

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY We at Port Stephens Family and Neighbourhood Services acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live. We recognise the Worimi Peoples continued connection to this land and we pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging.





OUR LOGO

The artwork for the leaves on our tree in our logo was designed by local Aboriginal artist **Tom Croft**.

The fingerprint design symbolises identity, belonging, and the unique connection each person has to Country, Culture, and Community.

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ABOUT US

Port Stephens Family and Neighbourhood Services is an incorporated not for profit organisation providing community services in the Port Stephens LGA.

We offer support and information services that include Child, Youth & Family Counselling and Casework, Homelessness Services, limited Transitional Accommodation,

Neighbourhood Centre Drop In, Parent's & Carer's Groups, Children's and Young People's Groups, Domestic Violence Support including Safe Houses, Aboriginal Culture Groups, Playtime Groups, Outreach Programs, Financial Assistance, Financial Counsellor, Home to School Mentoring, Youth Centre and more.

Port Stephens Family and Neighbourhood Services is an amalgamation of Port Stephens Family Support Service and the Raymond Terrace Neighbourhood Centre; both centres delivering service to the Port Stephens Community since 1987.

Proudly funded by the Department of Communities and Justice, Department of Social Services, Brotherhood of St Lawrence, Indigenous Advancement Strategy and Hunter New England Primary Care.

PSFaNS is a strong advocate for social wellbeing in our local community and has formed close partnerships with various government and non/government agencies with similar objectives. These partnerships give opportunity to enhance outcomes and social conditions in the community particularly in respect of vulnerable groups and individuals.



BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

It's been another year where we have seen overwhelming demand for service that we do not have the resources (funding/staff) to meet.
Responding as best we can, within this context, to the humanitarian crisis of homelessness has stretched us to the limit.

Domestic and Family Violence continues to be a large part of our work and lack of adequate systemic support adds to the complexity and the injustice of what children continue to have to live with.

Our staff remain as committed as ever to this community and we are so grateful for how they show up every day to do this work.

And importantly, every day we meet with amazing Port Stephens community members who support our work by volunteering, by donating food and funds, by supporting other community members to access our programs, and by participating in our programs themselves.

Thank you for your support, Tim Mizzi **CHAIRPERSON Tim Mizzi**

VICE CHAIRPERSON

Giacomo Arnott

SECRETARY

Helen Smyth

TREASURER

Chris Baguley

MEMBERS

Bronwyn Leary Nicki Saroca

Our commitment to our communities

Port Stephens Family and
Neighbourhood Services commitment is
to know, understand and leverage off the
strengths of the existing communities to
eliminate social and economic
disadvantage across the Port Stephens
region. We will continue to work with the
many communities across our region
(Aboriginal, Women's, Families, Youth,
Education, Business, Government etc) to
ensure all people can live lives which are
satisfying, meaningful and connected
with their communities.

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OUR VISION

A just community that includes and acts

OUR PURPOSE

Working with and for the communities of Port Stephens to eliminate social disadvantage



OUR VALUES

We believe in:



COMMUNITY

We acknowledge that the Port Stephens area is made up of many communities. We believe that building communities in ways that acknowledge and respect differences is the key to building healthy and inclusive lifestyles. Creating opportunities to link up communities to address social and economic disadvantage is our focus.



COURAGE

We take risks. We believe all good things that we have come to value in our communities have been born out of courage and follow through. We won't ridicule ideas and like to encourage everyone to give it a go. Redressing social and economic disadvantage needs us all to be courageous.



CREATIVITY

We encourage and value creativity. We are open to learning and like to encourage all of us to think out of the box. We are always aware of available resources and look to sharing what we have with others. We value new ideas and would like others to expand on ours.



RESPECT

For us, this means being honest. Empathic. Allowing time to listen and speaking and acting positively. We aim to "practice what we preach" and always follow through on what we have committed to. We support communities to accept each other's differences and work together at points of shared needs.



a look back... HOW MUCH DID WE DO?

Groups and Programs

- 4 x Tuning in to Kids Programs;
- 3 x Tuning in to Teens Programs;
- 4 x Women Speak Programs;
- 2 x Rent It to Keep It Programs;
- 6 x Playtime groups weekly;
- 4 x after school groups weekly;
- · 2 x weekly Art Therapy groups (young people and adults);
- 1 x weekly Youth drop in;
- 1 x Youth LGBTQIA drop in once a fortnight;
- 3 x Women's Multicultural Groups;
- · Youth school holiday day camps;

Financial Assistance

- 30 x Work & Development Orders with \$21,403.93 in credits applied;
- \$194,690 of Emergency Relief vouchers;
- \$15,580 for Energy account payment assistance scheme vouchers (with more available as needed);
- \$1,598 of Hunter Water PAS Vouchers;
- \$4,155 of assistance for PSC council rates;
- 800 Second Bite hampers given out;
- 950 Oz Harvest hampers were given out;
- 494 Grocery hampers given out;
- 100 Christmas foodbank hampers given out;
- 220 Christmas gift packages for children and young people were given out;
- 57 x Wesnet Telstra Pre-Paid phones given out to families escaping DV;
- 20 x phones for youth in DV given out;
- \$1000 Wesnet Uber Credit for women and children escaping Domestic and Family Violence;
- 22 households signed up for 2 years free student broadband;
- 250 dignity bags given out;
- 300+ trauma backpacks given out to children and young people;
- 50 school backpacks given out
- 96 pairs of winter pj's given out to families;
- 40 x free 12 month Optus SIM cards given out to clients experiencing DV and homelessness;
- 20 free car seats given out to parents/carers;

Client Engagement

- · Child & Family Support 698 children and families with 2728 engagements;
- Child & family Support (Tilligerry) 153 children and families:
- Youth & Family Support 432 young people and families with 1069 engagements;
- Youth in schools 197 with 1367 engagements;
- 977 engagements via our Tilligerry Family Network site which included groups, counselling / mentoring and food assistance;
- 735 people accessed our Homelessness service and an additional 309 people given information and/or referrals;
- 11 transitional properties this financial year providing transitional accommodation for 16 adults (including 7 young parents in our Young Parent Transitional Program), 4 young people and 23 children.

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- 2 safe houses-1 x short term and 1 x 3 month crisis. This financial year has seen 9 women and 15 children (in short term) and 2 women and 7 children (in the 3 month). Unfortunately due to the housing crisis it is increasingly difficult to secure accommodation post crisis stays and stays are often longer.
- 49 children and their families accessed HIPPY each week;
- 773 clients accessing Staying Home Leaving Violence Program (which included 398 children);
- 1476 people accessed ERF (some more than once)
- 3955 people accessed our Neighbourhood Centre (some more than once).

Staff and Partners

- 3 x Aboriginal traineeships in Community Services
- 17 full time staff & 22 part time staff (2-4 days per
- 9 x social work student placements;
- 32 x visiting services regularly used our rooms for training, access visits, meeting clients with a total of 340 x individual uses of our rooms;
- Manage 4 Facebook and 3 Instagram pages to engage with community.





Partnerships, Auspice & Refuge

- 2 x Safe Houses for Families escaping DV;
- Hosted 4 x Prosecutors Clinics;
- Partnership with Hunter Water enabling us to negotiate reductions in rates for homeowners/mortgagees;
- Partnership Friends with Dignity and Share the Dignity to furnish/stock homes for women leaving DFV, provide school bags with school items, dignity bags for women;
- Partnership with WeCare Connect for children and young people's clothing and supplies;
- Partnership with Headspace for outreach at the Neighbourhood Centre;
- Partnership with Centrelink Community Outreach for payment
- Partnership with St Johns Anglican Church for weekly food
- Partnership with Raymond Terrace Rotary for food help and household donations;
- Partnership with Hunter Valley Project for financial counselling;
- · Partnership with ATO for tax help;
- Partnership with Hume Housing for DFV support;
- Partnership with Health for onsite Pediatrician;
- Partnership with ALS for onsite legal support;
- Partnership with Northcott for onsite Early Childhood NDIS;
- Auspiced and chaired Port Stephens DV Committee;
- Hosted Hunter Region DV Committee and Port Stephen's Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Contemporary Challenges Forum;
- Successful bid for Port Stephens Refuge (coming mid 2026).

PSFaNS is an evidence informed service. We deliver evidence based practice. Staff participated in individual and group supervision and case reviews in keeping with our commitment to reflecting on and developing practice. In 2024-2025 staff were trained in:

Coercive Control

Trauma informed Practice

Child Protection

Child Development

First Aid Installation of Child Restraints Infection Control Safety Planning Suicide and Self Harm Prevention And much more...



A snapshot of our evaluations

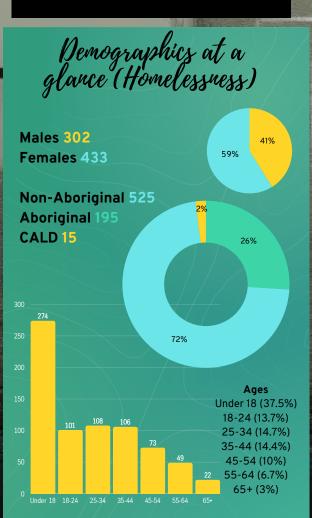
- 89% of parents/caregivers reported that since attending Playtime they have learnt of a service, resource or activity in the community for children and families
- 92% of families reported that they learnt new things about positive parenting in our parenting programs
- 88% of families improved in parent/caregiver warmth and empathy towards their child/ren
- 85% children at school entry age had participated in formal early childhood education at least two sessions a week for at least a year prior school
- 81% of young people said their most important goal was achieved in counselling/ casework
- 93% referring services reported that PSFaNS is responsive to community needs
- 95% referring services found the staff at PSFaNS to be helpful, friendly and knowledgeable
- 94% of Staying Home Leaving Violence clients said because of the service I feel safer
- 100% of Staying Home Leaving Violence clients said because of the service I feel my children are safer
- At the start of Women Speak, **90%** of participants blamed themselves in various degrees for the abuse that happened to them. By completion of the program, this number reduced to **15%**.
- 100% of Women Speak participants said they now knew the difference between a healthy and unhealthy relationship on completion of the program.

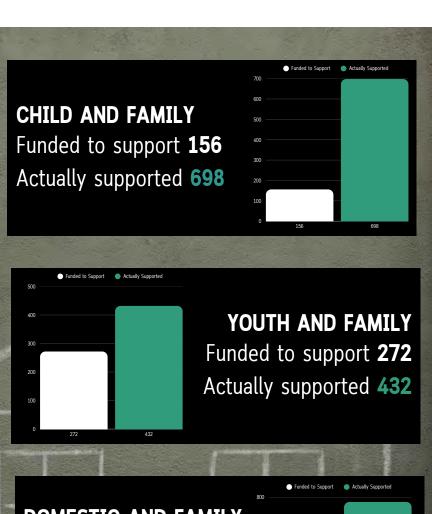
OUR IMPACT

Capacity vs Funding

Domestic and Family Violence Services and Homelessness Services are grossly underfunded. We continue to stretch our resources to ensure people in crisis are not turned away, but this comes at significant strain to our service.









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Brain Injury after strangulation. Following from our Brain Injury Roundtable with HNEH and DFV Consortium and led by our service, the Brain Injury working party were successful in gaining funding from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) to develop a Model of Care Approach for those Impacted by Traumatic Brain Injury through Domestic Family Violence. Part of this will be trialling a clinic in our area. The initiative represents a crucial step in closing the care gap for women and children whose injuries from violence are too often hidden in plain sight.



See the Survivor Video here



Anti-Racism Symposium. Manager Sue Pollock and Assistant Manager Ann Fletcher attended. They heard from some amazing minds including: Prof. Chelsea Watego, Dr David Singh, Kevin Yow Yee, Dr Randa Abdel-Fattah, Uncle Wayne "Coco" Wharton, Dr Amy McQuire and so many more. It was such a welcoming and loving space and there was much learning, unlearning and strength in the room. What we heard reinforces our service's work to disrupt and question the systems that govern and oppress our clients' lives, to keep advocating for our client's rights to a self-determined future where their basic needs are reliably met - and, in particular, for our youngest clients.



Hunter Community Alliance Assembly. The event was attended by a diverse group, including state and federal members. Renae represented PSFaNS in the absence of Assistant Manager Ann and said many attendees approached her to commend the great work we are doing in the community. Ann wrote an incredible speech highlighting the challenges faced by stretched services in the Hunter.



Hunter Domestic Violence Consortium. Our service is proud to be working alongside partners in the Hunter Domestic Violence Consortium as part of a media campaign calling on the NSW Government to increase base line funding for domestic and family violence services. This campaign is essential to ensuring that the services we provide-often life-saving-can be sustained and expanded to meet growing demand.



Business Port Stephens. PSFaNS was officially announced as a new member. We sat at the same table as Port Stephens Council representatives and used the opportunity to network and build connections.

Port Stephens Women in Business. PSFaNS Ann Fletcher was selected as the Port Stephens Women in Business Member of the Month.



Women who have been strangled and beaten are living with untreated concussion

10 June 2025



New \$7.2m haven for women and children fleeing domestic violence

21 January 2025



Framework to fill the gap: New response to domestic and family violence

3 October 2024



Families desperate for help: Residents doing it tough is at its worst

1 August 2024



'Need to stop the cycle:' Raymond Terrace rally for domestic violence awareness

3 December 2024



Rotary Club of Raymond Terrace to host domestic and family violence awareness event

27 November 2024



Mutual Bank helps charity spread warmth in Port Stephens this winter

Federal funding a welcome boost to Port Stephen's housing supply

9 July 2024



Active Fitness Medowie AGL Hunter Anytime Fitness Raymond Terrace Bakers Delight Raymond Terrace **Bannisters Port Stephens** Belgravia Leisure Birri Li Aboriginal Birthing Service Boomerang Bags Boomerang Park Bunnings Heatherbrae Capital Chemist Raymond Terrace Centrelink Club Lemon Tree Coles Medowie Commonwealth Bank Raymond Terrace Department of Communities and Justice NSW safer together Department of Defence PAC NSW Dowling Property Raymond Terrace Financial Counselling Hunter Valley Project Inc Fingal Bay Sports Club Friends With Dignity Harvey Norman Port Stephens Headspace Newcastle HIPPY Australia **Hume Housing Hunter Heroes** Hunter New England Health Child & Family Team Hunter New England Health Young Parent Network Hunter New England Health First Steps Parenting Hunter Region No Interest Loans Scheme (HRNILS)

Hunter New England Health Child & Family Team Hunter New England Health Young Parent Network Hunter New England Health First Steps Parenting Hunter Region No Interest Loans Scheme (HRNILS) Hunter River High School Hunter Tenants Advice & Advocacy Service **Innovative Computer Solutions** Irrawang High School Irrawang Public School Juvenile Justice Karuah Local Aboriginal Land Council Lakeside Leisure Centre Legal Aid Lions Club of Raymond Terrace Little Beginnings Medowie Medowie Family Clinic Medowie Pre-Junior Guides Motto Farm Auto Motto Farm Motel Murray Consulting Solutions Nelson Plaza Clinic Newlife Church Nextra Newsagency Raymond Terrace NSW Police Domestic Violence Liaison Officers **NSW Police Force** Oz Harvest Panthera Group **PCYC** Port Stephens Council Port Stephens Domestic Violence Committee Port Stephens Examiner Port Stephens Home Schooling Group

Port Stephens News of the Area Port Stephens Police Quirky Quilters Group Ramada Resort Shoal Bay Raymond Terrace Bowling Club Raymond Terrace Laundrette Raymond Terrace Men's Shed Raymond Terrace Public School Raymond Terrace Senior Citizens Regional Australia Bank Tea Gardens Rotary Club of Raymond Terrace R&R Property Salt Ash Home Schooling Group Salvation Army Raymond Terrace SecondRite Service NSW Share the Dignity St John's Anglican Church Survivors R Us Inc Susan Roskell Toy Drive Tanilba Bay Fire Brigade Tanilba Bay Public School Terrace Central Terry White Tanilba Bay The Backpack Venture The Learning Terrace The Mutual Bank Raymond Terrace Thouwalla Family Centre Warlga Ngurra We Care Connect Wesnet



PSFaNS collaborates with other services to enable community to access multiple supports in one location.

Services available at PSFaNS via visiting services providing free services to community are:

- Financial Counselling
- Legal Advice
- Help with Centrelink
- Youth Mental Health Counselling
- Free birth Certificates
- Counselling and women's services
- Tax help
- Young Parents Network
- Parenting Programs
- Early Childhood NDIS
- Paediatrician
- Early Childhood Health checks (via Playgroups)

















DONATIONS & COMMUNITY Thank you































- AGL Hunter
- · Anna Bay Public School
- Boomerang Bags
- Coles Medowie
- Comm Bank Raymond Terrace
- Dept. of Defence Social Club
- Friends with Dignity
- Harvey Norman Port Stephens
- Heart and Soul
- Homeschoolers of Port Stephens Raymond Terrace Bowling Club

- Kate Washingtons Office
- Lakeside Leisure Centre
- Medowie Mums
- Murray Consulting Solutions
- Mutual Bank of Raymond Terrace
- Panthera Group
- Port Stephens News of the Area
- Raymond Terrace Arts & Crafts

- · Rotary Club of Raymond Terrace
- Share the Dignity
- Susan Roskell Toy Drive
- Terrace Central
- The Learning Terrace
- WeCare Connect
- + many individual community members...

SERVICE STAFF 2024-2025



Manager Sue Pollock

Assistant Manager Ann Fletcher

ABORIGINAL

Team Leader

Aboriginal Programs

Emma

HIPPY

Angelique

Sarah M

Nina

SHS

Team Leader

Kvlee

Senior Caseworkers

Nichola

Adrian Caseworkers

Jess S

Blake

Emily

Renea

Casework Support

Karen Kristiana

Team Leaders

Ellen

Sarah Q

Senior Caseworker

Barbara

Caseworkers

Rebecca

Kadina

Amanda

Charna

Children's Casework

Support

Karen

Team Leader

Andrew

Senior Caseworkers

Amy

Danielle (TFN)

Mardi

Kelly

Sarah W

Caseworkers

Liz

Jordyn

Miranda

Julia

Casework Support

Sarah M

Children's Group Worker

Miranda (TFN)

Louise (TFN)

Children's Group Assistant

Kye (TFN)

PROGRAMS/HIPPY

Rachel

Domaneca

Fmma

Domaneca

FINANCE & ADMIN

Finance & Admin Manager Max

Reception & Admin

Jo

Clare

Reception Support

Jullianne

Community Development

Lisa Ronneberg

VOLUNTEERS

Our work would not be possible without the dedication of our incredible volunteers. They give their time and energy in so many ways. Assisting our Emergency Relief team, preparing food for schools and groups, supporting our children's and youth programs, gardening, and much more.

Your commitment, generosity, and hard work allow us to deliver exceptional support and services to our community. For this invaluable contribution, we want to say a big and heartfelt thank you.













International Women's Day - We're committed to our community—especially to those who aren't always invited to the table, or who feel that even if they were, they wouldn't belong.

This year we held our second International Women's Day event, created for women who continue to show up for life while carrying the weight of challenges and injustices. Many who came last year returned with more confidence, knowing what to expect. And once again—the result was the same: they didn't want to leave.

That speaks volumes about their courage and resilience, and equally about our staff. With warmth, respect, and care, they open doors that might otherwise feel closed, creating spaces where women feel safe, valued, and never less than.

Queer Formal - We held our very first Queer Formal for young people—and what a night it was!

The event created a safe and welcoming space where young people could show up as their authentic selves, celebrate with friends, and feel completely accepted for who they are. From the music and dancing to the joy on their faces, the night was filled with colour, confidence, and community.

The success of the evening is a testament to the courage of the young people who came, and to the commitment of our staff and partners who worked to make it a success.

Wear It Purple Day - our team proudly joins the Wear it Purple movement by donning purple to show our support for rainbow young people. By standing together, we send a clear message that every young person deserves to feel safe, celebrated, and respected for who they are and who they are becoming.

What began as a student-led response to the heartbreaking loss of young lives to bullying and harassment has grown into a powerful international movement of love, visibility, and acceptance. We're proud to be part of a day that shines a light on inclusion and reminds young people that they are never alone.

Be proud. Be you. You are celebrated.

Hunter Homeless Connect Day - a highlight on

the community calendar, growing bigger and better each year. Our service has proudly participated for over a decade, and our stall is always a favourite— well known for its beautiful hand-knitted scarves, beanies, and blankets generously made and donated by our wonderful local community. The event is a valuable opportunity to network with partner services, connect with clients from across the Hunter, and provide information and referrals in a welcoming and supportive environment.

Refuge - Excitement is building as the Core and Cluster refuge for women and children breaks ground.

The Core and Cluster refuge model promotes independent living by providing self-contained accommodation next to a 'core' of support, offering access to services such as counselling, legal assistance, education, and employment support.





Paris Copenses





HIPPY Graduation - We celebrated the achievements of our 2024 HIPPY families with a joyful graduation day, complete with some very special guests ••• •• who made the day even more memorable!

The Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) is a free, two-year, home-based early learning and parenting program. It empowers parents and carers to be their child's first teacher, building skills and confidence as children get ready for school. We are so proud of the commitment and growth shown by our 2024 graduates – both children and parents – and can't wait to see what they achieve next.

Reflect and Reset - Skills, awareness and support for change for men in the Hunter/Newcastle area was recently launched. PSFaNS Adrian pictured making a presentation at the event.

The resource and QR code, provides men a link to the Hunter Men's Projects Network website. You can find local support services, groups, programs, tips and tools to assist men to REFLECT AND RESET with their concerns with what might be happening in their relationships, their behaviours and how this might be impacting on them and others. You can access the resource via

www.huntermensprojectsnetwork.au

Staff Development Days at Murook- PSFaNS staff were recently treated to a Staff Development Day at the Murrook Cultural Centre. These days are an important opportunity for our team to reflect on practice, build new skills, and learn more about the partnerships and services that strengthen our work.

We've been fortunate to hear from a wide range of guest presenters, including Community Disability Alliance Hunter, Immigrant Women's Speakout Association of NSW, Aboriginal Legal Service, ACON, Yaaro Discover Reliable Care Services, PCYC, and FISH.

Murrook are always wonderful hosts, providing a delicious Bush Tucker menu and offering rich cultural experiences both onsite. We are grateful for the chance to come together in such a meaningful setting.

Multicultural Group - Back by popular demand, we introduced a new Women's Multicultral monthly group after a successful one-off event.

Women and children from many cultural backgrounds came together to share yummy food, laughter, and friendship. It is such a joyful group, and we look forward to it every month!

Youth Week - Youth Week is one of our favourite times of the year! We absolutely love seeing the fun, the energy, and all the amazing community involvement. Our Youth Team continues to blow us away with their creativity and passion!







"They are are really good with the kids and such great help with everything and great to talk to when in a bad spot or just need help with anything they are always there for u".



If they can help they will. Ive needed there help a couple of times over the past few years. Very understanding and easy to deal with. If you need help pop on in im sure you will be blown away with the help they offer. The best people who actually care about us locals.



This is the best playgroup I have attended. Interaction with the children and parents is exceptional.



"Thank you Clare & staff, first time in my life I have ever had to use services like this & the food hamper that Clare put together helped me through the in between jobs".



Always Wonderful,Caring people.



The men's health worker has helped me through probably the toughest time in my life great all round team very friendly and helpful. Very large variety of community programs and services here.



Thank you for making me feel welcome. It's hard to ask for help, and I am not one that usually asks, but I felt comfortable and was amazed by all the support!



They great people who work there and they try there best at helping people in need



Amazing people very kind and helpful



have been involved with Port Stephens support for over five years going to play groups, culture groups and even parenting advice groups. All the staff have always been amazing



PSFaNS is proudly funded by the Department of Communities and Justice, Department of Social Services, Brotherhood of St Lawrence, Indigenous Advancement Strategy and Hunter New England Primary Care.











SUCCESSFUL SMALL GRANTS

Community Building Partnership \$5,302.00 Shade Sail for Mallabula Hall.

\$4,000.00
Website for Port Stephens Domestic and Family
Violence Committee.

Port Stephens Council

Transport for NSW \$30,000.00

Staff training in installation of child restraints and provided free car restraints to families with children in the community.

Port Stephens Council NAIDOC Funding \$500.00 NAIDOC Week events.

NSW Club Grants
\$20,500.00
'Eat Thrive Survive'
Food for youth centre for groups and food education and emergency pantry for school lunches.