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Annual Report

2006 - 2007

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Annual Report

2006 – 2007

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Vision

To deliver quality, flexible and relevant services to *support and strengthen families* with a child with a disability and to encourage and support children to fulfil their lives to the greatest possible extent.

Values

- Respect the uniqueness and integrity of families
- Value the identity and diversity of individual children and family members
- Foster the abilities of children and provide opportunities for them to obtain valued roles in the community
- Commit to FaBRiC's values and ethics and to the integrity of FaBRiC's programs

Ethics

- Trustworthiness
- Loyalty
- Honesty
- Integrity
- Initiative
- Creativity
- Commitment

Aims

- To respond to the individual needs of young people with disabilities and their families.
- To provide a service to young people with disabilities that is appropriate to their needs and meets their family's need for safe and reliable respite.
- To improve the quality of life of young people with disabilities and their families.
- To promote and foster inclusion of children/young people with disabilities within the community.
- To strengthen the families of young people with disabilities.

- To prevent the isolation of families caring for young people with disabilities by providing opportunities to increase their social activities across the community.
- To prevent, or delay, residential placement of young people with disabilities.
- To promote and protect the rights of young people with disabilities and their families.
- To provide respite care to young people with disabilities irrespective of gender, culture, religion, economic circumstances or disability.
- To achieve or exceed recognised quality assurance standards in providing respite care to young people with disabilities and their families.
- To encourage the participation of young people with disabilities and their families in FaBRiC and other community based programs which may suit their needs.
- To ensure FaBRiC maintains a professional level of accountability and continues to be a highly respected community based service provider.

Objectives

- To operate an effective and efficient community service organisation that has a high degree of service and financial accountability.
- To provide a respite care service that responds to the changing needs of new and existing clients.
- To equitably allocate respite care to families following an accurate assessment of their needs.
- To inform all potential clients and community agencies of the services provided by FaBRiC.
- To develop and maintain a team of qualified, experienced and motivated support workers to deliver respite care to young people with disabilities and their families.
- To protect the rights, privacy and confidentiality of young people with disabilities and their families and ensure they have access to equitable mechanisms for dealing with their concerns and complaints.
- To work with other community support agencies in providing complementary services to support young people with disabilities and their families.
- To ensure quality assurance standards of service meet the needs of young people with disabilities, their families and the community.
- To maintain and improve occupational health and safety standards for young people with disabilities, their families and support workers.

President's Report

It has been another demanding and successful year for FaBRiC. Demanding, in that we face on-going pressures of ensuring that we effectively deliver respite hours to our clients, that we appropriately match families to support workers for respite activities, and that we continue to identify ways to ensure we recruit and retain sufficient support workers to meet demand. Successful, in that FaBRiC's vision and practices have been recognised by the ACT Government with our successful tendering for additional funding to participate in broader programs such as AFFIRM and Recreational Activities (RAP), both of which are discussed in detail in the Executive Director's report.

We are constantly looking at ways to ensure sufficient funding and staffing to meet our clients' needs and to be able to expand our services. To this end we began discussions late last year with Respite Care on the possibility of an amalgamation between our two organisations. A report commissioned to explore the possibility of the merger strongly recommended it on the premise that it would create a stronger entity that is better equipped to provide quality services to clients and to meet future challenges. The respective Boards agreed to the merger in-principle and considerable work has been undertaken to be able to have a new combined entity operational by 1 January 2008. The three key principles of the merger are: i) the best interests of clients and staff are paramount, ii) the level of support, access to services and other rights that clients and staff currently receive will not change, and iii) that no-one will be disadvantaged by the merger. The amalgamation will also provide an opportunity for families to receive a whole of life service, enabling a seamless transition of young people to an adult program. Board members are extremely excited and committed about the opportunities such a merger can provide. A Special General Meeting will be held in the near future for members to vote on the proposal, and I strongly urge all members to support the proposal.

Unfortunately, due to ill health, Conny Ehlers stepped down as President in xxx (**CHERYL check month please**). I am pleased to advise that she is now much better and has resumed responsibilities as a non-executive member of the Board. I would like to thank all board members for the support they have given me since my appointment as President. I would also like to acknowledge the considerable time they have committed to, and direction they have provided, in the ongoing governance of current FaBRiC activities, and in advancing the merger proposal.

While the majority of Board members have nominated for a further term, we do have to say several farewells. Bob Englund stood down during the year due to family commitments. Bob has been a stalwart of the organisation and has contributed to the board in Executive positions, including as President over a xx (**Cheryl ?**) year period. His counsel will be sorely missed. Also, due to pressing work commitments, Judy Morris and Belinda Roberts have both decided not to seek re-election. They leave with our best wishes and thanks, in particular, for their significant contributions to our strategic direction, legal framework and client service delivery approaches.

Special thanks go to our Executive Director, Cheryl Daw, who got more than she may have bargained for this year, in continuing to lead the ever expanding FaBRiC operations so effectively, while also being the driving force for merger plans and most recently taking over the General Manager role at Respite Care Inc. It is a credit to the professional and committed team she has around her, that this has occurred without so much a skipped beat. Thank you to all our staff - management, administrative, co-ordinators and support workers - for your expert and obviously passionate commitment to FaBRiC's vision and objectives.

CATHERINE MCPHERSON

President

Executive Director's Report

FaBRiC experienced a number of highlights in 2006/07 most notably a continued focus on developing the *supporting & strengthening families* strategic direction, commencement of our new program, AFFIRM and progress towards a possible amalgamation with Respite Care ACT.

Service Delivery

- Respite Programs

Overall, 320 families and 355 children received 48,354 hours of support from the two respite programs funded by HACC. This represented a shortfall of 2,065 hours over the 12 months directly attributable to:

higher than expected "natural attrition" of families earlier in the year due in part to the successful transition of some families to Respite Care ACT because of the age of the young people;

increasing difficulties in recruitment and retention of Support Workers into the disability sector; and

Support Workers' availability to meet families' needs, particularly at times of most need, for example after school between the hours of 3pm and 6pm.

At its meeting in January 2007 and as a result of an anticipated shortfall of hours, the Board agreed to a plan of action to increase outputs, including increasing family numbers by six each month to address "natural attrition" and actioning a rigorous recruitment campaign to increase the number of Support Workers. This plan is continuing in the current financial year to ensure the contracted number of hours, as well as the shortfall experienced in 2006/07 is achieved.

A Priority Register was operational throughout the financial year and whilst there was little movement into the respite programs for families with a *low* or *medium* priority, families with a *high* or *very high* priority became current and received respite relatively quickly. To determine priority the child/young person's disability and the family's needs are assessed. The priority given to a family is regularly reviewed, however if a family experiences a change in circumstances, priority is altered at any time.

CoOrdinators continue to work closely with Therapy ACT, Carers ACT and other brokerage agencies in supporting families whilst waiting for respite and other options to become available.

- AFFIRM Program

In late 2006, FaBRiC successfully tendered to establish a new and innovative program, AFFIRM.

AFFIRM is an initiative of the ACT Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services to provide a family-centred flexible intensive response service for children/young people aged between 10 and 20 years with high and complex needs, and at risk of family breakdown.

Funding is for three years, targets a maximum of 12 families annually and whilst still in its infancy the program is evolving and has achieved a number of successes. At the time of writing six families are in the program and actively working with Family Support Practitioners.

Staffing & Administration

Professional growth and development of staff remained a priority in 2006/07. Achievements included a series of monthly workshops (ie, peg feed, MTP, OHS and manual handling, epilepsy, autism, PART) and induction for Support Workers. In-house training continued for Certificate IV and Diploma in Disability Studies. Other professional development opportunities with external training providers included Family Partnership Model training, Support Workers' Conference, Mental Health First Aid, Social Role Valorisation, and Reporting Abuse and Neglect.

The recruitment process and Performance Appraisal system implemented in the previous financial year continues to be refined, and is critical to the success of the recruitment campaign to attract and retain Support Workers and CoOrdinators.

Employment Conditions

In the lead up to the end of the financial year, draft Australian Workplace Agreements (AWA) were introduced to employees for implementation in July 2007. The purpose for introducing AWA is to ensure fairness, equity and pay parity for employees within the community sector following the introduction of the Federal Government's new industrial relations law.

The AWA replace two existing Awards and include all terms and conditions such as penalties and overtime, as well as providing above Award payments for travel.

OHS Awards

In October 2006 FaBRiC was successful in winning the category for *Best Solution to an Identified Workplace Health and Safety Issue* at the ACT Workcover Awards and was a Finalist at the National Safe Work Australia Awards in April 2007. The Award was for implementation of Medical Treatment Plans (MTP) introduced to reduce the risk of injury or illness to children/young people during respite sessions through the inappropriate administration of medications or other medical procedures.

Recreational Activities Program

Towards the end of the 2006/07 financial year, FaBRiC successfully tendered for funding to establish and implement a Recreational Activities Program (RAP) from the ACT Government's Carer Recognition Grants program.

RAP provides opportunities for families, their children/young people with disabilities and siblings to participate in sporting, recreational and other activities that are inclusive, and provide beneficial and positive outcomes, as well as providing respite for parents.

Thank you to the Lions Club of Canberra-Ginninderra for providing sponsorship over three years to this worthwhile program.

The program is in its infancy and it is hoped that if other ongoing sponsorship is found, RAP will be in a good position to continue providing opportunities to families and their children for years to come.

Acknowledgement

I wish to commend and thank our wonderful team of Support Workers and CoOrdinators for their dedication, support, enthusiasm, professionalism and creativity in working with families and children.

I also wish to commend and thank our wonderful Administration and Finance team for their dedication, support, enthusiasm and professionalism in keeping the operations of the organisation in such great shape.

Finally, thank you to the Board of Management, for their unfailing support and professionalism over the past 12 months, and for strongly positioning FaBRiC to address the challenges of 2007/08.

CHERYL DAW
Executive Director

Treasurer's Report

Since 2004, FaBRiC has drawn down on reserves. When preparing each annual budget, it was decided to draw down in order to increase service provision, to increase coordinator numbers to provide that service, and to provide training and development for support workers, coordinators and other staff to equip them with skills necessary to provide quality services.

I am delighted to report that in 2006-07, the Company, whilst continuing to maintain a high standard of service delivery of family care, achieved a surplus of \$24,513, the first one since 2003.

Reserves at the beginning of the year were \$306,983 and with the addition of this year's surplus, closed at \$332,101.

Operating revenue for 2006-07 was \$2,454,413, as detailed below.

Revenue Source	Amount \$	% of Total
Government Funding	2,196,183	89.5
Parents' Contributions	161,031	6.6
Services Purchased	62,208	2.5
Interest	31,300	1.3
Other Income	3,691	Less than 1%
TOTAL INCOME	2,454,413	100

In 2005-06, total revenue was \$2,319,632. The increase over last year was mainly attributed to government funding and parent contributions.

We delivered 48,350 hours of family care consisting of 38,200 hours to the Respite Care Program and 10,130 hours to the In-Home Support (R2) Program – around 8% below budget for the year.

Significant expenditures for the year were:

- Wages and associated costs for support workers, coordinators and management (as expected, continue to be the highest single expense);
- Insurances – business, directors and officers, public liability, malpractice and voluntary workers ; and
- Audit, consulting and legal fees.

FaBRiC has maintained a strong financial position in the lead-up to the merge with Respite Care which is expected to take place during the early part of 2008.

CATH SUTTON
Treasurer

Age & Gender of Care Recipients

Age	Male	Female
1	1	0
2	7	5
3	14	3
4	9	1
5	15	3
6	19	5
7	22	4
8	13	15
9	18	10
10	17	13
11	20	7
12	15	2
13	19	5
14	17	5
15	11	7
16	6	3
17	5	2
18	5	1
19	2	5
20	4	1
21	5	0
22	2	1
23	0	3

	24	1	0
	25	1	0
Total each			
ender		248	101
Total persons		349	0

Primary Disability of Care Recipients

Disability	Number
Acquired brain injury	2
Autism	101
Behavioural disability	13
Intellectual disability	68
Medical disability	11
Multiple disabilities	52
Physical disability	60
Sensory disability	7
Undefined disability	42
Total	356

Cultural Background of Clients

Country	Number
Australia	324
Austria	1
Bangladesh	1
Bosnia and Herzogovina	1

Chilean Antarctic Territory	1
Egypt	1
England	3
France	1
Germany	1
Inadequately described	8
India	2
New Zealand	3
Romania	2
Switzerland	1
United States of America	1
Undefined country	5
Total	356

Cultural Background of Care Recipients

Country	Number
Australia	257
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1
Canada	3
Channel Islands	1
Egypt	1
England	11
Finland	2
France	1
Ghana	1
Hong Kong	3
Inadequately described	3
India	3
Italy	2

Lebanon	3
Malaysia	2
Malta	1
Mexico	1
New Zealand	4
Philippines	1
Russian Federation	1
Scotland	5
Serbia	1
Slovakia	1
South Africa	3
South America (NFD)	1
Southern and East Africa (NFD)	1
Sri Lanka	2
Thailand	1
Ukraine	1
United States of America	3
Vietnam	1
Undefined country	1
Total	323

