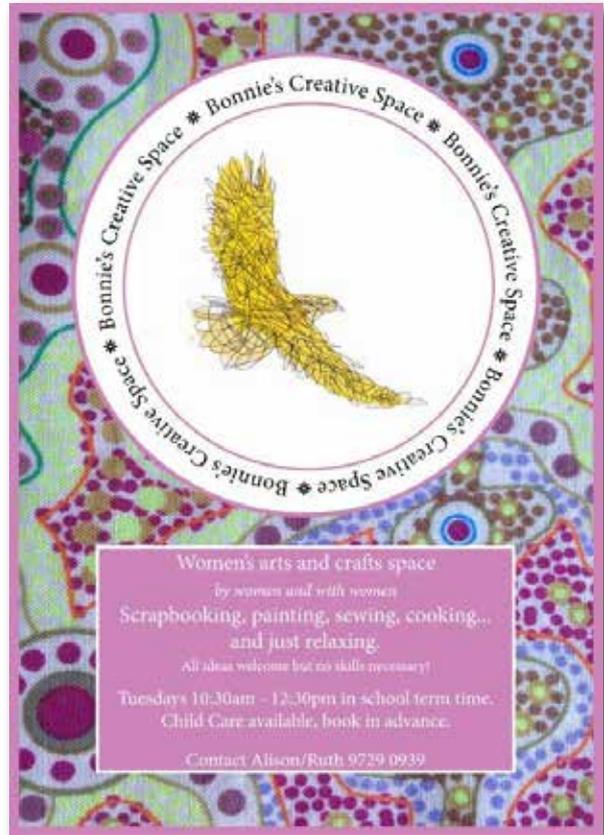
The women are invited to attend, to create and relax and to participate in a creative project that provides purpose and meaning to them. Women have stated that they find that the group provides a space to connect with each other and to find emotional support. The impact of violence and abuse can render women to feel fragmented and lacking confidence; women are often in survival mode, and may have been for years and their creativity may have been suppressed or buried. The group is a way of beginning to address this.

The women collectively have amazing skills; it is wonderful to see these skills unearthed in the group and the women celebrated for their unique expression. During the last year, 23 different women attended the group, with an average of 4-5 women attending each week.

The women reported that the group is a time for them to de-stress, a time for relaxing and learning new creative skills. The women have stated that they feel a sense of 'freedom' when attending the group. The women will often express that they want to make something beautiful for their children. The women encourage one another in their creative endeavours. There is great respect and sensitivity in the way the women communicate with one another, despite language barriers and cultural differences.



Succulents created in Bonnie's Creative Space.



New women are welcomed and supported; the participants often state that they feel proud of what they have created and that their self-esteem and confidence has increased. For others the group has become a stepping stone into Counselling as the creative space represents a safe place to rest... and to learn to trust again.

Mother Child Art Therapy

This year Bonnie's clients were given the opportunity to participate in a mother-child art therapy group. We worked with mothers and their children at the same time, giving them an opportunity to learn about their parenting relationship through art-making. The mothers in the group made art with their children and, through the principles of dyad art therapy, were guided, with the assistance of a Social Worker and Registered Art Therapist, to connect with their children, and respond positively to their curiosity and creativity. Having a space

where mothers and children can connect, have fun together, and make mess without fear, helps empower women to become the best mothers they can be, even under difficult circumstances, and we saw some amazing connections within the group.

Kids Space

Kids Space happens every Thursday from 3:30pm to 5pm.

It is an opportunity for children from the Bonnie's and Mimosa houses to drop in for some fun. Mothers are always welcome and encouraged to join in the activities with their children.

It is also an opportunity for any of the mothers residing in our transitional properties to come and participate. This is a casual space where an activity will be run every week. The group mainly does craft, but depending on the group and if there is a need for some other activity that would be beneficial, it may change at the discretion of the Child and Youth Worker. Recently there was a boy who was having problems with losing when he played a game. This was an opportunity to focus on game playing, and exploring what good sportsmanship looks like.

This is a wonderful opportunity for children to just relax and be themselves and the women are encouraged to join in as this is part of memory making and building strong relationships with their children.



This space also provides an opportunity to gauge how mothers interact with their children. It allows an insight into whether mum needs some extra support or if there is an issue that needs to be brought back to the other Family Workers or Child and Youth Workers to explore.

Friday with Sylvianne

Sylvianne Heim attends Bonnie's on Fridays to volunteer her time and expertise to our service. Sylvianne has a professional background in education, marketing and design and Bonnie's staff and clients are fortunate to benefit from her expertise. Sylvianne's assistance to Bonnie's has included:

- > helping clients with resumes, cover letters and job applications;
- > assisting clients with their applications for education courses and training;
- > stakeholder liaison;
- > helping clients to apply for private rental accommodation;
- > providing advocacy assistance on behalf of our clients; and
- > providing her expert advice with Bonnie's publications.

Sylvianne's services have not only benefited Bonnie's operationally, but more importantly, Sylvianne has enhanced the lives of many of our clients by helping them to access new and exciting opportunities for their futures.

Morning Tea with Amelia

This is a programme that runs once a month with an early childhood nurse, Amelia Scott, who comes to Bonnie's and provides our clients with parenting information. This is helpful for any mothers having parenting issues, or for any mother wanting to get a bit more information or tips around parenting.

This is a very casual set up and we provide a delicious morning tea of coffee, biscuits and sandwiches. Marryanne has designed this

programme around people's comfort and aims for it to be informal and non-threatening so that the women get as many benefits from the morning as possible.

Client's feedback is positive and they evidently enjoy it – numerous women have let the facilitator know that they got a lot out of it.

Latin Dance Class

Sophie Fletcher Watson's Latin Dance classes for women were put on Bonnie's "well-being" calendar this year as a means of supporting women who needed some positive and self-esteem boosting activity. Sophie was right when she said: fun, comfort in your body, moving to music, relaxing and expressing feelings in such a positive way can be healing to the utmost degree. The women who participate loved the group and agreed with Sophie's description.

Wrapped in Angels

In February 2017 Bonnie's facilitated a 'Wrapped in Angels' workshop in partnership with Cara House. The workshop ran for ten weeks and worked with women who had faced violence, abuse and trauma. It worked within a strengths based framework, which focused on women's journeys of resilience.

The workshop was about women creating an angel blanket based on symbols that reminded them of family, friends, pets, places and events that gave them a sense of safety and comfort. The blanket itself was an object aimed to remind each of the participants of their strengths, protection, connection and positive relationships.

From the word go the women were engaged and were picking colours, fabrics, templates and pictures to represent their journey. The women were very particular about what they wanted and how they wanted it done as it was not only a blanket; it was evolving into their own personal story. Observing their participation throughout the program was touching as the women created a bond with each other as they shared their experiences and explained what their symbols, templates and colours meant. One of the participants even commented on how great she felt each Thursday morning knowing she was going to see her friends and focus a few hours on herself without the sense of guilt she once had.

We believe in the importance of running such workshops to assist and support our women as we are just one of the chapters in their lives. Our service may not be with them long-term but if we can provide them with one opportunity to recognise their own strengths and resilience then we believe we are accomplishing our goal as a service.



Wrapped in Angels celebration lunch.

There are a variety of other ways we provide support...

OzHarvest

This year we have had the privilege of receiving OzHarvest deliveries for our families in need. OzHarvest is a food rescue organisation which has delivered over 60 million meals and saved more than 20,000 tonnes of food since commencing in 2004. OzHarvest collects all types of surplus food from organisations, businesses and supermarkets and supplies that food to charities, which in turn use it for those in need.



We have been lucky enough to be receiving OzHarvest each Friday afternoon and each week we put

together around 30 hampers for our clients. These hampers include items such as fruit and vegetable, bread, meat, dairy, dry goods and the occasional bunch of flowers. It is always great to see the women coming in to see what they will be receiving that week, as each week offers something different.

These hampers help our clients who either have no income or are on a low income, to save money on expensive fruit and vegetables and put that money towards other bills and debts that they may have.

Thanks to OzHarvest for supporting us this year.

School Holiday activities

Each school holiday period, Bonnie's organises activities for the young people who are part of our service. This provides kids the opportunity to do something fun they might not ordinarily get the chance to try, with other families who have been through difficult times.

Some of the highlights this year have included a trip to Featherdale Wildlife Park – complete with animal feeding; rock climbing – which was so much fun even the adults climbed up; Ten Pin Bowling – with

a special "Mum's" team for all the mothers to have a go; and a boundingly good time at Flip Out indoor trampoline. The school holiday trips are a chance for enjoyment, and a welcome break from the stress of day-to-day life.

Journeys to Safety

Bonnie's and a group of partners including NSW Health Education Centre Against Violence, Parramatta Council, Uniting Newpin, Western Sydney Community Forum (WSCF), Sydney Community Foundation and University of Western Sydney, have been working

towards the launch of this collection of stories for some time. The idea for the book, which we have called ***Home Free: Women's Journeys to Safety from Domestic Violence***, was conceived by Liz Reedy who raised the funds and worked closely with our storyteller, Moya Sayer-Jones, on this collection of women's strength based stories of living violence free lives. We are launching the book in November this year. It will be a wonderful resource and importantly a beautiful book of diverse stories that many women will find entirely relatable. It's been worth the wait! We are very grateful to the women who have generously shared their stories and experiences with us, to support other women.



And then there are projects that enhance the work we do...



Safety Hub

Liverpool Women's Health Centre – Safety Hub

Bonnie's has a long standing partnership with our sister service Liverpool Women's Health Centre (LWHC) and we have been working together to develop and extend a SAFETY HUB for clients experiencing domestic violence.

Initially there was a trial by a Bonnie's worker. The worker was present one day per week to gauge the demand and referral pathways. Statistics were collected and discussion with LWHC Management and staff took place, to inform Bonnie's decision to increase their presence in Liverpool and provide a safe space for all women. Bonnie's provides workers on Monday, Thursday and Friday each week, to assist clients. The space is used as a drop in service or appointments can be made.

The type of assistance given to the clients includes, but is not limited to: referral to Bonnie's main service, information, application, advocacy and support regarding safety planning, police liaison, MRG, Housing NSW, Centrelink, community housing providers, educators, medical, counselling, Legal – AVO/Family Law, Immigration, Victims Services applications; advocacy re private real estate organisations/arrears, referral for material aid, financial information and counselling, cultural support, emotional support, Start Safely applications and brokerage.

The Safety Hub has developed and extended over time and is now able to assist a greater number of women who have experienced DV. Referrals are received through various pathways – the main Bonnie's office, LWHC, HNSW, Centrelink, DV Line, hospitals, police, teachers, GPs, Psychologists, Social Workers and from affiliated community services or self-referrals via our website or word of mouth.

Bonnie's clients at the Safety Hub can be further supported via services at LWHC, such as access to a Solicitor, Doctor, Nurse Practitioner, Counsellor and various educational and support groups.

For the year ended 30.6.17, 122 women accessed the Safety Hub service, many on multiple occasions. The Safety Hub continues to be accessed to meet the needs of the community.

DVRE (Rapid Response)

Bonnie Support Service Ltd is a specialist domestic violence organisation that provides the Domestic Violence Response Enhancement (DVRE) Program. The aim of the program is to extend our operational hours to provide additional support at times of crisis and to reduce the wait before women and children can escape domestic violence. We provide after hours support to single women and women with children who are escaping domestic violence. This includes temporary accommodation, safety planning and case management, in order to move them into a safer environment.

It's been a great journey throughout this year as the Rapid Response team have provided support to 37 women accompanied by 66 children. The Rapid Response team works in partnership with St Vincent De Paul's DVRE program, in order to increase our scope to support those women and children in crisis.

Rapid Response Team



Tenancy Project

We now have a dedicated Tenancy Support worker who assists in and has a particular focus on, all aspects of locating stable and affordable accommodation. The Tenancy Support Project was introduced to our service as it was recognised how difficult and over whelming it was for our clients to transition to the private rental market.

Our Tenancy Support worker is available to assist with locating, inspecting and applying for properties in the private rental market as well as meeting with local real estate agents to educate them on the services that Bonnie's offers and how they can partner with us to assist our clients.

In this role we work with all aspects of housing, whether it is applying for assistance from FACS Housing, attending open home inspections with clients, liaising with different housing providers, lodging the relevant paperwork to apply for properties as well as advocating with the agency on clients' behalf. Our goal is to ensure our clients are applying for the appropriate housing products and providing assistance to ensure they have a smooth transition from temporary housing to permanent housing.

Project Worker – Outreach Services

The Outreach Services Project has involved the establishment of a Bonnie's presence in the Liverpool Local Government Area (previously we had been based only in the Fairfield Local Government Area), with a Safety Hub at Liverpool Women's Health Centre. Bonnie's has also worked diligently to improve our cultural competency and engagement with Aboriginal communities in the area. The Safety Hub at Liverpool Women's Health Centre has enabled women and children experiencing domestic and family violence and/or homelessness to access drop-in support from specialised Family Workers from Bonnie's, three days per week.

The Safety Hub model has consequently enabled Bonnie's staff to deliver over 190 sessions of support

to drop-in clients at the Safety Hub since July 2016. Clients have been referred to the Safety Hub from Liverpool Women's Health Centre staff, local schools, Link2Home, Centrelink, police, Housing and a variety of other local community service providers. Bonnie's staff have also been able to establish constructive working relationships with Liverpool Women's Health Centre's multidisciplinary team and regularly engage in consultations with the LWHC staff to provide information about domestic and family violence services and housing services.

Bonnie's is also thrilled to have been able to work with the Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association (MDAA) to deliver an outreach, peer based information sharing program about healthy relationships, to women with intellectual disabilities. We look forward to continuing our work as program partners, with this fruitful group work program, in the coming year.

Bonnie's is also very proud to be working in partnership with a number of other local agencies to coordinate the Aboriginal Awareness, Education and Prevention Shield (AAEPS) which is an annual sports program aimed at promoting the health and well-being of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Last year was Bonnie's first year of involvement in this project and the theme was domestic violence. Bonnie's provided information about our services, an interactive DVD was made about healthy relationships and distributed to several hundred children and all young participants received a t-shirt with the Bonnie's logo. Young people played a basketball tournament, during which they visited six stations of community programs, and collected educational material from each of these stations, including from Bonnie's. Bonnie's looks forward to continued participation in the coordination of this innovative project.

Other corporate, government and non-government information-sharing outreach opportunities that Bonnie's has been involved with in the past year, have included the Sydney Water "Women of Water 2017" event where we had a Bonnie's information stall and engaged in information sharing with

Sydney Water conference participants and guest speakers. We also provided information at NAIDOC community events, at an Australian Finance Group fundraiser and to NAVITAS, an education provider for newly arrived migrants.

Early Intervention Project

The NSW Government's Domestic and Family Violence Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy 2017–2021 was launched in 2017 and Bonnie's Early Intervention Project works to address the root causes of domestic and family violence in South West Sydney, in accordance with this strategy. Acknowledging domestic and family violence as a primary causal factor of homelessness, we engage with local communities, including CALD and Aboriginal communities, schools and other health, community and government organisations, to share information and improve public awareness about the seriousness of domestic and family violence, to promote domestic and family violence prevention strategies, work to change unhelpful cultural and community beliefs, attitudes and behaviours that underpin domestic and family violence, build effective referral pathways and respond to those at risk of violence at the earliest possible stage. We work extensively with young people in communities to try to prevent intergenerational violence from continuing and to promote healthy relationships, regardless of gender, via group work at schools and participation in after school programs. Bonnie's also attends festivals and community events, such as NAIDOC events and the Bring it On Festival, a youth festival where we have been able to have discussions with young people about their thoughts about domestic and family violence.

Bonnie's also works to provide and promote information about domestic and family violence via social media, such as our web page which contains psycho-education, safety strategies and informative blogs written by our staff. Our Facebook presence is another soft-entry point to the service, and avenue for promoting information to the community, to prevent domestic and family violence.



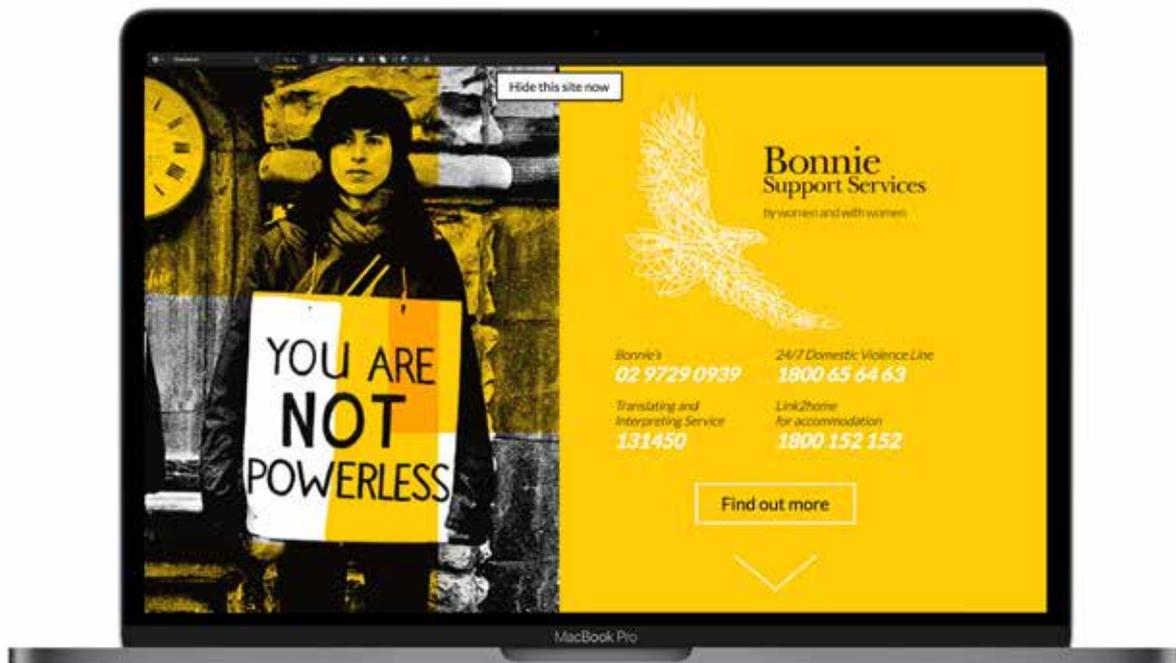
Reconciliation Action Plan

This year Bonnie's commenced formalising our commitment to reconciliation with our nation's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by starting work on a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The RAP is a business plan, endorsed by Reconciliation Australia that documents what our organisation commits to do to contribute to reconciliation in Australia. Our RAP will enable Bonnie's to formally commit to measurable, practical actions that build respectful relationships and create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Bonnie's has established a RAP Working Group of 4 staff and 2 external Advisory Group members. Bonnie's aims for an equal proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants and non-Indigenous participants. Our RAP Working Group members are:

- > Tracy Phillips (EO and RAP Champion)
- > Kelly Jones (Family Worker)
- > Asha Zappa (Child and Youth Worker)
- > Catherine Mellors (Project Worker)
- > Del Leslie (SWSLHD) – external Advisory Group Member
- > Norma Burrows (Liverpool Council) – external Advisory Group Member.

Former Project Worker, Lucy Pedrana, was instrumental in the establishment of the RAP



Working Group's Terms of Reference and an initial meeting of the internal Working Group.

The RAP development process has been designed to be inclusive of all Bonnie's staff ideas and feedback and to this end, a staff consultation, information sharing session during Reconciliation Week and a presentation by Caitlin Maxwell from Reconciliation Australia, have occurred. All staff are also regularly invited to contribute to the development of the RAP, provided with updates on the RAP development process and able to easily access information about the RAP Working Group meetings which occur monthly, in the development phase of the Bonnie's RAP. Information about our RAP development has also been made available more publicly, via a blog post on the Bonnie's website during Reconciliation Week, and information provision at a local Aboriginal Women's Group.

Generally a RAP takes three to six months to develop. We look forward to launching our RAP in the not too distant future whilst continuing to work to improve our service's cultural safety, build on opportunities, positive relationships and improved respect with our nation's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

For more information about RAPs, sourced from Reconciliation Australia, please see here: <http://www.reconciliation.org.au/raphub/about/>

Social media

Bonnie Support Services Ltd has a webpage that can be accessed by all; the website has information about the service and important numbers such as Link2home and DV line. The Webpage aims to be an inviting, safe space for all women, and outlines the history of Bonnie's, its people and four core response areas. The webpage also has a learning space where women can get vital information to assist them in assessing their relationships, FAQs about the service, a quiz and information about what domestic violence and homelessness is. The webpage aims to provide women with information in a safe and secure way.

We recently dived into the social media world. With a staff-managed active Facebook page with over 200 followers, the page reflects the feminist philosophy of the organisation. Relevant articles, videos and agency information are shared on the page. The Facebook page can also act as a soft entry point into the service – vulnerable women have the option to message the Facebook page and a staff member will respond and get more information.



We belong

I came to Bonnie's as a temp having been retrenched. I thought I only needed work but the universe taught me otherwise, that I needed the refuge of Bonnie's too and how wonderful Bonnie's is at supporting all who walk through its doors.

[> Read on...](#)



Why has this happened to me?

Those of us working in the field of domestic and family violence frequently hear survivors ask self-blaming questions such as: "Why did he do this to me?" and "Why does this keep happening to me?"

[> Read the full story...](#)



The power of love

Love is a powerful influence in our lives. But, as I have found, writing about love is not an easy thing to do. People have so many different experiences that shape their perspective on what love means to them.

[> Keep reading...](#)



Behaviour change app for men

Bonnie's works with women and children who have experienced violence and abuse. However there are many organisations that work with male perpetrators of domestic violence.

[> Find out more...](#)

Excerpt from a Bonnie's newsletter.

Our Executive Officer, Tracy Phillips, also writes monthly for our Newsletter which informs internal and external stakeholders of what each month entails for Bonnie's; a great way of information sharing. Bonnie's aims to have a platform of communication everywhere women may access.

Partnerships

Partnerships with other agencies enable us to reach more women and children and share resources and expertise. Bonnie's has partnered with Liverpool

Women's Health Centre, Liverpool Women's Resource Centre, Rosebank Child Sexual Abuse Service, Cara House, CORE Community, Community First Step, Lost in Books, Hume Community Housing and New Leaf in these past 12 months.

Joanne, a Financial Capacity Caseworker with the Salvation Army, attends Bonnie's weekly. Joanne assists women with financial management and links to financial support. Joanne can also provide links to Work and Development Orders (WDOs) which enable eligible people who are experiencing hardship, to pay off fines by undertaking particular activities.

Other on-site services are provided by Selina from Centrelink who is based at Bonnie's once per month to deal with any Centrelink enquiries.

Other support that makes our work easier....

Report from Admin

Working as Administration Officer at Bonnie's is very rewarding. When a staff member comes to me looking puzzled or worried I gain satisfaction from responding to their questions and problems and sending them away with a relieved happy smile on their face. I like to see them take that smile with them when working with the women and children at Bonnie's. The flip side to my role is it can be very frustrating at times with some suppliers testing my patience but I enjoy the problem solving and thrive on the challenges the role brings. This year I have increased my knowledge around donations and voluntary assistance. I have attended a number of webinars which have educated me in the marketing side of donations and voluntary assistance. It has been interesting for me to delve into a new area and to begin to develop strategies for the future and to begin to pass this knowledge onto other staff.

We participated in many activities throughout the year; here is a sample...

Launch of the Aboriginal Mural Project

In November we finally saw the fruits of the amazing art workshop facilitated by Danielle Mate Sullivan which brought together Bonnie's staff and a group of Aboriginal women. Danielle created a beautiful mural which combined everyone's art work and which is now a permanent fixture in the Bonnie's office. The warm and welcoming Acknowledgement to Country was given by Aunty Mae Robinson. We are all reminded daily of the power of creating together.

Rosie Batty Roadshow – Soroptomists International

We were delighted to join with a couple of hundred others at the Rosie Batty Roadshow breakfast organised by Soroptomists International to raise funds for Women's Legal NSW. Australian of the Year, Rosie Batty's wise and thoughtful words inspired us all throughout this campaign to "Orange the World" and stamp out violence against women in Australia.

International Women's Day (IWD)

Again we celebrated this important day on our calendar with Liverpool Women's Resource Centre and Liverpool Women's Health Centre; this year in Miller. We were joined by the Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL), local women and workers from the area to celebrate women's achievements. The inaugural Kate Nickolas Community Services Award was deservedly presented to Del Leslie of South West Sydney Local Health District in recognition of her work in the sector.

OzHarvest CEO's Cook off

Staff and clients alike had a fantastic night at the CEO Cook off fundraiser held at Barangaroo. The night brought together some amazing chefs, service providers, CEOs and service users at a wonderful fundraiser put on by OzHarvest.



Cheque presentation from Fairfield Council Social Club



Aboriginal Mural office privacy screens



Bonnie's staff wearing the new Bonnie's T-shirt



International Women's Day



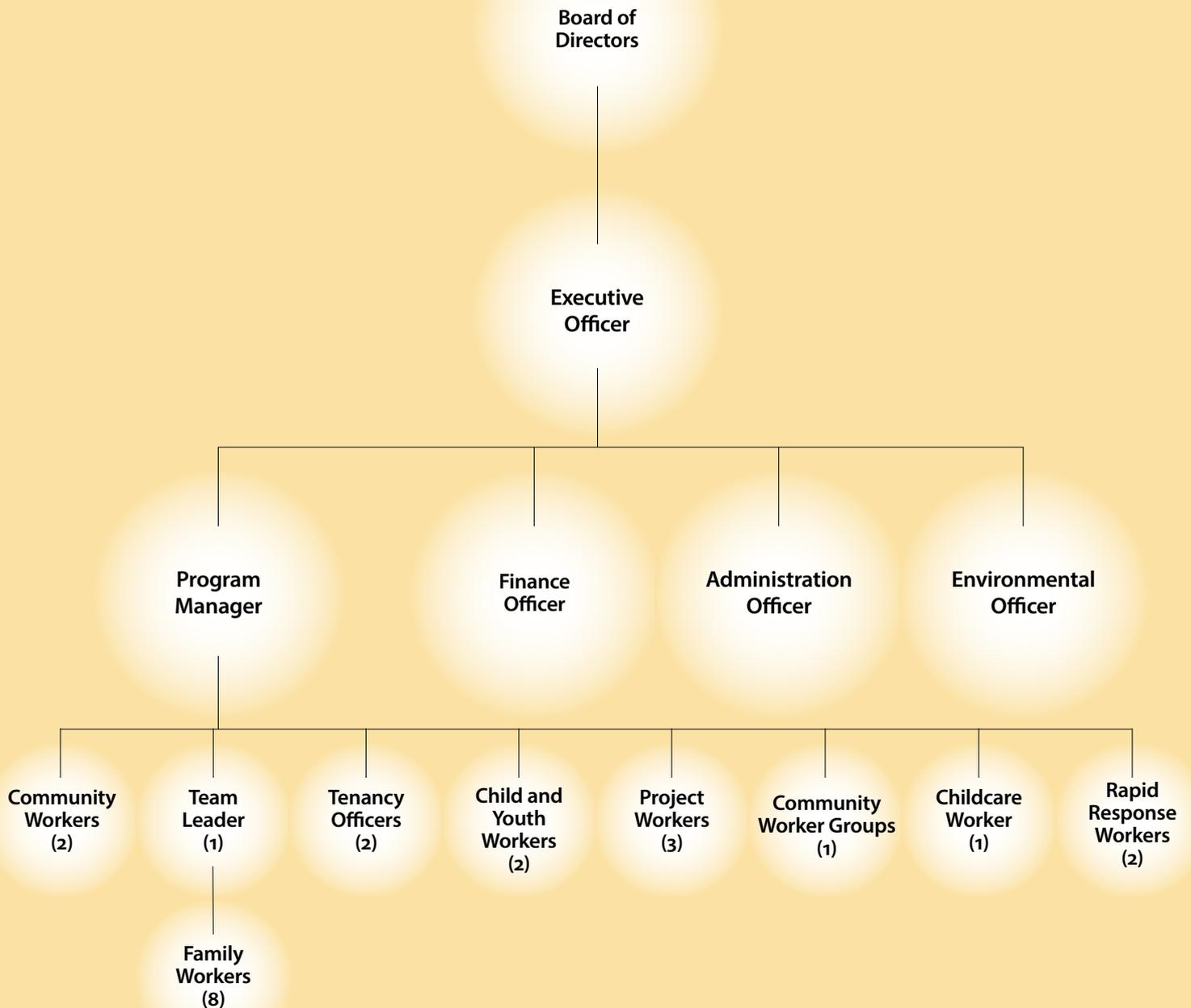
Del Leslie – winner of the inaugural Kate Nickolas Community Service Award, receives the award from Kate's great-granddaughter



Rosie Batty with the team from Bonnie's

Organisational Chart

Bonnie Support Services Ltd



Our Board



Maree Mullins – *Chair* – Maree has a great depth of experience in entrepreneurial leadership and change management. Maree has been a CEO and held senior Executive roles and brings a great depth and passion for working with people with a disability.



Frances Atkins – *Treasurer* – Frances has significant experience in banking and finance, including experience advising senior management, boards and committees on a range of corporate and strategic matters.



Betty Green – *Secretary* – Betty is a committed feminist advocate and her work in the women's community services spans three decades. Violence against women, particularly domestic violence, has been her focus.



Amelia Scott – Amelia Scott is Bonnie's longest serving Board member. Amelia has a wealth of experience in health and in particular women and children's health.



Danielle Winzenried – Formerly a practising lawyer in insurance litigation and legal professional regulation, Danielle is now an international development practitioner with Refugee Rights and Women's Access to Justice interests.



Tam Ho – Tam has a wide range of experience in the not-for-profit and tertiary education sectors, working in the areas of program management, fundraising and marketing and communications



Dusanka Mrdjenovic – Dusanka has a passionate interest in human rights and social equity brought about by life experience of civil war, which included homelessness and displacement.

Donations



Bonnie's benefits enormously from the generosity of people and organisations who donate money, goods and other services for our clients. Thanks to everyone named below, for your support; and to all others who have given their time or have donated to us. Your donations are used wisely to provide additional supports to the women and children we work for.

Habit for Humanity
.....
Australian Finance
Group (AFG)
.....
Parex Davco
.....
Bunnings Villawood
.....
Gertie & Ruth
.....
StreetSmart Australia
.....
University of NSW
Women's Revue
.....
Cabramatta Liquor
Accord
.....
Market Intelligence
.....
Omran Omran Pty Ltd
.....
Open Door
.....
Help Astrid Pay it
Forward
.....
Share the Dignity
.....
Victims Services staff
.....
Fairfield City Council
staff social club
.....
An Niahn Restaurant
Cabramatta
.....
Vietnamese Buddhist
Assoc
.....
Sylvianne Heim
.....

Helen Rintoule
.....
Little Care Packs
.....
Inspire Church
.....
Flight Centre
.....
Exodus Foundation
.....
Carol Best
.....
Kathleen Maxwell
.....
Phuong Tam Ho
.....
Sally Coggiola
.....
Edward Bartolo
.....
Deanna Ivetic
.....
Robyn Metcalfe
.....
Sue and Stan Allen
.....
Helen Callaghan
.....
Jodie and Tahlia Rinkin
.....
PRD Real Estate
Panania
.....
Premier Brands Outlet
.....
Ladies of Variety
.....
Simon Wrangham and
Rebecca De Castro
.....
Carlene Khoury
.....

Women Auxiliary of
Ahmandiyya Muslim
Organisation
.....
S/C Tannous
.....
South Western
Regional Tenants
Association
.....
Noreen Familo
.....
Ian Ferguson
.....
Melissa Gibson
.....
Elisabeth Barry
.....
Lisa Lai
.....
Linda Oliver
.....
Parissa Zand
.....
Anna Ralston
.....
Clair Reynolds
.....
Gregory Drumbell
.....
Lesley Laing
.....
Sam Metcalfe
.....
Country Women's
Association
.....
Rosie Batty
.....
CBHS Health Fund staff
.....
Linda Stone
.....
Laura Varrica
.....

Penny Johshan
.....
Mai Nguyen
.....
Snack Brands Australia
.....
Parks Community
Network
.....
E Mills
.....
K Willcocks
.....
T Roach
.....
Amy & Gabrielle
.....
Prareen Singh
.....
Peter Andrews
.....
Adri-Anne Vatubia
.....
Rachel
.....
Rick Toro
.....
Tracey
.....
Melissa Foo
.....
Amy Castles
.....
Philippa Waters
.....
We all Care
.....
Amber Fonnano
.....
Roger Rodrigues
.....
Amy Harding
.....
Summer Ng
.....
Una Singh
.....



Some stats about the people we are working with



New clients we supported in 2016-17

1,347

and a total of **2,304** clients throughout the year

8.9%

of the clients supported in this period identified as Indigenous

At **Liverpool Women's Health Centre – The Safety Hub** we saw

122

women in the period (many for multiple contacts). They had 189 children

Psychological Supports

Our Psychologists provided

142

counselling sessions

Outreach Support

We provided

4,128

occasions of service through Early Intervention and outreach support

DVRE – our Rapid Response program

We supported

103

women and children through this program

Client country of birth

(01.07.2016 to 30.06.2017)

Argentina	1	Kuwait	4
Australia	1182	Laos	3
Azerbaijan	4	Lebanon	30
Bangladesh	8	Liberia	2
Belgium	2	Malaysia	14
Bosnia and Herzegovina	5	Mexico	3
Burma (Republic of the Union of Myanmar)	4	Morocco	3
Cambodia	16	Nepal	2
Chile	13	New Zealand	54
China	14	Nigeria	4
Colombia	2	Pakistan	11
Congo, Republic of	2	Papua New Guinea	2
Croatia	3	Peru	3
Egypt	8	Philippines	13
England	1	Portugal	2
Ethiopia	3	Russian Federation	2
Fiji	86	Rwanda	2
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM)	4	Samoa	11
France	2	Scotland	2
Gambia	4	Serbia	8
Germany	2	Sierra Leone	6
Greece	4	Slovakia	2
Guinea	2	Somalia	2
Honduras	2	South Africa	2
Hong Kong (SAR of China)	4	South America, nec	2
India	13	South Sudan	2
Indonesia	11	Southern and East Africa, nec	1
Iran	19	Sudan	4
Iraq	62	Syria	6
Jordan	14	Thailand	7
Kenya	2	Tonga	4
Korea, Republic of (South)	6	United States of America	1
		Vietnam	76
		Not known	316

Bonnie's at a Glance

CRISIS ACCOMMODATION

- 2 houses that can accommodate 4 families each.
- We aim to accommodate clients for 3 months and then refer on for longer term housing which could be a transitional property, community housing, priority housing, Start Safely etc. We work from a client centred, strengths based approach so 3 months is a guideline but depending on clients' circumstances this may not always be the case.

TRANSITIONAL ACCOMMODATION

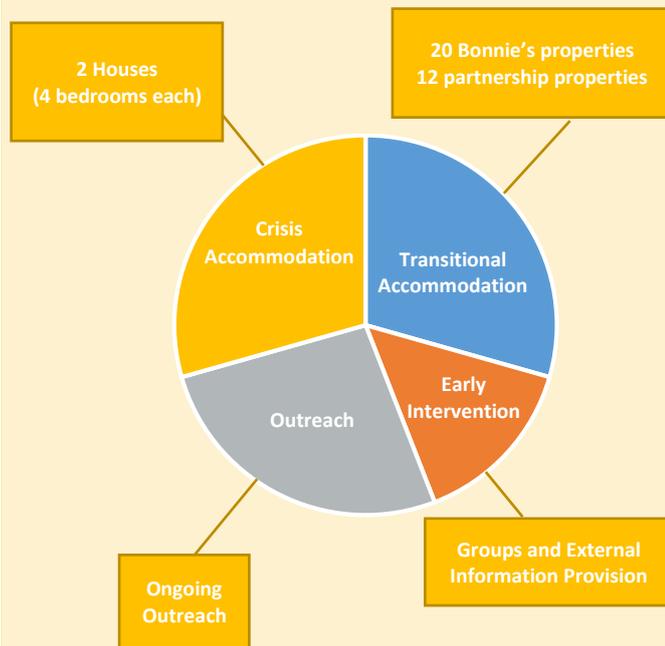
- We work on providing 3 month leases with the possibility of renewal if clients are engaging with the service. The maximum time frame for a client in a transitional property is 12 months.

OUTREACH SUPPORT

- We provide ongoing outreach case management support for clients in the Liverpool and Fairfield LGA.
- We also provide emotional wellbeing groups such as art therapy for both women and children, parenting workshops, financial education workshops and cultural social groups such as the Hindi and Urdu speaking women's health group.

We're essentially an all-female not-for-profit support service, working for more than 40 years with women and children in South-Western Sydney (Fairfield & Liverpool LGA). We are trauma informed and strengths based and work to a feminist philosophy in our approach to assisting women and children.

We provide **accommodation** and **casework support** to women and their children who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or escaping domestic and family violence.



SAFETYHUB

@ LIVERPOOL WOMEN'S HEALTH CENTRE

HOW CAN WE HELP?

- We provide crisis and short-term support to women and their children.
- Support to develop a safety plan.
- Information about domestic violence protection orders.
- Information about legal support available.
- Information about housing matters.
- Counselling referrals.
- Health referrals.

EARLY INTERVENTION

Bonnie's believes early intervention work is vital to improve public awareness of the seriousness of DFV, and to promote DFV prevention strategies. We work to change cultural and community beliefs, attitudes and behaviours and respond to those at risk at the earliest possible stage.

We engage with;

- Local communities including CALD communities, Aboriginal communities, schools and other health and community organisations.

RAPID RESPONSE PROGRAM (DVRE)

- Referrals for the DVRE service will only be accepted from the DV line and Link2Home.
- Referrals accepted for domestic violence victims ONLY.
- Referrals accepted for women with and without children.
- We provide face-to-face support on a Saturday and support over the phone all weekend.
- We provide short term but intensive case management.
- We provide short-term accommodation.

Five Year Financial Summary

Bonnie Support Services Ltd

ABN 24 003 100 445

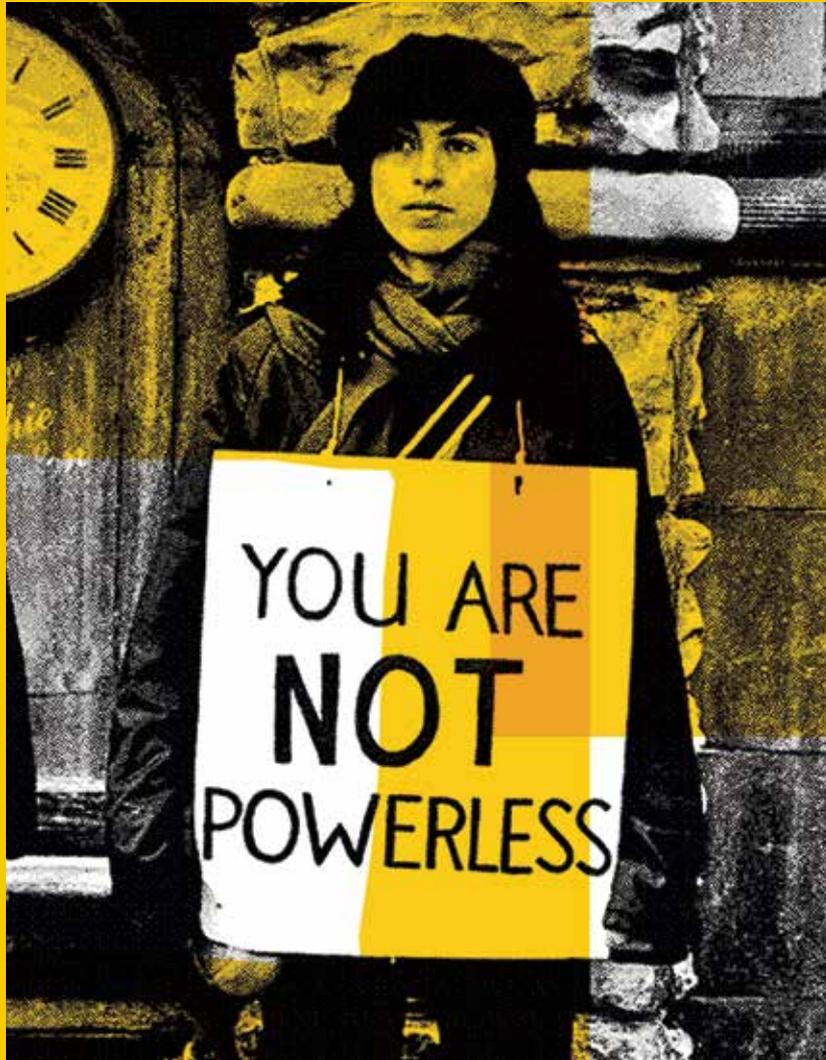
	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
Income					
Government grants	1,937,403	1,825,547	1,580,759	1,340,315	1,351,569
Donations and corporate support	18,000	5,945	24,501	2,266	810
Rental income	254,900	226,663	109,705	17,234	31,889
Interest	29,263	19,956	15,109	4,073	199
Other	27,089	11,925	159,903	36,645	6,576
Total Income	2,266,655	2,090,036	1,889,977	1,400,533	1,391,043
Expenses					
Salaries and on costs	1,791,288	1,264,582	838,147	918,634	1,001,175
Client brokerage	150,393	269,534	75,086	76,457	80,790
Operating expenses	653,820	491,616	668,862	399,417	450,251
Total Expenses	2,595,501	2,025,732	1,582,095	1,394,508	1,532,216
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	(328,846)	64,304	307,882	6,025	(141,173)

The Company recorded an operating deficit of (\$328,846) for the year ended 30 June 2017 compared to an operating surplus of \$64,304 in 2016. The main reason for the deficit was an increase in expenditure for additional projects utilising a surplus arising from the 2015 Specialist Homelessness Services program.

Bonnie Support Services measures its performance through annual accountability reports for each individual funding contract. The company also uses a range of other performance measures to ensure its strategic goals as stated in the Strategic Plan 2016 -2019 are achieved.

The company monitors its performance against budget and rolling forecasts. The budget is approved by the Board of Directors prior the commencement of the financial year. Financial results are presented to the Board who use this information for the purpose of tracking progress, determining if agreed objectives are met and to inform future planning.

A complete copy of Bonnie's Financial Report 2017 including our audited financial statements, accompanying notes and Auditor's Report can be downloaded from our website www.bonnie.org.au or the ACNC register.



Family &
Community
Services

Bonnie's receives its primary
funding from FACS

*Design: Only Human Communication
Illustration: Alex Mankiewicz*

Bonnie
Support Services



by women and with women

Bonnie's

02 9729 0939

24/7 Domestic Violence Line

1800 65 64 63

*Translating and
Interpreting Service*

13 14 50

Link2home

for accommodation

1800 152 152

www.bonnie.org.au