

**GROWING TO  
A SUSTAINABLE  
FUTURE**



# A year of growth, investment and change

**Every day, FMC Mediation and Counselling helps a growing number of people take back control over their lives.**

We have been able to do this for over 31 years because we stay true to our values – helping people build better relationships. In 2015/16, we provided expert support to more than 7,200 families – an increase of over 15% from the previous year – who were dealing with relationship issues and other related challenges.

Last August, FMC launched the expanded Financial Counselling and Capability services. Additional government funding enabled us to provide financial counselling to more than three-and-a-half times the number of clients this past year than the year before.

Our face-to-face counselling program, complemented by our unique Financial First Aid online service and mobile app, has given many people easy access to instant assistance when they need it most. The feedback has been hugely positive with one site visitor calling it, “simply brilliant.”

FMC has also added a new government-funded Family Mental Health Support program to its service offering, which has been in high demand since its launch.

In terms of corporate performance, we achieved a modest financial surplus this past year whilst also expanding our services, investing in innovation and capacity building, and moving closer towards our strategic goals.

FMC’s 2015–2020 strategic plan focuses on diversifying its services in response to the community’s evolving needs and updating how we deliver those services through better use of technology. We are thrilled to report that we made great progress in both areas last year.

Another strategic priority is to build FMC’s research capacity so we can have a deeper understanding of how our work impacts our clients’ lives. This will help guide the continuous improvement of existing services and design of new ones. In fact, through our partnership with Social Ventures Australia, we have developed a groundbreaking outcomes measurement and management toolkit, and look forward to using it in our daily work.

We also keep a keen eye on external influences that impact our work. One such influence is the anticipated change in the current paradigm of government block funding that we have seen in the aged care and disability sectors. We now observe a developing focus on consumer directed care. In moving forward, FMC is expanding its external focus and actively seeking opportunities for partnerships and collaborations.

Another influence involves demographic changes such as Australia’s ageing population and the rapid urban growth around metropolitan Melbourne. We foresee

a greater need for our Seniors Conflict Resolution service and unfortunately, our new Elder Abuse Prevention service, which is currently offered pro bono. Urban growth will raise demand for our services in the West where we are already expanding through our Wyndham office.

FMC is responding to the grave and unabating presence of family violence in our society by adapting our services. We have further enhanced our intake process to ensure early detection of the presence of family violence and provide an appropriate specialist service response and referral.

Considering that up to 45% of our clients from certain services experience some form of family violence, we have introduced a Specialist Financial Counselling service and for our FDR clients, a Pre-Mediation Service to safe start Mediation. In parallel to this we have strengthened our partnerships through the Women’s Legal Service.

For all this to come to fruition, however, FMC needs to be sustainable in the long-term. So we are establishing a commercial growth area within the organisation.

Meanwhile, there have been some key people changes at FMC over the past year. In March, Samantha Kolasa joined as Executive Manager Client Services, and Albert Li was appointed to the newly created role of Strategic Commercial Manager.

Chief Executive Officer, Kim O’Neill, left FMC in June after four years at the helm to take up a new appointment elsewhere. The Board acknowledged Kim’s contribution to FMC with thanks and wished her well for her new role. Graeme Westaway has been appointed Acting CEO as we continue searching for a new CEO.

FMC welcomed Natalie Hughes and Brendan Rowsell as new directors in November 2015. They join Michelle Lac, Ashley Saltzman, Peter Saunders and David Speyer on the Board, chaired by Gerlinde Scholz.

Finally, we want to take this opportunity to thank the directors, executive team, front line practitioners and support staff for their work, commitment and professionalism. We also thank our funding partners whose support makes FMC’s work possible.

The report that follows summarises FMC activities and outcomes achieved in 2015/16. We commend it to you for your interest.



**Gerlinde Scholz**



**Graeme Westaway**

**Gerlinde Scholz**  
Chair of the Board of Directors

**Graeme Westaway**  
Acting Chief Executive Officer

# FMC Outcomes

## How can you demonstrate you are successful?

How do we know if we are making a difference? Measuring impact helps FMC and our team to think about what we are doing well and where we could make improvements to help people take back control over their lives.

FMC is committed to collecting and evaluating client outcomes to ensure they are provided with the best possible solutions.

There has also been a move towards outcomes reporting across the sector, and in government contracts.

Social Ventures Australia (SVA) works to improve the lives of people in need, through funding, investment, and advice. Their support of partners across sectors has increased their social impact. SVA are a non-profit organisation established in 2002 by The Benevolent Society, The Smith Family, Work Ventures and AMP Foundation.

In September 2015, FMC engaged SVA to review its management of client outcomes and strengthen its overall outcomes management approach.

SVA and FMC identified areas for improvement, such as a review of program logic models, prioritisation of outcomes and further development of an outcomes framework. SVA Consulting worked with FMC's Research and Evaluation service team to review and refine program logics and develop an Outcomes Management Framework for two programs.

A project timeline was formulated to ensure the changes FMC make are sustainable and achievable.

### Achievements to date

#### 2015-16

- Program logic models for all five program areas have been reviewed and refined including an overarching FMC program logic
- Staff engagement - staff across all levels of the organisation have been involved in the Framework development which is overseen by the FMC Research and Evaluation service team
- A staff workshop was run in October 2015 to build staff knowledge and capacity for outcomes measurement

#### 2016-17

- Began collecting client experience data from a kiosk-style iPad located at 6 reception areas
- Development of an a Outcomes Management Framework for programs which includes revised client outcome measurement tools and key performance indicators

### What's next

#### 2016-17

- Trial the Outcomes Measurement Framework across two program areas and two sites
- Roll out the Outcomes Measurement Framework for all programs in early 2017
- Share the Framework with the Department of Social Services and other partners, to support the development of managing to outcomes practice across the sector

#### 2017-18

- Undertake an SROI analysis on a priority service or program
- Evolve the Outcomes Management Framework
- Redesign services as required depending on the Outcomes data received



# Operational & Financial Highlights



15%

Growth in client numbers

Achievement of \$6,014 surplus

92%

Client satisfaction

Development of a 5-year strategic plan for the period 2015 - 2020

33%

Increase in social media following

Implementation of Client outcome reporting

25%

Growth in client fees 2014/15 to 2015/16

Implementation of Growth projects to diversify revenue base and pilot of fee for service models

21

Locations

100% Compliance

Launch of a new website [financialfirstaid.org.au](http://financialfirstaid.org.au)

Elder Abuse Prevention  
Creation of a Seniors Partnership with Seniors Rights Victoria

Investment into the business for long-term sustainability



Creation of commercial area

Review and subsequent Enhancement of Family Violence Support services

# FMC Board



**Gerlinde Scholz**  
Chair of the Board  
of Directors

Gerlinde Scholz is a not-for-profit sector director and advisor with extensive executive experience. In her executive career, primarily in higher education and medical research organisations, she has been responsible for fundraising and other income generation, organisational growth and capacity building, governance and strategy. As a consultant, she advises a diverse range of non-profit clients on these issues.



**Natalie Hughes**  
Director

Natalie has led companies through business expansion with an emphasis on new service development and new markets. Starting her career as an accountant then marketing and strategic management roles in leisure, travel and tourism. Natalie is a strategy consultant and founder of a mentoring business for young women.

Joined the Board in 2015.



**Michelle Lac**  
Deputy Chair

Michelle is passionate about innovation, education and technology and strives to make a contribution to the community. Michelle's professional experience spans over 19 years in higher education teaching and research, management consulting professional services and serving on not-for-profit Boards. Michelle holds a Bachelor of Information Technology.



**Brendan Rowswell**  
Director

Brendan Rowswell is a Director at a leading public affairs firm whose clients are major Australian companies across many sectors. He regularly represents not-for-profit clients in their dealings with all levels of governments. Brendan was previously Public Affairs Manager at a Victorian industry association and adviser to a federal Member of Parliament for two terms of Government.

Joined the Board in 2015.



**Ashley Saltzman**  
Director

Ashley is a commercial mediator and specialist in recovering projects in distress. Ashley is the Commercial Escalations Executive at global software company SAP where he manages all commercial disputes and escalations across Australia/New Zealand.



**Peter Saunders**  
Director and  
Company Secretary

Peter Saunders is a corporate lawyer with Thomson Geer, specialising in corporate and financing transactions. Peter has many years' experience in executive leadership, finance and consulting roles and has also practiced as a chartered accountant.



**David Speyer**  
Director and Treasurer

David Speyer is Chief Financial Officer at Vision Australia. David has 22 years of extensive senior executive experience in finance, mergers and acquisitions, business reorganisations in leadership roles in the not-for-profit and corporate sectors.

# Our People



## FMC is only able to demonstrate and live its values through the strong commitment of its terrific staff.

In 2015–2016 we were extremely happy to welcome an influx of new staff into our expanded suite of services. We strived to recruit people who are values driven, socially minded and who will strengthen our innovative and dynamic culture. We had a 15 per cent increase in staff numbers and have greatly benefited from the skills and broad life insights that these new people have brought to the organisation. Our staff were able to work together across our expanded geographical presence and consistently ensured that we have a client satisfaction rate of over 92 per cent.

Our staff are highly qualified with more than 60 per cent having a postgraduate tertiary qualification. We maintain an emphasis on continual improvement from research and outcomes measurement to ongoing development of staff knowledge and skills. Staff are encouraged to pursue further professional development in their practice or expand their expertise into new areas of practice.

A common theme in the last year was the need to raise sensitivity to the presence of family violence. Workshops

were held on risk assessment, referrals and embedding improvements into our practice. Complimenting this were a number of staff symposiums focusing on Family Violence and Legally Assisted Family Dispute Resolution.

Through pilot programs and partnerships we were able to develop innovative a new practice in the areas of Seniors Conflict Resolution and Elder Abuse prevention. The focus of the practice is to ensure that the older person is ultimately able to express their voice in the conflict resolution. This newly developed service model was then further enhanced by integrating it into a program logics model and outcomes framework. Staff shone in their presentations on Elder Abuse at the fourth National Elder Abuse Conference in Melbourne.

We streamlined elements of our established Performance Planning and Management system in response to feedback from our Program Leaders. This strengthened the quality and efficiency of our review process and in turn, gave us the confidence to meet the expectations of our funders and the achievement of benchmarked client outcomes.

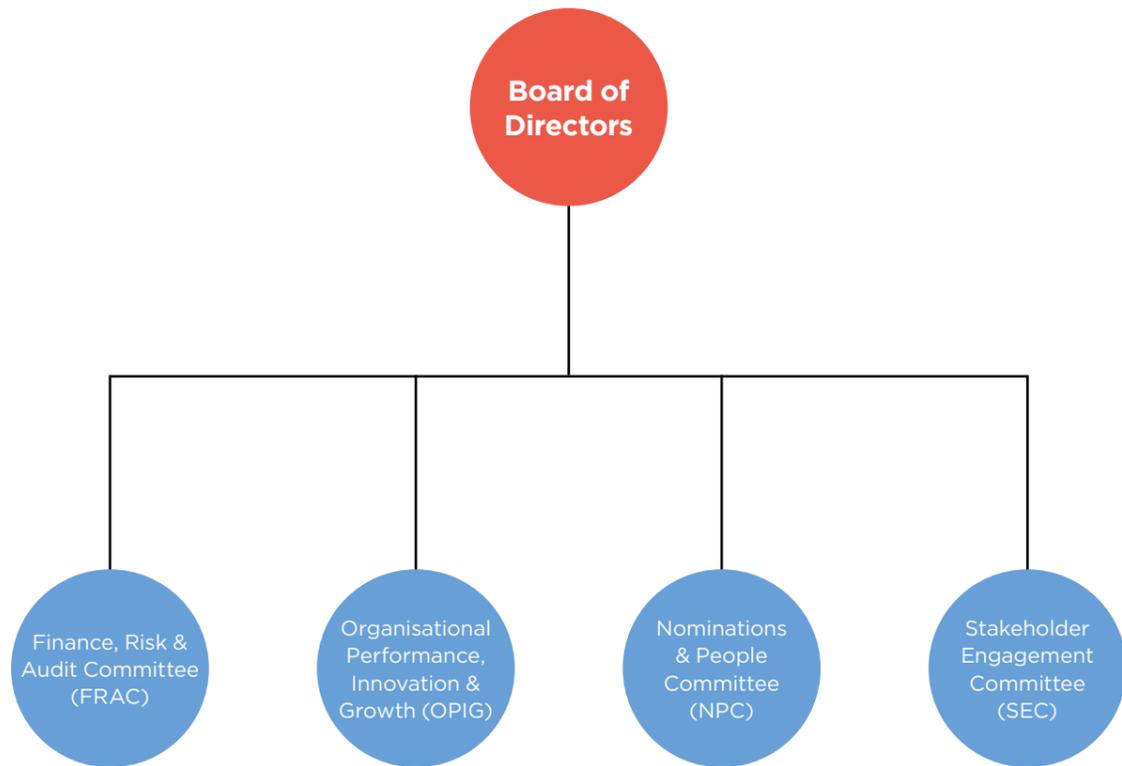
One of our strategic objectives is to provide innovative, accessible and flexible service solutions including through technology. This has inspired staff to embrace flexible technology solutions across FMC programs and sites. This was reflected in the steady increase of video sessions. As we move into 2016, a core focus will be on investing in technology to create a smooth and fulfilling client experience and offer them a wider range of choices.

FMC's recently established business development function has brought a welcome set of new commercial skills and focus to the organisation. We need to be sustainable in the long-term and this new area is charged with generating revenue through new services, private practice and establishing new networks and partnerships.

As we look back over the year, we see the many new developments have been implemented by staff and the great compassion shown to those of our clients in deep need. FMC is fortunate to be able to draw upon a pool of incredibly talented and passionate professionals who help our clients take back control of their lives in times of personal trouble.

# Governance

**FMC reviewed its governance structure in FY16 and strengthened its ability to grow towards a sustainable future.**



**Board committee review**

**Finance, Risk and Audit Committee**

Provides strategic advice to management and monitor and review, on behalf of the Board, the effectiveness of FMC's financial reporting and legal/regulatory compliance environment.

**Organisational Performance, Innovation and Growth Committee**

Provides high level guidance, advice and oversight for monitoring the Company's performance and for planning and implementing innovative growth initiatives in line with FMC's strategic plan.

**Nominations and People Committee**

Assists the Board in ensuring that FMC recruits, develops and retains outstanding leadership talent for Board positions and the CEO role.

**Stakeholder Engagement Committee**

Ensures that a structured and effective stakeholder engagement program is planned and implemented.

# Executive Team



**Graeme Westaway**  
Acting Chief Executive Officer

Graeme joined FMC in 2013. He has held a number of executive and senior leadership roles in services development, strategy and capacity building across the not for profit, mutual and corporate sectors. His training in Science, Marketing and Mediation has been used in innovation and organisational planning.

He has held a number of committee positions in volunteer organisations. He was appointed to the acting role in May 2016.

Kim O'Neill served as CEO of FMC Mediation and Counselling from 2012 until 2016.



**Jenni Dickson**  
Executive Manager Quality Compliance and Outcomes

Jenni has over 20 years experience in the health sector. She has a Bachelor of Nursing and a Graduate Diploma Community Health. Jenni brings to FMC a strong background in services development and quality improvement.

Jenni has developed a high standard of reporting across FMC.



**Samantha Kolasa**  
Executive Manager Client Services

Samantha trained as a psychologist and worked directly with clients before moving into senior management roles in the not-for-profit sector. She has worked across all levels of government bringing a wealth of experience in stakeholder engagement and the development of partnerships.

**Executive Management Organisational Reporting and Development**

The Executive Team and staff of FMC participate in a range of meetings and team development initiatives to fulfill the desired outcomes of the strategic plan.



**Albert Li**  
Strategic Commercial Manager

Albert has over 17 years of private and corporate experience. In 2007, Albert co-founded Project New Dawn with The Salvation Army. In 2014, Albert founded Scuba for Change, a world's first social enterprise where 100% of profits are reinvested into communities within developing nations to promote children's rights and empower local people.



**David Turen**  
Executive Manager Human Resources

David has extensive experience as an HR Executive across a variety of sectors including not-for-profit, health care, local government and commercial aviation. His portfolio includes responsibility for HR Strategy, Enterprise Agreement administration, HR consultancy and People Policy.



# Our Clients



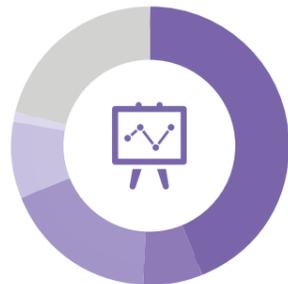
### Gender

Female	54%
Male	45%
Not stated	1%



### Highest Level of Education

Tertiary, University or Institutes	34%
Secondary Year 12	15%
Secondary Year 10	14%
Primary	6%
Not Stated	31%



### Employment Status

Employed including self-employed	44%
Unemployed - actively looking for a job	7%
Not in the labour force (e.g. stay at home parent)	18%
N/A - person aged under 15 years	9%
Retired	1%
Not Stated	21%



### Current Income

\$0 - \$25,000	35%
\$25,001 - \$50,000	17%
\$50,001 - \$110,000	14%
\$110,001 and over	4%
Not Stated	30%

### Centrelink Payments

42% of responded clients receive centrelink benefits.

# CASE STUDY Elder Abuse

## Seniors Conflict Resolution - A new integrated service

### SCENARIO

Fay wants to buy into an independent living apartment at the residential facility that she has been living in for two years. However, all her funds are tied up in a house jointly owned with one of her two daughters, Rose, who had placed her in the residential facility. Fay was frightened of losing her relationship with her daughter if she pursued her share of the house.



### FAY 86

86 year old. Lives in low care residential facility. Fay has three children



### ROSE 42

Visits Fay daily and has power of attorney

### PROCESS



#### Initial Contact Consultation

Referred to FMC from Seniors Rights Victoria. Fay contacted FMC as she wanted to move into an independent living apartment but had no access to funds.



#### Consultation

To establish the issues at hand, FMC conducted an Older Person Consultation with Fay, who was distressed at being placed into residential care by Rose. Fay presented as mentally intact and required minimal assistance with her activities of daily living.



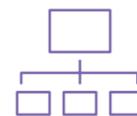
#### Counselling

Fay revealed that before the residential placement she had previously lived with her daughter Rose and her family in a house jointly purchased by herself and Rose. Prior to this, Fay had sold the original family home under pressure from Rose and her husband in order to fund the joint purchase.



#### Coaching

FMC focused on empowering Fay to speak for herself and tell Rose that she wanted a sum of money to purchase an apartment at the facility. She also told Rose about how hurtful the move had been. Fay emphasised that she loves Rose and still wanted a relationship with her.



#### Engaging with the other parties

Assessments undertaken with Rose and her two other children revealed the following - her son believed the house should be sold so she could move into the apartment she wanted but the other daughter did not want to be involved and remained neutral.



#### Mediation

The mediator is neutral and does not act as an advocate. An agreement was reached for Rose to pay a third of the amount of the value of the home. Fay, in an effort to retain the relationship, asked for less money. Power of attorney was given to Fay's son. Fay was given time to think about the agreement and seek legal advice.

### OUTCOME

Fay had greater confidence to make decisions, listed for the type of living arrangements she wants and has more contact with her other two children. She is hopeful to one day resume her relationship with Rose but is aware this may not happen.

### SIGNIFICANCE

Fay's case illustrates how an older person can feel torn between the love they have for their child and the shame of recognising the situation their child has placed them in. Power of attorney and other transfers of control away from the older person can engender a growing sense of entitlement by the other family members or a carer. Fay had witnessed the diminution of her assets and thereby no longer had any control over the quality of her life. Restoring Fay's control, building her resilience and strengthening her relationship with other family members significantly reduced her stress and opened the way to future decision making capabilities.

Collaboration: SRV, GP, Legal provider and residential care facility.

\*Names have been changed

CASE STUDY

# Family Dispute Resolution

**Scenario:** Separated couple in legal conflict over child and lawyers now involved



**SIMON 37**

Concerned that Samantha does not view his role as crucial to his son

Simon needed validation of his parenting role



**TOBY 5**

Recently started school and is acting out

Both parents needed to spend time together to work out how to manage the situation



**SAMANTHA 38**

Believes mid-week contact with Simon is contributing to Toby's misbehavior

Samantha needed reassurance that Toby's behaviour was normal

**OUTCOME**



Parents attended separate Child In Focus groups at FMC to learn to focus on Toby's best interests.



They also agreed to undertake Child Informed Mediation (through an FMC Child Counsellor).



Parents realised Toby's behaviour reflected the level of conflict between them — it escalated when their conflict escalated.



As they began to discuss and respond, to Toby's needs in a manner that was in Toby's best interests, Toby began to adjust to school and improve his behaviour.



Through the Child Counsellor, Toby was able to express his need and desire for a strong relationship with both parents.



The parents were able to develop a Parenting Plan without further legal involvement.



Simon accepted a referral to FMC for individual Counselling to manage his strong emotions around the separation.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

This case was on its way to court with both parents preparing to battle it out for their son. The direct financial and emotional cost could have been enormous. By helping Samantha and Simon focus on the best interest of their child instead of their personal issues with each other, we were able to shift their negative energy and perceptions into a positive, more co-operative and collaborative way of coming to agreements over Toby's care. It was great to see them make the connection between their child's behaviour and coping mechanisms, and their own behaviours and relationship. It was also deeply fulfilling to provide Simon with the additional support he needed to help him move on emotionally and focus on his relationship and the best interest of his son.

\*Names have been changed

CASE STUDY

# Family Relationship Counselling

**Reconciliation**

**Scenario:** Married couple with 3 children. Wife considering ending marriage



**MATT 45**

Frustrated that his strategies of managing conflict with Jack are not working and that Cath is blaming him

The issue is not as simple as poor communication between Matt and Cath. The whole family needed to communicate more effectively. For that to happen, FMC needed to work with them all in different ways: first with Cath and Matt, then individually with Jack and finally, with the whole family.

**OUTCOME**



Divorce was no longer being considered as an option and the family unit remained intact.



Matt and Cath learned and used communication strategies such as Emotion Coaching to help them to more effectively manage Jack's anxiety.



Matt and Cath's general parenting skills improved.



Matt learned additional self-calming strategies to use during times of conflict with Jack.



Jack was referred to Headspace, a support organisation that provides mental health support to children and young people.



The two younger children contributed to a family session about the patterns of family conflict and what might be improved.



**CATH 43**

Concerned about Matt's focus on Jack and the escalating violence between them

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Despite the challenges of father and son personality clashes, significant improvements were made. The flexibility with which we are able to operate plus the relatively simple interventions for reducing emotional reactivity and improving communication between all parties made a huge difference to the whole family.

Happily, these are changes that will have positive ramifications to the quality of their life together as a family for years to come.

\*Names have been changed

CASE STUDY

# Specialist Financial Counselling

Family Violence



**RUBY 21**

Dependent: 3-month-old boy

A 21-year-old single mother, Ruby, recently escaped a brutally violent relationship. She is currently residing in a safe house and has taken out an intervention order taken out against her former partner.

Ruby, with the help of a caseworker at the safe house, has drawn up a safety plan and worked on building up her emotional and physical resilience. After learning that Ruby is deep in debt with different creditors, the caseworker referred her to a Family Violence Financial Counsellor at FMC Box Hill.

Ruby came to the Financial Counselor (FC) with \$20,000 of secured and unsecured debts. In her first session, Ruby explained that she felt responsible for the credit card debts and loans, as her former partner had threatened to leave her if she did not open new accounts and apply for all the loans in her name.

A highly anxious Ruby said that she was at the end of her tether and just wanted to be able to get her life back on track so she could provide stability for herself and her baby.

The FC called the creditors to negotiate the situation and propose a solution that would take into account the safety of the client and work out a way to protect Ruby (the other party) on the joint account.

The bank assisting the client explained that they could not separate the joint debts, as both parties were legally responsible.

After the FC explained Ruby's situation and the concerns over her former partner accessing the account, the bank put a freeze on the account and communicated this decision to the relevant personnel. Although the freeze was a temporary solution, it was more than satisfactory considering the complex legalities of joint debt.

Due to Ruby's welfare status, the sole debts in her name were judgment proof and the full amount was waived. This was a big win yet there are more levels of complication to the situation and case. The financial sabotage also left Ruby with a bad credit rating that not only limits her ability to be financially independent but that will remain on her financial record for the next five years. This again is often referred to as "sexually transmitted debt" in reference to the financial costs of the abuse/implications and being prevented from moving towards a better financial future.



\*Names have been changed

**45%**  
of FMC clients reported a presence of Family Violence

CASE STUDY

# Private Psychological Services

Bullying



**SARAH 9**

Acting out at home due to being bullied at school

Sarah's mother organised an appointment with her GP when Sarah became increasingly emotional and explosive at home, getting into regular fights with her siblings. She was also skipping school frequently because of intense abdominal pains and occasional vomiting every morning. Sarah had consistently denied having any problems at school for several weeks but eventually confessed to the GP and her mother that she was being bullied by several classmates. Sarah was referred to see a child psychologist at FMC.

Sarah and her mother attended the first session together where they discussed the nature of therapy, particularly the confidentiality aspect, with the psychologist. Despite her anxiety, Sarah decided to attend most of the sessions by herself and was gradually able to discuss her emotions and relationships with the psychologist. She drew pictures of herself depicting how her body feels when she is sad, angry or anxious. Sarah brought her mother back into the room at the end of each session to give her a summary of what she had discussed. The psychologist would filled in any gaps.

The psychologist also urged Sarah's mother to speak with her teacher and principal to formulate a plan that would get Sarah attending school regularly.

Sarah, her mother and the psychologist then talked about the challenges of going to school when there is bullying and social isolation were present. With her mother's

support, Sarah starting attending school more regularly, built up a small group of supportive friends and was better able to manage the bullies.

The school further supported her by implementing a 'School Bullying' policy. Sarah's psychologist and her GP wrote to each other regularly. Sarah's psychologist helped her outline some goals and had her complete a questionnaire every few sessions to check her level of distress.

As she started meeting her goals, Sarah's distress scores reduced. She decided to stop therapy after eight sessions with the understanding that she could return to see her psychologist if ever the need arose again.



\*Names have been changed

CASE STUDY

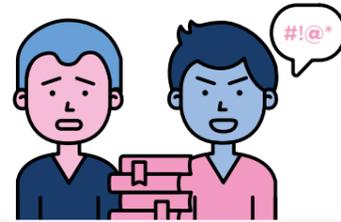
# Family Mental Health Support Services

SCENARIO

Rose is a 40-year-old single mother of two boys – Robert, 9 and David, 8. Robert has been diagnosed with autism and learning difficulties. David has begun to act out at school.



ROSE 40



ROBERT 9 & DAVID 8

PROCESS



Initial Contact

Rose was referred to FMHSS by the school to seek assistance in handling David's increasingly difficult behaviour in the classroom. David was lashing out at other students and being generally disruptive in class. This behaviour had also begun occurring at home.



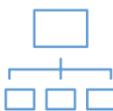
Consultation

Rose presented to the FMC office for assessment. The following risk factors were identified for both children: family violence, trauma, social isolation, parental mental health symptoms and poor interpersonal skills, with both children. Parenting education was initially identified as a potential strategy. Rose was allocated a case manager, and she and the children attended a number of sessions over a six-month period.



Family Capacity Building

Family capacity building activities like including mindfulness strategies, scaling and an open non-judgmental approach, were used when engaging the family. Both children were given emotional education throughout the intervention to help them develop their capacity to regulate their behavioural outbursts. Rose was taught assisted parenting techniques and education such as establishing boundaries, consistency in messages and how to be more present with her children.



Engaging with other parties

Anglicare Child First and the Family Life Shine program had previously been involved with the family who consented to FMC sharing information with them. TRY Mentoring was concurrently involved with the family while engaging with FMHSS. The primary school was also involved in discussions with Rose and the case manager about the needs and assistance provided to David and Robert. Rose and David were separately referred to a Mental Health Nurse at the end of their consultation with FMHSS.

OUTCOME

Rose gained an increased emotional awareness of her actions and their affect on others. She also came to understand the need to seek further help for past trauma. David displayed an increased capacity to manage and observe his own behaviour. All three increased their mindfulness and ability to verbalise what was happening for them as individuals and as a family.

SIGNIFICANCE

David's capability to recognise that his behaviour is separate to who he is as a person, is likely to have long-term benefits. Rose now has the ability to differentiate her emotional response to her children and to her past trauma. FMHSS played a key role in helping her develop that ability as well as the ability to ask for help and be a part of a multi-agency approach to help her family.

\*Names have been changed

CASE STUDY

# Financial Counselling

SCENARIO

Jenny and Simon are married with two children but temporarily separated due to the stress of business debt.

The ATO was threatening to wind up their business unless the debt was cleared immediately.

Jenny and Simon needed FMC to liaise with the ATO and negotiate a solution to their predicament.



JENNY 37

SIMON 41

OUTCOME



Prepared income and expenditure statements detailing how the debt could be repaid within a reasonable time frame.



Negotiated a waiver of \$50,000 in penalty fees and interest from the ATO.



Negotiated a further write off of \$20,000 from the ATO due to natural disasters that affected the business during the taxable period.



Secured approval from the ATO for a manageable repayment plan to clear the remaining debt.



Jenny and Simon were also referred for relationship counselling through our Family and Relationship Services (FARS) program.



Post-counselling, Jenny and Simon reunited and the family is whole again.

IMPACT

By undergoing Financial Counselling

- 74% avoid legal action
- 53% avoid bankruptcy

Of FMC Child Counselling clients

- 92% Feel they have increased their financial knowledge and skills upon case closure
- 76% Are aged 35 years and over
- 65% Are either from single person households or are single parents families with dependent children

The most common reasons for financial difficulty amongst FMC clients

- \* 26% Credit/Debt issues
- Income/unemployment
- 19% Family/Relationship issues
- 19% Utility issues (gas, water & electricity)

\*Names have been changed

*By helping this couple to clarify the reality of their situation and prioritise their issues, I was able to resolve their immediate financial problems and provide them with a realistic payment plan. As I had also established a high level of trust with them, I was also able to refer them to my colleagues for counselling and, ultimately reunite a family. This family has been through a lot and has come out of it the other end stronger, better informed and skilled, and together. — Sam, Financial Counsellor*

# CASE STUDY

## Child Counselling

**Scenario:** Parents separated when Jack was 3, he feels rejected by his mother



### DIANNE 38

Has Asperger's syndrome and lives with her parents



### JACK 8

Is on the Autism Spectrum and is struggling at school with being 'different'



### JIM 35

Father. Recently re-partnered and is Jack's primary carer since Dianne has difficulty with keeping him Jack safe.

Jim was trying to protect Jack emotionally but wanted Jack to maintain a loving relationship with his mother

## OUTCOME



Jack changed school and is feeling happy and supported.



Jack sees his mother regularly and stays with her during school holidays. Their relationship has improved significantly.



Jim continues to monitor Jack's safety very carefully.



Jim has been able to discuss Dianne's condition with Jack in a way that he is able to understand and still regard her in a loving and positive light.



Jim was given additional support resources such as a referral to the autism support service.



Both parents were consulted and informed of Jack's progress throughout his counselling sessions.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Children on the Autism Spectrum can be challenging to work with due to their literal interpretation of the spoken word. However they are also particularly delightful due to their openness, trust and straightforward interactions. Thanks to FMC's ability to cross refer clients, Jack and his parents were able to receive additional post-mediation support, which ultimately led to a stable, functioning — albeit separated — family unit.

Jack now understands his mother's limitations, he knows that his father respects his mother's role in his life and will support Jack in maintaining that connection. This gives Jack room to create a new 'family' group and move on with his life.

\*Names have been changed

# CASE STUDY

## STAR School Program

The STAR program, developed by FMC, is a class-based emotional education and regulation program for students. STAR is delivered to grade 5 & 6 students by expert child counsellors and child psychologists.



### The STAR program includes key components:

1. Australian Curriculum and VCAA Personal and Social Capability Curriculum
2. National Kids Matter Framework
3. Victorian Child Protection Best Interests Framework

### STAR Foundation Program

A program filled with evidence-based psycho educational exercises and strength-based neurobiological principles.

It encompasses the Personal and Social Capability curriculum of self-awareness...

The STAR Foundation Program can be the start to a wholesome school approach that is rich in interactive programs for teachers, families, parents and carers.

### Week One:

- Different types of relationships and why they are important to us
- Understanding of how we relate to each other
- Understanding relationship boundaries?
- Knowing and managing our feelings and emotions
- "Looking after myself". What is this all about?
- Looking after others
- Every day relationship questions and dilemmas

### Week Two:

- Really getting to know ourselves and others
- Behaviours that build and behaviours that damage relationships
- How and when to get help
- Discussing common worries and how to overcome them
- Working with great strategies and our skills
- Developing skills to help us stay calm

### Program outcomes:

- Gain awareness of themselves and the impact they have on others
- Receive answers to every day relationship questions and dilemmas
- Learn skills to manage their emotions
- Understand a range of different types of relationships including that with themselves
- Identify the behaviours that make a relationship healthy or unhealthy
- Identify ways to look after themselves
- Answer common relationship questions
- Recognise the behaviours that build relationships and those which damage relationships
- Learn strategies for teaching students calming techniques
- Discuss common worries and how to overcome them
- Identify ways to get help



## CASE STUDY

# Training



**FMC Training is one of Australia's leading training organisations in conflict resolution skills, delivering high quality consultancy and training services across Australia. We have been providing training in Mediation and Family Dispute Resolution for more than 20 years.**

Our training program provides courses for a wide range of professionals in mediation and family dispute resolution, counselling and self-care. Our courses are designed for people looking for further professional qualifications, exploring alternative career paths or wanting to develop or improve their negotiation and conflict management skills to deliver better client, team, business or personal outcomes. FMC Training's courses and workshops are suitable for professionals working in the social services and allied fields who are looking for further professional qualifications, or professionals wanting to develop advanced expertise.

We have a team of well qualified and experienced trainers with backgrounds in mediation, family dispute resolution, counselling, psychology, education, social work and law. They bring a wealth of practical, every day experience and are expert practitioners in conflict resolution and dispute resolution.

FMC Training offers the Vocational Graduate Diploma FDR course and a Continuing Professional Development program to improve practitioners skills and knowledge. Our workshops and courses help participants:

- achieve professional qualifications in mediation and family dispute resolution
- register with the Attorney General's Department as an accredited FDR practitioner

- develop skills and strategies for dealing with conflict on a personal and professional basis
- improve conflict resolution or negotiation skills and techniques
- build positive, practical and sustainable outcomes for clients
- develop hands on skills through experiential learning techniques

In 2015 - 16 we offered a range of workshops covering topics as diverse as Motivational Interviewing, Dealing with Tricky Workplace Relationships, Mental Health First Aid, Approaches to Working with Men and Boys, Maximising Personal Effectiveness and Innovative Approaches to Working with Children. We also delivered tailored training to groups including Latrobe Women in Business, Latrobe Valley Bus Lines and Wyndham City Council Youth Services. A number of students undertook placements within our service as part of the Vocational Graduate Diploma in Family Dispute Resolution.

There are a number of exciting initiatives to be rolled out over the coming year. FMC will introduce the Accredited Mediator course with newly developed course content. It will take advantage of the latest research in adult education and be delivered as a "flipped classroom" where participants are provided a comprehensive Learning Guide to study in their own time in preparation for the five-day course. This will be followed by a three-day skills workshop onsite at

FMC, which will be facilitated by our experienced and expert team of trainers/ mediators on staff.

The Graduate Diploma of Family Dispute Resolution is being re-developed to meet the needs of the new course requirements and will be offered again from early 2017. The new course has an increased focus on supporting children and additional hours for student placement to better prepare future family dispute resolution practitioners.

We are also looking to develop new workshops for the Continuing Professional Development program, as well as continue delivering successful and popular programs. We plan to expand our Tailored Training and Consultancy services and offer more opportunities for student placements.

FMC Training has had a successful year and we look forward to further expanding and further enhancing our adult education and training services in the future.



# Strategy & Values

At FMC, we believe the relationships we have with ourselves and others is the most important factor in contributing to our sense of purpose and wellbeing.

Our services support individuals, couples and families in the areas of Finance, Family Law, Relationships and Mental Health.

FMC Mediation and Counselling Victoria has been in the business of helping people take back control over their lives for the past 30 years.

We believe that individuals develop better relationships and skills for themselves and with the people who matter to them, and through this we live kinder, more positive and fulfilled lives.

FMC is predominantly funded through the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

*Be the leader in accessible and effective solutions to personal and relationship challenges*

## Our Services

- Risk Assessment
- Counselling for Individuals/ Families/Couples
- Child Counselling
- Psychology Services
- Family Dispute Resolution
- Financial Counselling and Capability
- Seniors Services
- School and Group Education
- Family Mental Health Support
- Online information

We also provide Training and Professional Development.

## Our Vision

Be the leader in accessible and effective solutions to personal and relationship challenges

## Our Mission

Helping people take back control over their lives

## Our Values

Compassion  
Optimism  
Professionalism  
Empowerment

## Our Strategic Objectives

Our focus on business sustainability requires the pursuit and practice of these five strategic objectives:



### 1. Respond Quickly To Changing Consumer Needs

Swift response to evolving client needs and funding priorities  
Flexible approach and solutions  
Develop a service suite for Seniors



### 2. Innovate Through Technology

Offer new and effective solutions  
Improve accessibility and flexibility of services through technology



### 3. High Quality, Accessible Services

Maintain high quality services and practitioners  
Stronger community presence  
Enhance Family Violence Support Services  
Solid reputation among stakeholders and funders



### 4. Grow And Diversify For Sustainability

Expand commercial service offerings  
Mental Health Support  
Explore different income sources  
Create a sustainable business  
Redirect resources to emerging regions needs



### 5. Build Our Research To Measure Impact

Identify client needs  
Measure services impact

# Less waiting, better outcomes

## Phone our consumer support service



4,232

An average of 353 booked appointments per month



10

Average number of days to wait till first appointment



79%

Of calls responded to within 24-hours



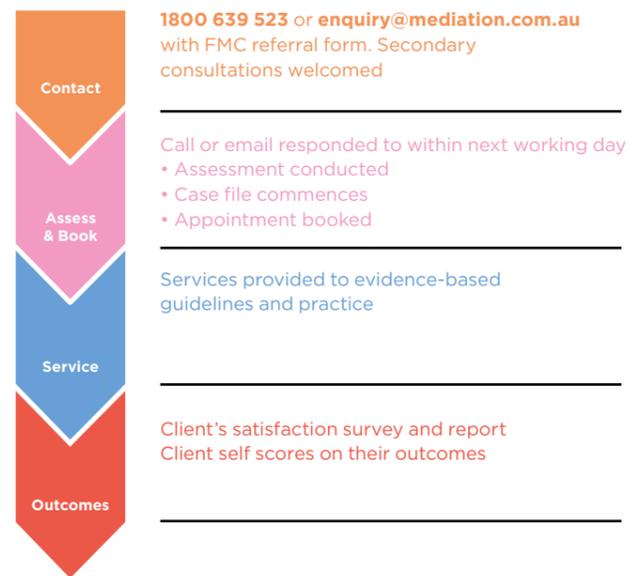
8,551

Enquiries received in the last financial year ending 30 June, 2016. An average of 713 calls per month

## FMC Referral Process

Clients and prospective clients can contact FMC in a number of ways. We offer both phone and website contact.

This stage of the process allows our team to assess the client's needs and situation of the client and put them in contact with the relevant FMC service.



## Consumer Support Service



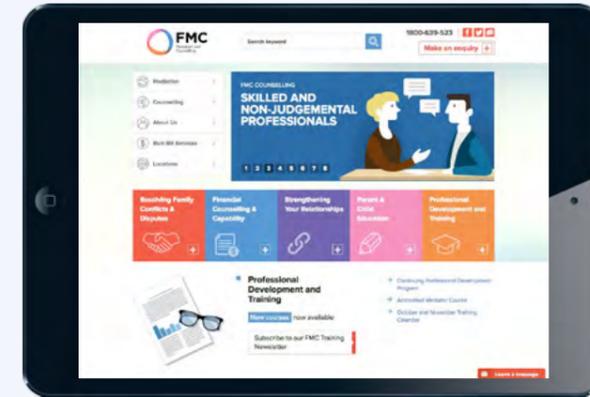
## Our Professional Phone Assessments

- All callers are assessed for suitability:
- Risk factors identified
  - Needs assessed
  - Areas of concern noted on file
  - Client needs matched to appropriate service
  - Appointments set
  - Warm referrals conducted as required
  - Secondary consultations available to referrers

Facilitators are specifically trained to manage potential issues.

# Providing instant help

## Find us online



[mediation.com.au](http://mediation.com.au)

44,971

Sessions

Most frequent visitors are

**Women aged 25 - 44**



[financialfirstaid.org.au](http://financialfirstaid.org.au)

10,478

Sessions

Most frequent visitors are

**Women aged 25 - 34**

## Online Community

In 2015 -2016 FMC redeveloped it's social media presence to unify its presentation and engage more effectively.

33%

Growth in users



# FMC Partners

**FMC proudly works with all members of our community to help people take back control over their lives.**

## Chadstone Family Relationship Centre (FRC) and Monash Oakleigh Legal Service (MOLS)

Family Relationship Centre (FRC) has a close working relationship with Monash Oakleigh Legal Service (MOLS). With MOLS' assistance, Legally Assisted Family Dispute Resolution is offered to assist those disadvantaged and vulnerable clients who are in high conflict situations but do not have the means to access legal resources.

## Seniors Rights Victoria

Following FMC's decision to develop and trial the Seniors Mediation Program, a new service for older people, FMC engaged with Seniors Rights Victoria to inform the program development. The collaboration between FMC and Seniors Rights Victoria brought together FMC's 30 years of providing conflict resolution services with Seniors Rights Victoria's expertise and leadership in elder abuse, and advocating for older people.

## Family Violence Financial Counsellor working within Eastern Community Legal Centre

A gap was identified in supporting survivors of financial/ economic abuse. The need arose for a financial counsellor to be co-located into a legal centre. This direct partnership ensures a holistic and soft referral approach that minimises the impact of the client's stress of having to re address and go through the stressors related to having to repeat their story and situation over and again.

This enables the Financial Counsellor to assist the client in negotiations and provide advocacy to empower them with the information and tools that will give them a sense of financial resilience. From here, clients take the first steps towards knowing their rights, taking control of their finances and rebuilding their lives.

## Melbourne City Mission- Family Reconciliation Mediation Program (FRMP)

The Melbourne City Mission-Family Reconciliation Mediation Program (FRMP) is a state-wide program funded by the Department of Health and Human Services for workers to assist young people aged 16-25 years that are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

FRMP has accredited FMC practitioners and listed them on their database. This allows community-based workers to refer young people to FMC for access to therapeutic interventions such as family mediation, family therapy and / or individual counselling.

## Women's Legal Service Victoria (WLSV)

Over the past several years, FMC has enjoyed a developing partnership with WLSV to provide a wraparound service for vulnerable clients. The development of the Legally Assisted Family Dispute Resolution program and access to Legal Advice Sessions has led to an increased capacity for people to access our services. An evaluation has been presented at two national conferences in the past 12 months. Both organisations have consistently focused on the best outcomes for the clients in a non-adversarial environment.

## Connections- Child Youth and Family Services

FMC has a partnership with Uniting Care, Connections- Child Youth and Family Services, based in Narre Warren. This has enabled and supported a direct pathway from Connections into FMC services.

FMC staff presented at the Connections Conference on the FMC model of Child Informed Mediation (CIM) which was of great interest to Connections.

The partnership highlights the benefit and strength gained by agencies that work together with their clients to ensure they receive the best possible support when required.

# Financial Statement

Income Statement	2016 \$	2015 \$
Revenue	*1 8,936,101	8,016,565
Marketing expenses	(217,532)	(210,627)
Occupancy expenses	*2 (659,012)	(496,225)
Employee benefits expenses	*3 (5,812,755)	(4,988,223)
Consultancy and legal expenses	(644,338)	(588,863)
Bank charges and interest	(13,477)	(30,876)
Depreciation	(426,078)	(295,573)
IT software support and supplies	(263,354)	(225,142)
Utilities expenses	(235,123)	(70,320)
Other expenses	(658,418)	(677,523)
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>(8,930,087)</b>	<b>(7,583,372)</b>
<b>Surplus for the Year</b>	<b>6,014</b>	<b>433,193</b>
Other comprehensive income	-	-
<b>Total Comprehensive Income for the Year</b>	<b>*4 6,014</b>	<b>433,193</b>

\*1 Greater revenue from grants and commercial development

\*2 Greater spread of service locations

\*3 Increase in staffing levels to service greater client demand

\*4 Increased costs to service more clients and investment in growth activities focused on long term sustainability

Assets	2016 \$	2015 \$
Total Current Assets	2,269,304	2,185,083
Total Non-Current Assets	2,637,472	2,979,978
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>4,906,776</b>	<b>5,165,061</b>

Liabilities	2016 \$	2015 \$
Total Current Liabilities	927,580	1,041,080
Total Non-Current Liabilities	61,702	163,052
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>989,282</b>	<b>1,204,132</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>3,917,494</b>	<b>3,960,929</b>
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>3,917,494</b>	<b>3,960,929</b>

# Our Locations



## FMC Offices

- 01 Moorabbin**  
Level 4  
1001 Nepean Highway  
Moorabbin VIC 3189
- 02 Broadmeadows**  
Unit B1, 1-13 The Gateway  
Broadmeadows VIC 3047
- 03 Ringwood**  
367 Maroondah Highway  
Ringwood VIC 3134
- 04 Narre Warren**  
86-88 Victor Crescent  
Narre Warren VIC 3805
- 05 Chadstone\***  
41 Stamford Road  
Oakleigh VIC 3166
- 06 Traralgon\***  
41 Grey Street  
Traralgon VIC 3844

## Co-Locations

- 07 Werribee**  
Level 1  
242 Hoppers Lane  
Werribee VIC 3030
- 08 Frankston**  
Level 1  
146 Young Street  
Frankston VIC 3199
- 09 Bendigo**  
Catholic Care  
176 McCrae Street  
Bendigo VIC 3550
- 10 Geelong**  
Catholic Care  
McKillop Street  
Geelong VIC 3220
- 11 Fitzroy**  
Catholic Care  
23 Brunswick Street  
Fitzroy VIC 3065
- 12 Box Hill**  
Suite 3, Town Hall Hub  
27 Bank Street  
Box Hill VIC 3128

## Outreach Locations

- 13 Caroline Springs**  
22-50 Becca Way  
Caroline Springs VIC 3023
- 14 Melton**  
390-392 High Street  
Melton VIC 3337
- 15 Warragul**  
36 William Street  
Warragul VIC 3820
- 16 Leongatha**  
5A Church Street  
Leongatha 3953
- 17 Bairnsdale**  
306 Main Street  
Bairnsdale VIC 3875
- 18 Seymour**  
Salvation Army  
Shop 5-6, 78 Station St  
Seymour 3660
- 19 Greensborough**  
Level 3 Greensborough Plaza  
Greensborough VIC 3088
- 20 Heidelberg West**  
The Harmony Centre  
Shop 48 Bell St Mall  
Heidelberg West 3081
- 21 Grovedale**  
Uniting Care Building  
272 Torquay Rd  
Grovedale VIC 3216

- Head Office
- FMC Offices
- Co-Locations
- Outreach Locations
- \* Branded Family Relationship Centre (FRC)



[www.mediation.com.au](http://www.mediation.com.au)  
[www.financialfirstaid.org.au](http://www.financialfirstaid.org.au)  
**1800 639 523**  
[enquiry@mediation.com.au](mailto:enquiry@mediation.com.au)