



Social Futures

Northern Rivers Social Development Council

Thriving People, Strong Communities

2015-2016

ANNUAL REPORT

2017 CALENDAR

2015-2016 Notable Dates

July 2015

Lismore Regional Gallery hosts G'Click a photographic exhibition about Goonellabah, captured by the lenses of Clubhouse photographers.

JULY 2015						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

25 November - 15 December

Dirty Laundry Day Campaign.

More than 350 t-shirts displayed in Lismore CBD shop windows to raise awareness of domestic violence.

OCTOBER 2015						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

27 November

More than 300 attend the Community Sector Ball to recognise the efforts of professionals and volunteers during the year.

AUGUST 2015						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

NOVEMBER 2015						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

SEPTEMBER 2015						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
28	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

5-19 August

Homelessness Exposed: an exhibition of photos from our Connecting Home participants to show that homelessness is not just about rough sleeping.

6 August

150 stakeholders from across the state attended 'Everybody Needs a Home' conference at Lennox Head.

10 September

On World Suicide Prevention Day we participated in 'Walk Out of the Shadows' events in Tweed, Evans Head, Grafton and Coffs Harbour.

We presented an information stall at Lismore Square in conjunction with Lismore Headspace.

18-23 February

In partnership with Alzheimer's Australia NSW, NRSDC brings the Memory Van to Casino, Lismore, Banora Point, Tweed Heads, Ballina, Ocean Shores, Brunswick Heads, Alstonville, Yamba and Grafton.

JANUARY 2016						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

FEBRUARY 2016						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29						

MARCH 2016						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

12 December

Northern Rivers Social Development Council, Incorporated holds its last AGM.

14 December

37 people from 23 private, government and non-government agencies attend the Affordable Housing Investment Forum.

25-26 May

We co-hosted the Northern NSW Community Care Conference in collaboration with Mid Coast Communities & New England Support Services.

APRIL 2016						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

MAY 2016						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

JUNE 2016						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

9 June PASH Conference:

"A highlight of my year was co-presenting the 'Sex and Disability' hot topics session at the Positive Adolescent Sexual Health conference. It was fabulous how engaged and thoughtful young people were around issues of sex, imperfect bodies, inclusion, desire and disability.

(Ability Linker)



BOARD DATES

• 27 August 2015 • 22 October 2015 • 26 November 2015 • 10 December 2015 • 3 March 2016 • 21 March 2016 • 28 April 2016 • 26 May 2016 • 23 June 2016

Message from the President and CEO

Social Futures is unashamedly a social justice organisation. We work to achieve social justice in regional Australia by supporting collaboration, encouraging action and helping people to take control and live well. All of our work during the last year supported our vision:

Thriving People, Strong Communities

We continued to operate at three levels:

- Providing high quality, evidence-based services to help **individuals** and **families** make positive change in their lives
- Engaging with **communities**, advocating on social issues to raise awareness, seek better policy from governments; and funding to address them in our region
- Working to strengthen the **community sector**, by providing information and training; conducting research; and collaborating on key issues such as housing and homelessness; inclusion; and child and family wellbeing

Collectively we can do great things and only by working with like-minded organisations, individuals, families and whole communities can we achieve real, lasting and positive social change.

This was a huge year for us, during which we worked with more than 5,000 participants across 30 services. We started the year as Northern Rivers Social Development Council and finished it as Social Futures.



Some of the tiny bears knitted by volunteers to comfort families bereaved by suicide.

In addition to the calendar of highlights below, some of our key achievements include:

- Completing our first full year of delivery of the Mijung Jarjums Family Mental Health Service, working with **184** families and **770** young people in group sessions
- Providing **30,000** occasions of service to more than **3,000** participants through Connecting Home
- Supporting more than **500** people living with disability, through Ability Links
- Working with more than **600** families experiencing difficulty in our Family Referral Service, Family Connections, Network Development Program and Family Relationships Support Programs
- Piloting the innovative 'Trauma informed tenancy management' course for **39** real estate agents and property managers working with tenants at risk of homelessness
- And sadly, but of vital importance, our Standby Response Service provided **79** interventions for those bereaved by suicide, reflecting the tragically high rate of suicide in our region

On behalf of the Board we would sincerely like to thank our 130+ staff... from the frontline service providers to the back room organisers. We are a complex organisation doing complex work and despite challenges of office moves and exponential growth, our team has acted as a unified organisation and deserve the highest praise.

Tony Davies CEO **Paul Cruickshank** President

Board members: 10 ▶

Retiring Board members: 1 ▶

New Board members: 3 ▶

Board meetings: 9 ▶

Total hours volunteered by Board members: 300+

Young People & Families

Anna's story...

14 year old “Anna” was referred to Reconnect by the Family Referral Service after her mother tried to relinquish care due to her challenging behaviour. Anna’s father died a year ago in prison and her mother minimised his death, often saying she is “just like her father”, which had led to Anna having issues of low self-esteem. Anna was refusing to go to school due to social anxiety and bullying – both as a victim and a perpetrator.

Having witnessed domestic violence as a small child, Anna had arguments with her step-father. She said he is abusive when he is drunk and Anna took out an ADVO against him. She was admitted to a community mental health unit after being violent towards her mum who, with her step-father, run a seven-day a week business. This increased stress and limits family time with Anna and her 11 year old sister.

With support from Reconnect...

Anna was placed in respite accommodation. Attachment-based family therapy for Anna and her mum began to heal their relationship and rebuild Anna’s violent relationship with her sister. Anna was also referred to the headspace Early Psychosis Program; to a psychologist to assist with anger management and support for her grief and loss; and for early intervention and harm minimization for her alcohol and cannabis use.

Reconnect facilitated Anna’s enrolment in a new school so she could make a fresh start, identifying strategies for managing bullying behaviours helped her to develop social skills. We also provided training for her parents to help them manage her behaviour, and counselling for anger management and communications skills for her step-father.

How have things improved?

A period of respite reduced the tension, improving motivation to repair family relationships. Anna’s mother is learning to self-care and reduce stress. Family therapy encouraged Anna’s mum to reflect on her own family history and gain insight into her trauma (dissociative amnesia) surrounding the death of her family of origin.



Through emotion coaching, mother and daughter have learned how to become more aware of their feelings and express their emotions in more regulated ways, to negotiate and problem solve when conflicts arise. Anna’s relationship with her sister has also improved.

Anna has been supported to grieve the loss of her father in healthy ways and has been assessed as at ‘high risk’ of developing psychosis, so ongoing monitoring is now provided which has reduced her mum’s stress.

Anna’s self-esteem is increasing. She is building healthy relationships, attending a local gym and doing well at her new school, with a ‘time out’ ticket system when she gets overwhelmed.

Improvements in Anna’s anger management skills, assertive communication, social and problem solving skills has also improved her relationship with her step-father.

This is a true story... names have been changed.

JANUARY 2017

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

SUN

RECONNECT

159 Participants

145 Cases open

127 Cases closed

91

Formal needs assessments and goal setting undertaken



New Years Day

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

Survival Day

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

GETTING IT TOGETHER

144 Participants (young people)

32

Participants identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

47

Group participants



Increasing our footprint through partnerships

The **North West Alliance** delivers Ability Links to 85 per cent of regional and rural New South Wales. As the lead agency Social Futures co-ordinates meetings, training and reporting functions of the Alliance partners to ensure consistency, efficiency and best practice across the group.

Social Futures also manages a website for participants and Linkers within the Alliance's footprint and regularly provides digital content for social media to partners.

Through the Alliance, Social Futures has developed concepts and resources for use and replication well beyond its geographical boundaries, including:

- Employing Lived Experience Linkers (people living with disability or carers) for the first time in the disability support sector in Australia.
- The Alliance Linker Practice Guidelines: a user-friendly document based on person-centred strengths that is now widely adopted.
- The NSW Ability Links website, on behalf of all ALNSW providers across the state. Launched in October 2015, visits increased month-on-month from 346 in November 2015 to 1,469 in June 2016.



Photo courtesy Pathfinders



FEBRUARY 2017

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
North West Alliance Members Care West • Intereach • Pathfinders MidCoast Communities • Social Futures		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
				International Asperger's Day		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
World Day of Social Justice						
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	1	2	3	4	5

3,050 Total Ability Links participants

96,864 Community connections

4,750 Web site visits

76,260 Web page visits

Ability Links

Ability Linkers identify opportunities and connect people living with disability to community activities. Activities such as the Mandala group and the regular fishing group (pictured) assist participants to improve their self-esteem and confidence, while community outreach activities aim to create social inclusion shifts in workplaces, sporting and social groups.

A 'Mindful Self-Compassion' group in Ballina was facilitated over 8 weeks:

Participants: "I now believe I can change how I feel about myself. I can change how I live and relate to others"... "I can now recognise the beginnings of my emotional turmoils, step in early and deal with them in a constructive way"... "Believing that self-critical behavior is just one way of being – not something essentially shameful."


Facilitator: "... one of the best things I've ever been involved in, [the group] went way beyond where I thought they'd go. 19 out of 22 completed the program; just three couldn't, for clinical reasons. A number of the participants described the program as 'life-changing'... about half will continue as a self-help support group."

More than 10 per cent (244) of participant outcomes did not fit the standard reporting template and many were of huge significance to participants, e.g.: "I got out of the house and met new people", "I'm learning to play the piano", "I overcame my anxiety about speaking to linkers", "I overcame my addiction to...", "I participate in a group exercise class".



Photo Jimmy Malecki/Social Futures

MARCH 2017

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	 	Zero Discrimination Day International Wheelchair Day 1	2	3	4	5
		International Women's Day				
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UN)	UN World Down Syndrome Day					
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
				31 Mar-9 Apr Youth Week (Lismore Young Songwriters Competition)		
27	28	29	30	31	1	2

NORTHERN NSW ABILITY LINKS PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

Outcomes for participants **1,844** Engagement with services and organisations **479** Increased personal wellbeing **407** Increased independence and choices **369**
 Increased social wellbeing **232** Connecting to a passion **145** Engagement in education or training of choice **127**

Young People

Supported by Lismore City Council, the sixth **Young Songwriters Competition** was presented in partnership with headspace. It provided an opportunity for young musicians to showcase their talents, with career-boosting prizes including recording, film and photography sessions and musical equipment. Previous award-winners include Ben Wilson (pictured) and The No Frills Twins. The Songwriters of the Year Hannah Parrington and AKA Lui made professional appearances at Crankfest in Evans Head this year.

The Youth Connections Clubhouse is a member of the international Clubhouse Network, an initiative providing out of school activities for young people aged 12-18 in creative arts and technology. We received grants from Lismore City Council to run outreach activities in Goonellabah; and Australia Post to purchase new hardware and software.

Byron School of Audio Engineering provided five youth scholarships for club members to attend its 'Summer Shorts' program. In June 2016, two of the 142 Clubhouse members were chosen to represent our Clubhouse at a Teen Summit in Boston, USA.

In a recent survey, 42% of Clubhouse members agreed strongly that their involvement in the Clubhouse makes them care more about doing well at school and 40% thought it was very likely they will use the skills gained at the Clubhouse in their future career or job.

Links to Learning worked with 75 young people aged 11-18 in four Lismore LGA high schools to improve their communication and conflict resolution skills, while maintaining their engagement in school.

Schools feedback indicated the program assisted young people with their self-esteem and confidence and participants demonstrated new insights into their behaviours and relationship skills.



APRIL 2017

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
YOUNG SONGWRITERS 100 Participants 5 Categories 5 (folk, urban electronic, pop, rock / indie, punk/metal) 14 Finalists					World Autism Awareness Day	
					1	2
Youth Week (31 March - 9 April)				World Health Day		
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Youth Homelessness Matters Day					
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
		International Guide Dogs Day	World Day for Safety and Health at Work			
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
THE CLUBHOUSE 142 Participants 210 Occasions of service 39 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander participants			1,975 Contacts		LINKS TO LEARNING 75 Participants 128 Occasions of service 25 Referrals to other programs	

A close-up photograph of a woman and her young daughter. The woman, with long dark hair, is smiling warmly at the camera. The daughter, with curly dark hair, is leaning her head against the woman's shoulder and smiling. They are in a field of tall green grass, with a blurred background of trees and sunlight filtering through the leaves.

Family Referral Service

"I am so happy with the support we received and we feel like we're in a much better position now. Thanks, you have really gone above and beyond and we really appreciate your help."

The **Family Referral Service** links families to much needed supports. Just over a quarter of referrals were made by the police (27%) and 40 per cent from other government agencies including Health, Education and Family and Community Services. 17 per cent of families accessing the service were self-referred and an almost equal number came via non-government organisations and other sources (16%). Just over a quarter of all participants identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Half of our families received support for a total of five to 15 hours and 18 per cent for up to 35 hours. 67 families (almost 15%) received material support, most notably in the form of food and clothing (55%) and transport (27%).

Most families faced multiple challenges, including parenting issues (61%), mental health (45%) and domestic violence (44%). Other main reasons for seeking support included family breakdown (27%), financial stress (24%) and psychological harm (19%).

FROM OUR CASE NOTES

Clients: Mum and her 9 year old daughter (who was not attending school) at risk of homelessness due to debt and finances.

Referred by: Home School Liaison Officer.

What we did: FRS Linked the mum to support services for housing and debt management. We supported the family to enrol the daughter in school and set up a bus pass exemption. We advocated for mum regarding her debts and set up payment plans. We purchased one school uniform and a one month bus pass until the exemption was put in place.

Outcomes: The family is now in a private rental and the mum is working off debts through a charity organisation and finance management.

MAY 2017

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
		4-10 Tourette Syndrome Awareness Week				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
International Day of Families	Global Accessibility Awareness Day					
15-21 Schizophrenia Awareness Week National Families Week	16	17	18	19	20	21
			Sorry Day	27 May - 3 June National Reconciliation Week		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				



FAMILY REFERRAL SERVICE

460

Referrals
(families)

466

Cases
closed

**Referrals
from:**

123 Police • 77 Self • 57 Education
75 FaCS • 57 Other NGO • 41 Health

**Presenting
issues:**

280 Parenting • 207 Mental health • 201 Domestic violence
124 Drugs & alcohol • 124 Financial stress • 80 Homelessness
109 Family breakdown • 89 Psychological harm

Children & Family

Family Connections supports young and vulnerable parents through case management and a weekly playgroup that builds trust with family members, offers support with parenting skills, provides advice on other services and advocacy.

Parents participate for a variety of issues including family violence, mental health, homelessness, child protection, disability, alcohol or drug use and a history of out of home care and juvenile detention.

Parent outcomes:

- Parents are now on restoration pathways
- Families have found suitable housing
- Commencing study at TAFE or University
- Employment... and another their own business

Family Connections facilitates a free seven week parenting course *My Kids and Me* for parents whose children are in out of home or kinship care.

The **Family Relationships Support Program** provided free counselling for 10-24 year olds and their families using a range of different approaches from traditional talk therapy to play therapy, sand work and grief counselling.

Almost 70 families were supported during 291 occasions of service. Feedback from families was positive, especially regarding engagement in group activities.



"I am proud of myself"

"I can put my kids first"

"I have learnt to trust services"

"I have hope for my situation"

"Others are going through this too"

"I now look forward to waking up"

*"Thank you for listening and
not judging me"*

Family Connections Participants

JUNE 2017

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
FAMILY CONNECTIONS			Global Day of Parents			International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression
90 Participants	16 Referrals to other programs	53 Families	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12-18 International Men's Health Week			World Elder Abuse Awareness Day			
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture	26	27	28	29	30	
FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS SUPPORT PROGRAM						
68 Families	291 Occasions of service	25 Referrals to other programs	13 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander participants	163 Community training participants	245 Community connection participants	



Training & Professional Development

For a number of years, NRSDC's training and professional development program has been a cornerstone of building the capacity of our sector to deliver high quality services.

It is vital the training is relevant to the professional situation of participants and has practical application to their work. 95.8 per cent of respondents to the evaluation surveys agreed that the training improved their knowledge and skills.

"I will be able to help people more thoroughly in a better and informed way, therefore providing a better service for the consumer."

"I'm now very inspired to go ahead and try new things."

"Great hands on practical workshop. I was able to glean new ways of working with trauma children"

"One of the most informative and practical workshops I have ever attended"

We engaged 25 trainers from public, private and community organisations to facilitate our events, and operated from 17 venues around the region. We always receive positive feedback:

"Delivery was awesome, inspirational, trainer was outstanding."

"Fun, adaptable, informative, caring ... interested in all the attendees"

Dementia Education

Social Futures worked in partnership with Alzheimer's Australia NSW to provide free training for people caring for someone living with dementia. Carers attended seven training events, which were held in Casino, Maclean, Mullumbimby, Ballina, Grafton, Tweed and Yamba.

JULY 2017


MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 462 Participants 30 Training events 17 Venues 109 Organisations represented					2-9 July NAIDOC week	
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
				World Youth Skills Day		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Stress Down Day (Lifeline)					International Day of Friendship	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	1	2	3	 Alzheimer's Australia Living with dementia	DEMENTIA EDUCATION 7 Courses 85 Participants	
				4		

Photo courtesy Fiona Connecting Home participant

Connecting Home

Connecting Home provides specialist homelessness services to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Demand for Connecting Home specialist homelessness services far exceeded the funding we received and our dedicated staff have responded by seeking innovative ways to raise awareness 'by about 50 percent' and additional funds to provide support to those most at risk of homelessness in our region.

Our 'Homelessness Exposed' Exhibition showcased homelessness from the perspective of Connecting Home participants. The launch was held at Dragonfly Café on 5 August 2015.

Case study: Fiona and Noah (main picture)

Fiona and her son Noah were living in a tent. Connecting Home had supported them for about a month when this photo was taken.

Fiona and Noah have since secured a private rental and are both doing well.

Program achievements

- Positive relationships nurtured with Real Estate Agencies in Grafton have led to more private rental outcomes for participants.
- Our *Youth Study House* in Lismore ensures young people remain in education while in this safe and stable accommodation.
- The *Foot in the Door* head leasing project with North Coast Community Housing provides young people with no tenancy history to gain private rental tenancies.
- A Survival Skills training course was developed in consultation with homeless young people and successfully implemented with positive outcomes for the attendees.

"Noah thought he was camping, he doesn't know the difference. He enjoyed it, he makes friends with the old people travelling."

AUGUST 2017

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1-7 National Homeless Person's Week & National Missing Person's Week					
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
		International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples				
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
				World Humanitarian Day		20-27 Hearing Awareness Week (Deafness Forum of Australia)
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



CONNECTING HOME

525

Couples

501

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander participants

3,004 Participants

1,289 Families with children

Participants also experienced: 400 Domestic and Family Violence
 452 Some level of disability • 194 Substance abuse/drug and alcohol
 550 Mental health • 50 Corrective Services/Custody

Wellbeing

Lismore and Kyogle Family Planning Service offers accessible and affordable sexual and reproductive health services. Their holistic approach results in measurable health outcomes and repeat consultations. We maintain close referral relationships with local health organisations and GP clinics and our staff promote the service to participants in our homelessness, mental health and family programs as appropriate.

Co-chairing the Positive Adolescent Sexual Health (PASH) alliance provides connection to more than 30 organisations for young people.

StandBy Response respects, understands and supports the health and wellbeing of people bereaved by suicide and is available to anyone bereaved by recent or past suicide.

The service made 79 interventions in 88 cases during the year. 28 participants attended a Supporting Children After Suicide workshop, presented in collaboration with our Mijung Jarjums program.

"I am extremely grateful for the kindness and the effort [of StandBy staff] coming to our rural home after hours to help us when we felt so raw and confused and saddened by this event. I feel better equipped to cope with the impact of this tragedy and more confident in raising my children in such circumstances. I am sure my son, daughter and husband are better for knowing [you] are there. We deeply appreciate what you have done for us. Thank you."

Lismore and Kyogle Family Planning Service bulk-bill and operate from discreet locations. The service has supported the reproductive and sexual health needs of thousands of women for more than 30 years.



Children & Families

Network Development Project


The Network Development Project supported 56 families with a child living with a disability to build social networks.

These include:

- Supporting a single parent carer to enrol her son with autism in the school of her choice; help her access Ontrack for Young Carers respite funding; and support her enrolment in a Cert III Health Services course.
- Assisting a family in which the children both had high needs and the parents had physical and mental health challenges to access occupational therapy and attend NDIS information days. We also liaised with schools to meet the children's learning needs and referred the family to Northcott Early Links for ongoing case co-ordination.
- Linking a rural family with a high needs child with a local specialist music teacher and supporting their decision around transition from an early intervention pre-school to kindergarten.

Parents reported a range of disabilities including: Autism, ADHD, Anxiety, Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Global Developmental Delay, Spinabifida, Tourette Syndrome and others.

All of the participants surveyed agreed their knowledge of local support had increased 'quite a bit' or 'greatly' and their feeling of connection to community was increased 'quite a bit'.



"The NDP has been a wonderful help and very beneficial"

Photo courtesy Pathfinders

OCTOBER 2017

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
NETWORK DEVELOPMENT PROJECT 56 Families 182 Occasions of service 1 Community workshops 30 Referrals to other programs 6 Community connection events						World Cerebral Palsy Day 1-31 Mental Health Month - Mental Health Association NSW International Day of Older Persons
International Day of non-violence		4-16 Down Syndrome Awareness Week & Buddy Walk - Down Syndrome Australia		Hat Day for Mental Health - Rotary Australia		
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9-15 Mental Health Week - National Mental Health Commission	World Mental Health Day	Headspace Day				15-21 - National Week of Deaf People - Deaf Australia
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16-22 Anti-Poverty Week	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty					15-21 National Carers Week
16-22 National Carers Week - Carers Australia	16	17	18	19	20	21
						22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					



Social Futures
Northern Rivers Social Development Council

Children & Families

Mijung Jarjums | Kids in Mind celebrated its first year of operation promoting the wellbeing of children and young people under 18 who show early signs of mental illness.


- Case work provided a holistic approach for individual children and their families in which goal setting and review are key to monitoring positive outcomes.
- A six-week group program about building resilience has been very well received and enjoyed by students, with requests from schools for the program to continue.
- Mijung Jarjums also participated in various community training and connection events throughout the year
- The staff worked extensively in schools in Casino and Kyogle having identified a service gap for 8-12 year olds.

The **Belonging Project** provided free training for carers of children with additional needs, resources for short term loans (including 'sensory tents', books and other equipment) and launched a website in December 2015 that had 1,080 visitors and almost 2,000 Page views.

Participant feedback has been in relation to:

- Building resilience for parents when supporting their children to feel included in community life.
- Providing tools to support carers expand their thinking and go beyond obstacles they may face.
- The opportunity to share time and practical solutions to common situations with families experiencing similar challenges.

Participation in awareness raising at community events such as NAIDOC week and the Kinship Festival has included practical activities such as weaving and demonstration of the sensory resources. The program was a partner in the Tweed Access and Inclusion Awards.

A photograph of a family walking away from the camera on a paved path. A man in a dark jacket and jeans is on the left, a woman in a dark jacket and jeans is on the right, and a small child in a patterned hooded jacket and white boots is in the middle, holding hands with both adults. The path is surrounded by lush green trees and foliage.

The Belonging Project engaged more than 175 stakeholders in the Clarence Valley.

NOVEMBER 2017

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
 International Day of people with disability	1-30 Movember Mens Health Awareness	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
						19-27 Social Inclusion week Suicide Survivors Day
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Universal Children's Day					International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (White Ribbon Day)	25 November - 26 December 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			
						

MIJUNG JARJUMS

128 Individual participants

42 Families

1,733 Occasions of service

60 Referrals to other programs

THE BELONGING PROJECT

100+ Families

2 Community training events

6 Community connection activities

1,500 Community connection participants



Photo Social Futures

Disability & Inclusion

Ability Links Participant: Pam Bourne

"I have multiple 'hidden' disabilities that prevent me from working regular jobs and long hours. I had lived in Nimbin for 20 years and moving to Kyogle was very challenging because I didn't know anyone.

Due to problems with my hands, I was losing my talents. I was just wasting away in sadness really. I was in despair and had almost given up before I met Sandy [Linker]. Through Ability Links, I've been involved in lots of different things, including the gym, which is improving my health!

Sandy assisted me to get reliable and affordable help with my yard and supported me with social security, because I just didn't know how to deal with Centrelink on my own. She linked me up with some legal advice and has acted as my advocate when I needed it

Ability Links got me back into craft – which I love – through the mosaic project that was funded by [Kyogle] Council. A group of us sat together every week and learnt a new skill, and I really enjoyed that.

I also did an eight-week comedy course with Mandy Nolan. I was terrified, but I was determined to do it and I went to every session. In the end I performed eight minutes of stand up comedy that I wrote, about me, at the Lismore Workers Club, to an audience of about 300 people!

I've definitely gotten braver through Ability Links. I've met people I never would have before and now I feel really connected to my community. I can't thank Ability Links enough."

DECEMBER 2017

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
				World AIDS Day		International Day of Persons with Disabilities
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
	International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development				UN Human Rights Day	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Christmas Day	Boxing Day					
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

FAR NORTH COAST ABILITY LINKS

511 New program participants	43 Average new participants each month	128 Average ongoing participants each month	28 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander participants	11,519 Occasions of community connection (up from 7,898 last year)
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Community & Sector Development

Our staff continue to champion regional communities to build understanding of the issues affecting, and solutions for improving, wellbeing.

During the year our staff:

- **presented** at **three** national and **three** State conferences;
- **addressed** students at Ballina TAFE and Southern Cross University;
- **published** a journal article on the impact of urban development on housing;
- **have been a panelist** at a social justice in the pub event in Kingscliff organised by Vinnies; and
- conducted **Trauma Informed Tenancy Management** for real estate agents in Lismore, Murwillumbah and Grafton.

Every fortnight our e-news was delivered to more than 1,000 recipients. From November-June we published more than 650 articles on a variety of topics, from working with clients and sector events to funding and training opportunities.

We continue to work, often in partnership with other agencies, to provide leadership, education and resources to support the human services sector and the broader community in the region.

Aged & Disability Sector Engagement

- A regional tour of *The Memory Van* in partnership with Alzheimer's Australia NSW to raise awareness on the importance of brain health to reduce the risk of dementia;
- Compilation and distribution of the *Ageing & Disability Digest* to 205 professionals each month;

- Advocacy, development and distribution of resources through the Abuse of Older People Collaborative:
 - Production and distribution of *My Wellbeing Checklist* for World Elder Abuse Awareness Day to GP clinics and pharmacies.
 - Distribution of more than 200 copies of the NSW Government's *Preventing and Responding to Abuse of Older People* policy to aged care and disability service providers.
 - A submission to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Elder Abuse.
- Co-hosted the *Northern NSW Community Care Conference* (with Mid-Coast Communities and New England Support Services).

Transport Development

The Transport Development Project works with transport providers across the region to provide current and accessible transport information.



- goingplaces.org.au was redeveloped and has had more than 53,000 page views.
- 338 people were assisted at transport information days in all LGAs and at the Northern Rivers Carpool Forum in Ballina.
- The *Lismore Commuter Bus Report* was developed in collaboration with Northern Rivers Buslines and the Lismore Sustainable Transport Group.
- Transport Guides for Kyogle and Ballina were developed. The Ballina edition was distributed to 20,000 readers through the Ballina Shire Advocate.

Transport Development Project

1,863

Occasions of service
(Lismore Environment Centre)

478

Community connections
(occasions of connection)
issues resolved

goingplaces.org.au

37,746

Sessions

30,521

Unique users

62,631

Page views

Partnership Working

NRSDC led the **Regional Social Plan** implementation group, comprising 25 community and government organisations to:



- develop tools to measure the impact of collective action in contributing to positive social change;
- co-host **Affordable Housing Investment Forum** at which 37 stakeholders identified local opportunities through the NSW Government's Social and Affordable Housing Fund; and
- co-ordinate a joint submission to the draft **North Coast Regional Plan** regarding collaboration between partners in the sector to improve affordable and accessible housing outcomes.

The **Northern Rivers Housing Forum** is led by a core group of agencies and convened by NRSDC to improve responses to homelessness and the lack of affordable housing in the region.

Housing Forum evaluation:

92% of respondents who completed the post-conference evaluation strongly agreed or agreed they had a better understanding of housing issues in the region.

91% strongly agreed or agreed they had a better understanding of opportunities to increase affordable housing supplying the region.

150 attended the **Everybody Needs a Home Conference** at Lennox Head Community Centre on 6 August 2015, which asked the question "How can we work together to increase the opportunities for every member of our community to have a home?"

The event provided an opportunity for attendees to engage with property developers (including social housing developers), academics, lenders, local government planners, real estate agents and individuals who have had difficulty accessing the local private rental market.

During the year, NRSDC led the NR Communities of Practice (Ageing), Abuse of older people Collaborative and the NR Communities of Practice (Disability) and took an active part in regional and state agency planning and advisory bodies, including Youth Action and the North Coast Ageing Strategy Working Group.



Photo Natsky / Social Futures

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

NSW Ability Linkers Gathering (12 November)

National Disability Services (15-16 February)

Commissioning Public Services (2 March)

Early Links NSW Conference (4 May)

Disability at Work (30-31 May)

People, places and promotion

More than simply our biggest asset, our staff ARE our organisation and we aspire to be an employer of choice.

People

- During the year, we welcomed 33 new employees and bade farewell to 23.
- We provided regular opportunities for internal debriefing and clinical supervision for our staff, to support their own mental wellbeing as they support others.
- We provided staff with 276 hours of professional development (study) leave to undertake formal, accredited training. A percentage of this is required under the terms of our service contracts.

All staff are encouraged to participate in one of our six cross-organisation working groups. This enables them to engage with passions and skills they may not directly use in their daily work and build a strong, connected workplace culture.

NUMBER OF STAFF

2016 125 up 28%

2015 98

2014 48



Cross organisation working groups:

- Reconciliation Action Plan
- White Ribbon
- Bugul Wahnmalah (Wellbeing)
- Rainbow Tick
- Workplace Health and Safety
- Child Protection

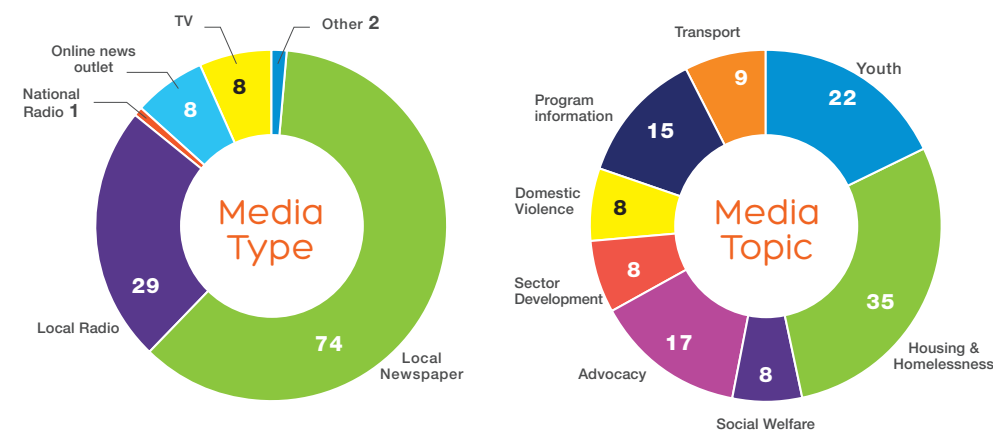
Places

In December 2015, we sold our old office building in Cathcart Street in Lismore. We consolidated most of our Lismore front line service teams in Keen Street and established a new office in Goonellabah for our Corporate Services and Development and Innovation staff. We operate from 13 offices in 9 locations around the Northern Rivers.

Communications and Marketing

In addition to supporting the marketing and promotion needs of our programs, we told brave stories of our resilient participants and advocated in the press and online on subjects of social inclusion and equity.

Our presence in the local, regional and national media included 122 stories during the year.



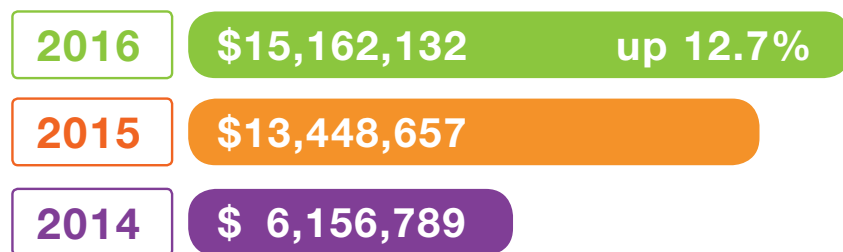
Online our main communication is via our website. We overhauled and re-launched our site in November 2015, to bring the technology up to date and enable better analysis of our stakeholders' needs. Digital communications continues to be a development area for our work.

Our main social media presence is on Facebook. During the year our 222 posts reached almost 48,000 Facebook users.

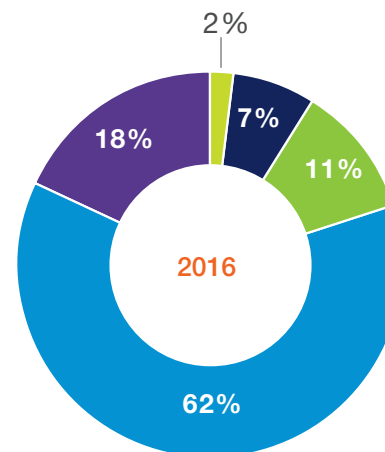
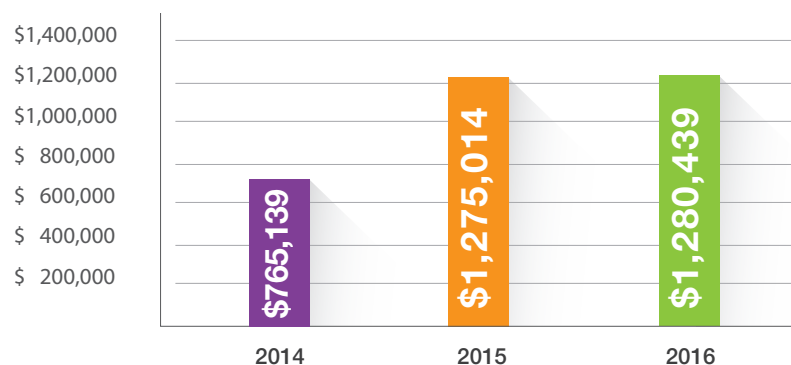
Financial Snapshot

Our balance sheet finished stronger at the end of a year of substantial growth. Strong key balance sheet ratios and our cash position place us well for further growth. Receipts from social enterprise, professional development, donations and other non-government sources were positive, at four per cent of total income. Our auditor's report was unqualified and the auditors were complimentary about our financial reporting, record keeping and overall fiscal management.

Annual Turnover

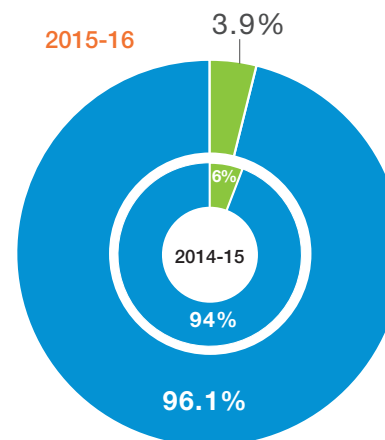


Members Equity



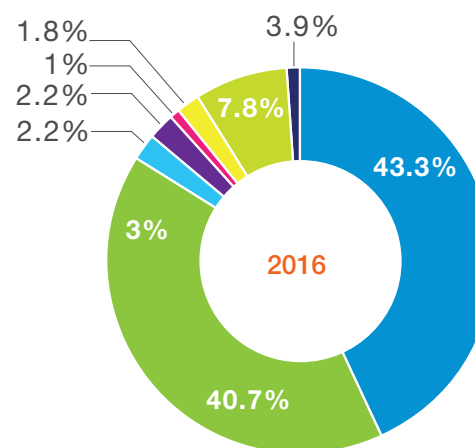
Staff by Work Area 2016

- Strategic Leadership
- Development & Innovation
- Administrative Support
- Student Placements & Volunteers
- Direct Service Delivery



Income Sources 2015-16

- Other Income
- Government Grants



Expenditure 2016

- Payments to funding partners
- Wages
- Motor vehicles
- Rent
- Assets
- Brokerage
- Other
- ICT

We are grateful for the ongoing support we receive from our partners.

Aboriginal Wellbeing Alliance
 ACON Northern Rivers
 ACSA (Aged Community Services Association)
 Byron Bay Community College
 CareWest
 Clarence Valley Housing & Support Interagency
 Community Mental Health Byron Bay
 Families in Focus Committees (Casino, Lismore, Clarence Valley – establishing Tweed)
 Family Support Services (Ballina/Byron, Clarence, Casino, Lismore, Kyogle, Tweed)
 FSG Australia
 Griffith University
 headspace (Lismore & Tweed)
 Intereach
 Legal Aid
 Liberation Larder Soup Kitchen
 Lismore City Council
 Lismore Financial Counselling Service
 Lismore Sexual Health Service
 Local Community Services Association (Peak)
 Mid Coast Communities
 Mullum Neighbourhood Centre
 Murwillumbah Community Centre
 National Disability Services (Peak)
 Nortec Employment and Training
 North Coast Community Housing
 North Coast TAFE
 Northern Rivers Community Gateway (Lismore NC)
 Northern Rivers Housing Network
 Northern Rivers Women and Children's Services
 Nullum House - Homeless drop in Centre, Murwillumbah
 Pathfinders Ltd
 Primary Health Network
 Richmond Valley Homelessness & Support Action Group
 Sherraton House
 Southern Cross University
 St Vincent de Paul Lismore Diocese
 The Buttery - Drug & Alcohol / Mental Health
 The Family Centre
 Trauma and Healing Centre
 Tweed Shire Housing & Homelessness & Support Action Group
 Tweed Shire Integrated Response to Domestic Violence Committee
 United Synergies
 University Department of Rural Health
 Women's Resource Centre Mullum
 YWCA

2018



Social Futures
Northern Rivers Social Development Council

JANUARY 01 2018							FEBRUARY 02 2018							MARCH 03 2018							APRIL 04 2018						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	26	27	28	1	2	3	4	27	28	29	30	31	31	1
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
29	30	31	1	2	3	4	26	27	28	1	2	3	4	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	5	7	8	9	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	30	1	2	3	4	5	6

MAY 05 2018							JUNE 06 2018							JULY 07 2018							AUGUST 08 2018						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
30	1	2	3	4	5	6	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	30	31	1	2	3	4	5
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
28	29	30	31	1	2	3	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	31	1	2
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

SEPTEMBER 09 2018							OCTOBER 10 2018							NOVEMBER 11 2018							DECEMBER 12 2018						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
27	28	29	30	31	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	31	1	2	3	4	5	6

Key funding partners



Australian Government
Department of Social Services



We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land where we live and work and their continuing connection to land, water, sea and community. We pay respects to Australia's First Peoples, to their unique and diverse cultures, and to Elders past, present and future.