

ANNUAL REPORT 2005-2006  
Diocese Of Wollongong

# Centacare

Catholic Family Welfare Services





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## Our Mission

On behalf of the Catholic Church, Centacare provides a range of human services and endeavours to be a prophetic voice in the community to alleviate injustice and disadvantage. We are committed to working together to make a difference in people's lives through service and advocacy.

## Our Values

Catholic social principles will be evident in our lives and work by:

- respecting the dignity of each person
- protecting human dignity in the community
- actively seeking conditions which enhance the common good
- enabling clients and fellow workers to participate in the community
- providing preferential access to the most vulnerable clients
- demonstrating responsible stewardship in the quality and professionalism of our individual and collective work
- acting with integrity and fairness

## Our Services

### Family Services

- Counselling (Family and Relationship; Grief)
- Marriage and Relationship Education
- Family Skills Training Program

### Children's Contact Service

### Aged Services

- Community Aged Care Packages
- Community Visitors Scheme

### Office of Disability and Disability Services

### School Student and Family Program

### Children's Out of Home Care Services

- Foster Care
- Children's Access Services

### Chaplaincy within Juvenile Justice

### Community Support Program

### Corporate Services



## Future Directions

Centacare is dedicated to advocating and being proactive for the people society marginalises and devalues in the Diocese of Wollongong.

The welfare sector is growing and changing rapidly and Centacare must be well prepared to meet current and changing circumstances.

We are reaching the end of our Strategic Plan for 2003-2006, which has led to the development of systems that better allow us to proactively identify and respond to special needs and social issues in our community. The current Strategic Plan has driven a process of continuous improvement in the delivery of all our programs and services through the implementation of a quality approach across our operations. This has been enhanced by staff development and support, the use of technology as an essential tool in quality service delivery and key collaborative partnerships.

Other key objectives that have been achieved include the establishment of Outreaches in the Macarthur and Shoalhaven areas.

We are now developing a Strategic Plan for 2006-2009 that will reflect how we will meet the challenges of providing welfare services in the second half of this decade.



## Director's Report

*We must, as a matter of necessity, organise our resources wisely to achieve these objectives.*

At a time when Australian society and the Diocese of Wollongong appear to be going through fundamental change, Centacare faces a major challenge to remain true to its mission and values.

Everywhere around us we see evidence that Australians are living individualistic lives and are less inclined to reach out to their fellow human beings. The most dangerous aspect of today's Australia is the shift in public discourse towards a more individualistic, consumer driven society and away from a shared notion of building the common good for the benefit of all. This trend sees the most vulnerable, disadvantaged members of society blamed for their own circumstances.

Many parts of our community reap the benefits of a record budget record surplus, low unemployment and low inflation - but people on benefits, and other low income earners suffer as interest rates increase and the cost of food and petrol rises.

Our Mission states: *On behalf of the Catholic Church, Centacare provides a range of human services and endeavours to be a prophetic voice in the community to alleviate injustice and disadvantage. We are committed to working together to make a difference in people's lives through service and advocacy.*

Clearly, it is our duty to both provide services to needy people in our community and speak out against injustice and disadvantage. However, we are confronted with many challenges in the provision of social and welfare services. Changes in the way government services are funded and managed and changes in community attitudes towards people in need indicate that new solutions are required if we are to continue to serve the most in need.

The task for the year ahead is for us to respond to these challenges - to remain true to our mission, to maintain our independence as we seek funding from government and to rally support from the

government, business and community, whilst also asking them to recognise the realities of poverty and disadvantage.

This year saw the first encyclical of the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, which confirmed the importance of the very challenges we are facing. The Pope reaffirmed the centrality of the charitable mission of the Church and his challenge is clear. We must by nature, serve those most in need. We must, by our nature, give voice to their concerns and we must, as a matter of necessity, organise our resources wisely to achieve these objectives.

### Leadership in difficult times

In the past year we have restructured our management team to help us meet the challenges we face in remaining true to our Mission and continuing to preserve the dignity of the individuals who need our services.

Importantly, we have renamed it the Leadership Team to reflect the importance we place on sound and inspiring leadership to retain a sense of identity and purpose among our staff and energize them to meet the challenges they face in their demanding jobs. This is essential if we are to achieve our goals in the face of seemingly ever-increasing bureaucratic demands from funding, accreditation and auditing bodies that can often distract out staff from their core roles - providing best practice services to people who need them and joining them in making changes to their lives. Our Leadership Team is introduced on page 8.

### Highlights for 2005-2006

Centacare seeks to meet the needs of people in our community irrespective of religious affiliation, cultural background, ethnicity, gender or age. Centacare's services continue to be proactive, preventative, supportive and empowering with the aim of strengthening families and communities.

There have been many highlights over the past year.

However, I would particularly like to acknowledge that the Diocese has provided funding for two years for a Disability Advocate to go out into the parishes and help people with disabilities and their carers.

Special thanks to Diocesan personnel who over the past twelve months have worked with Centacare to develop our new Mandate & Constitution which has been approved by Bishop Peter Ingham. We especially acknowledge Fr Peter Comensoli and Sr Moya Hanlon for their commitment and to Dr Rodger Austin for his assistance in this matter.

Centacare, the major welfare ministry of the Diocese, does not work in isolation and, as always, there are many people to thank for another successful year of service.

Bishop Peter has been a tower of strength and pastoral support for us and we have also benefited greatly from the work of many priests and lay people across the Diocese.

Our fund-raising committee has again done another outstanding job, coordinating wonderful social occasions and successful fund-raisers.

I am eternally gratefully to the commitment and wisdom of the Centacare Board members for their guidance throughout the year. With the introduction of the Centacare Constitution and Mandate, a new Advisory Council has been formed. My deepest thanks to outgoing members, Barry Wood, John Logue, Dr Di Sansom, Margaret Bartley and Tony Abela for the generosity of their time, solid commitment and unwavering support to the mission of Centacare as Board members. They are the foundation on which Centacare will grow into the future.

Thanks also to our many sponsors and supporters, notably the Campbelltown Catholic Club.

And finally, a heart-felt thank you to our outstanding staff who do such a wonderful job in a very demanding field.

**Kathleen McCormack**  
Director





## Bishop's Report

*'Along with the administration of sacraments and the proclamation of the Word, love for widows and orphans, prisoners, and the sick and needy of every kind, is as essential to the Church as the ministry of the sacraments and preaching of the Gospel'.  
Pope Benedict XVI,  
Deus Caritas Est  
(God is Love)  
(December 2005) (#21).*



It is my pleasure once again to endorse the work of Centacare, Wollongong Diocese's Catholic Welfare Agency. Centacare has served the diocesan community for 26 years, welcoming families, individuals, couples, young people and children who seek help through its many programs and services.

Centacare's mission, like that of the Church at large, is to give witness to Jesus Christ's love and care for people and, when necessary, to be a prophetic voice working to promote justice, love, peace and reconciliation by alleviating injustice, disadvantage and disharmony.

Along with many other apostolic endeavours in the Diocese, Centacare also works on behalf of the Catholic community at parish level to promote Jesus Christ "the way, the truth and the life" (Jn 14:6) who came that "we might have life, life to the full." (Jn 10:10)

The Holy Father's first Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est* (God is Love) brought a particular joy and hope to those who work in the Church's fields of social welfare and justice. Benedict XVI reminds us all that these works of 'charity' are fundamental to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, hence irreplaceable signs of the credibility of the Church. The task for all the baptised is to rise to the challenges of our time.

Centacare's competent staff work on behalf of distressed couples or families, children who are devalued, children in need of loving families, persons with disabilities and their carers, alienated or anxious persons, married couples who are endeavouring to live in a spirit of love, elderly persons who are fearful about self-sufficiency, people who have obstacles to rewarding work. Centacare endeavours to create the best possible intervention to enable such people to understand the human rights and social responsibilities that they have which, when realised, allow

them to live with dignity.

The Diocese cannot but support its social welfare arm, Centacare, both actively and financially because it is integral to the work of the Church. It is a response to Jesus' identification with those who are sick, in prison, in need of food and shelter. The Lord said that whatever you do or do not do to one of the least of my brothers and sisters, you do or do not do, to me. (Mt 25:31 ff)

During this year, Centacare rightly participated in both the Diocesan Vocations Congress in May and the Stewardship Institute in June. The week-long Vocations Congress aimed to focus everyone on our basic vocation from our Baptism, to participate actively in the mission of Jesus' Church, whether we be single, married, ordained, or in religious life. I wish gratefully to acknowledge the particular involvement of Centacare's staff and fundraising committee in the Congress' Healing Liturgy, the Festival of Faith and Day of Discernment.

The Stewardship Institute taught attendees to see themselves as God's stewards, sharing their time, talent and treasure – a credible way of responding, because we are disciples of Jesus Christ through our Baptism. Being a steward acknowledges God as the source of all we have and are. So we need to be accountable and grateful for what we have received and seek ways to contribute to the common good by sharing generously our gifts and talents. As a response to this, Centacare is exploring ways to work more closely with parishes and to share voluntarily the professional gifts of Centacare staff.

**Centacare Advisory Council**  
After prayerful consideration and extensive consultation, I have established a new Centacare Advisory Council (CAC), which combines some former Centacare Board members with new members. I have sought to incorporate a

broad membership reflecting the diversity of our Diocese, including clergy, psychologists, community workers and professionals in law and finance, all of whom have an interest in and a concern for Catholic welfare.

The role of the CAC is to advise me in matters relating to Centacare as a ministry, an apostolic work of the Diocese. It will investigate and study matters relating to promoting, developing and establishing social services in the Diocese so as to formulate practical conclusions regarding them, as well as advising and supporting the Director of Centacare in carrying out the duties of that office. It is my hope that the new CAC will be welcomed by all as a means of developing and improving the already high quality of Centacare's work in the community. May it ensure that the Church has a prophetic voice on a range of important contemporary social issues.

May I sincerely thank all members of the outgoing Centacare Board, the members of the new Centacare Advisory Council, the staff and our precious volunteers, for their commitment to the vision of a collaborative church working for a just and compassionate society. I particularly thank the outgoing members of the Centacare Board - Mr Barry Wood, Mrs Margaret Bartley, Mr John Logue, Mr Tony Abela and Dr Di Sansom. Their contribution and perspectives, given openly and informatively about social welfare, legal and administrative issues, has greatly assisted the work of Centacare. Our Director, Kath McCormack, has again given her staff sound leadership throughout what has been another challenging year and we continue to be inspired by her vision, energy and generosity.

**Most Reverend  
Peter W Ingham DD**  
Bishop of Wollongong



## Chairman's Report

Leadership is the key to success in any organisation - but it is even more crucial in such a challenging field as the delivery of welfare services.

Centacare has been fortunate to have such a capable leader as Kath McCormack, who has been with the organisation since it was established in 1980 and Director since 1984. Kath has driven Centacare's extraordinary growth over the last 26 years.

Under Kath's leadership Centacare has developed a reputation for not only providing a wide range of important services to the community, particularly for people in need – but also for delivering those services with empathy and compassion. The dignity of individuals is always paramount in the way Centacare delivers its services, and Kath has been responsible for embedding that culture in the organisation.

In 2005 Centacare undertook a Management

and Administration review to consider changes to our structure to ensure Centacare continues to deliver high quality services while meeting the challenges of an ever-growing and increasingly complex welfare system.

That review has resulted in the establishment of a very capable Leadership Team that I am sure will provide excellent support for Kath and expert guidance for our staff.

My congratulations to Gail Maurice, Colleen Mandicos, Michael Mittwollen, Lesley Gray, Peter Burgoyne, Judy Valic and Michael Gross.

As this Annual Report outlines, these are challenging times for participants in the welfare sector but I have no doubt that under this team Centacare will maintain true to our Mission and our Values and continue to be wonderful ambassadors for the Catholic Church in our community.

In an organisation such as Centacare, there are always many people to thank because we receive

such wonderful support from our staff, volunteers and the community. On a personal note, I would like to acknowledge the extraordinary contribution made by Marg Rowan, who retired earlier this year after 25 years of voluntary and paid service to Centacare. Marg epitomizes the commitment and enthusiasm that so many people have for this organisation.

My special thanks to Bishop of Wollongong, Peter Ingham, for his continuing outstanding support, and to the many people who give their time and energy in a voluntary capacity to ensure that Centacare can fulfill its Mission.

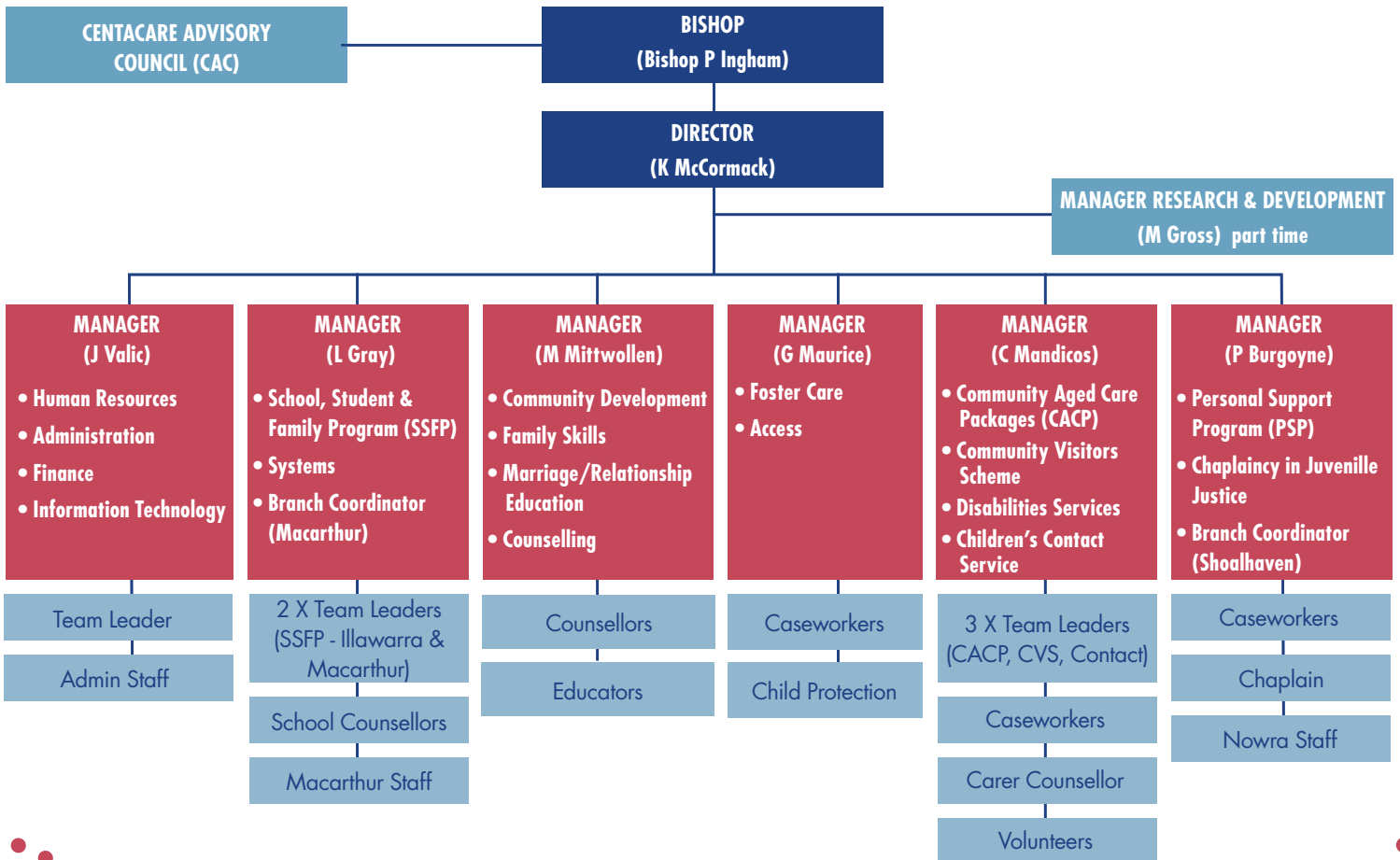
Finally, thanks to my fellow Board members for their continuing hard work, and to the Diocesan staff who also contribute to Centacare in many ways.

**John Driscoll,**  
Chairman

### Board members:

Mr John Driscoll (Chair)  
Ms Kathleen McCormack (Director)  
Mr Tony Abela,  
Mr Kieran Biddle,  
Ms Margaret Bartley,  
Mr John Logue,  
Dr Di Sansom,  
Mr Matt Waugh,  
Fr Vince Whiteman,  
Mr Barry Wood

# Organisational Chart





## Leadership for the future

Centacare has re-structured its management, establishing a Leadership Team charged with the responsibility of meeting the challenges of the future.

During 2005, Centacare undertook a Management and Administration Review to examine its structure and ensure that it had the right people and processes in place.

Our goal with this review was to implement a new management structure that supports the achievement of our goals as

contained in our strategic plan and to meet the challenges that lie ahead for our agency in an ever-changing and growing welfare environment.

Community service organisations are increasingly required to be accountable and to meet certain standards.

Our review identified a range of issues within our structure where we could improve our performance. These included developing better cross-program synergies, plugging

gaps in our community outreach and succession planning, providing better role clarity and giving more attention to growth initiatives.

As a result, we have changed Centacare's management structure. We have called it the Centacare Leadership Team (CLT) to reflect the fact that these people have a very real responsibility to provide leadership and guidance to all Centacare staff".

### The CLT (pictured anticlockwise from top) is:

**Gail Maurice**, who was previously Manager of the School Student and Family Program, Out of Home Care and Aged Care. Gail now concentrates her expertise and energies exclusively on the Out of Home Care programs.

**Colleen Mandicos** has moved from Family Services and the Personal Support Program to manage Disability Services and Aged Care. Colleen continues to manage the Children's Contact Service.

**Michael Mittwollen**, formerly manager of Anglicare Wollongong, joined Centacare late in 2005 to take up the position of Manager, Family Services. Michael will also focus his energies on community development.

**Lesley Gray**, who was the team leader of the School Student and Family Program has been appointed to the role of Manager of this program as well as the Coordinator of the Macarthur branch of Centacare.

**Peter Burgoyne** has been appointed to the role of manager of the Personal Support Program and coordinator of the Shoalhaven branch.

**Judy Valic** is now the Manager of Finance and Administration.

**Jacqui Forst** has joined the team as the Human Resources Officer.

**Michael Gross** continues to work as our Manager Research and Development.



## Fundraising Events

Australian Catholic Film Office Director and Jesuit priest Dr Richard Leonard was the guest speaker at a special 25th Anniversary dinner at Villa D'Oro in Wollongong. Dr Leonard had the audience in raptures with his insightful perspectives on Centacare over the past 25 years and the

challenges it faces in the future. The night raised more than \$7,000 - reinforcing the value of our three main fund-raising events. The Annual Dinner Dance, Art and Craft Show and Centacare Race Day not only generate significant income which helps in Centacare's work, but they also provide an invaluable opportunity

for staff, volunteers and supporters to get together in a relaxed, social atmosphere. The annual race day at Kembla Grange always generates a huge response. This year more than 350 guests attended. Our sincere thanks to the members of our hard-working fund-raising committee for the work they do organising these events. Our volunteers are an integral part of the Centacare team, and their efforts are greatly appreciated.



## Centacare Newsbriefs

### Marg Rowan retires.

Marg Rowan was given a fitting farewell after 25 years at Centacare, with a retirement function at the Wollongong City Gallery in February.

Wollongong Lord Mayor Cr Alex Darling paid tribute to Marg's dedication to working for the community. The function was attended by Centacare staff and supporters, community representatives and many of Marg's friends and family.

Marg was one of the original band of volunteers who helped establish Centacare in Wollongong in 1979. She eventually joined the paid staff, while continuing to serve as a volunteer fund-raiser.

Over her quarter century with Centacare Marg coordinated fund-raising events including the annual Art & Craft Exhibition, Race Day at Kembla Grange and Dinner Dance, generating more than \$1 million for Centacare.

Centacare Director Kath McCormack summed up Marg's contribution when she said "Marg has given selflessly of her time, energy and experience in voluntary service for the betterment of the quality of life of others."



## Reading the Signs of the Times

*'Yet the promotion of justice through efforts to bring about openness of mind and will to the demands of the common good is something which concerns the Church deeply.'*  
Pope Benedict XVI,  
*Deus Caritas Est (God is Love)*  
(December 2005) (#30).

Catholic Welfare Australia (now known as Catholic Social Services Australia) released a report in January 2006 called *Reading the Signs of the Times - Challenges to the future of Catholic Social Services in Australia*.

The report was produced in response to the changes in Australian society in recent decades, and the changes in the way the Catholic Church is able to deliver social services.

It pointed out that in the past, these services were largely aimed at families and supported principally by funding from the diocese or religious order. Today Catholic social services have evolved to provide a very diverse range of services to the community, worth in excess of \$500 million annually and largely funded by governments.

With this funding, the report warns, come threats to our independence and mission. It says the structures that the Church uses to set priorities, to seek funding, to establish and maintain programs, and to promote improved services delivery across the community have not adapted to cope with the changed environment or funding arrangements.

### Disturbing trends in Australian society

The report also identifies trends in Australian society that suggest the values of human dignity and the common good are declining. These trends include:

- Substantial breakdown in family support structures and community life
- Changing social and financial pressures mean more parents spend longer periods in the workforce while also attempting to raise their children
- The modern workforce is becoming increasingly casualised, offering many workers less security
- Many unskilled works are being left without a substantial role in the modern economy
- Increasing pressures on community services - particularly public hospitals and mental health services - leave some members of the community without services once considered as basic needs
- Education, once a pathway to social mobility, is increasingly provided on a user pays basis - limiting opportunities for the poor.



**New Identity for Peak Body**  
Catholic Welfare Australia (CWA) has undergone a name and identity change to Catholic Social Services Australia (CSSA). CSSA is the Catholic Church's peak national body for social services in Australia. It works with Catholic organisations, governments, other churches and all people of good will, to develop social welfare policies, programs and other strategic responses that work towards the economic, social and spiritual well-being of the Australian community.

CSSA's National Office in Canberra operates a policy and research unit that is informed by

an extensive service delivery network. This includes over 500 programs nationally.

One of the challenges in the name and identity change was to create an environment at the national level that encourages all Catholic social welfare organisations to become active participants in the 'spirit of solidarity'. Catholic Social Services Australia (CSSA) is well placed to move into the future under the new name of Catholic Social Services.

### Research into support for ageing carers.

Centacare commissioned a research project over the past year in conjunction with the Knights of the Southern Cross to investigate how the Diocese can support ageing carers in the future.

The study project was undertaken by Professor Trevor Parmenter, who researched a range of support and accommodation models for people with disabilities who live with ageing parents, families or carers.

Professor Parmenter is Director of Sydney University's Centre for Developmental Disability Studies. His study feeds into the

NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care discussion paper on supported accommodation.

### It's Time to Care for the Carers.

In June 2005 Centacare launched the Carers Counselling and Support program in collaboration with Anglicare and the Southern Council Group through the Illawarra Carer Respite Centre. Called 'Your Time', it provides support, information, advocacy and counseling to carers of family members or friends who are frail and elderly, or have a disability - with priority to ageing carers with an ageing child who has a disability.



## Family Services

Centacare's counsellors and educators work directly with individuals, families and groups to strengthen relationships and family life

*Staff from family services will be working to further develop partnerships and services in early intervention initiatives for families in regional areas.*



### Counselling

The implementation of a specialist intake role to support the counselling programme has led to many improvements in the service, including the reduction of waiting times, greater effectiveness with case allocation and information management, improved client attendance rate and enhanced expertise in managing enquiries and referrals.

An average of 67 assessments each month were processed through the intake service with an average of 170 counselling sessions provided each month.

### Marriage and Relationship Education

Courses range from relationship formation courses at high schools to preparing couples for marriage through both group courses and one-to-one sessions, helping couples prepare for the demands that having young children will put on their relationship, marriage enrichment courses for long-term couples and recovery assistance for people who have experienced grief and loss through separation, divorce or death.

### Family Skills Training

The Family Skills education programme delivered a comprehensive range of programmes (55 in total) across the Illawarra, Shoalhaven, Macarthur and Wingecarribee regions to 840 participants. The programs are designed to enhance the experience and skills of parenting and family life and are delivered in a variety of community settings.

Each of the educators works in collaboration with local services or community groups to provide targeted programmes which genuinely meet the needs of local communities.

### Future Directions

- With the introduction of the Commonwealth government's new family law system, the introduction of the Family Relationship Centres and Family Relationship Advice Line and a developing relationship between Centacare and the Family Court and the Federal Magistrates Court, the need for processes which focus on children and assist in the post separation assessment of families will become a core component of our counselling service. Staff from Family Services will be working to further develop partnerships and services in early intervention initiatives for families in regional areas.
- The rise of numerous government funded initiatives in the Illawarra, Shoalhaven and Macarthur/Wingecarribee and Centacare's role in numerous community development initiatives will see a consolidation of agency processes to streamline service delivery to families and develop a holistic approach to assessment at the point of enquiry.

## Parenting course magic for first-time mother

First-time parent Jo Kane found Centacare's 123 Magic parenting program so valuable, she immediately signed up for the follow-up course. 123 Magic is aimed at parents with toddlers in the 1-3 year age bracket, and involves three group sessions. For Jo, 35, attending the course really helped her approach to parenting her 2½ year old son Grady.

"It was fantastic - not just for what I learned about parenting, but for the opportunity to be with other parents and hear about their experiences with their children," she said. "As a first-time parent I was having difficulty with my approach to discipline, and lacking confidence about my parenting skills," the Kiama mother said. "Doing the course

really boosted my confidence because the course presenter emphasized that a lot of the things she would be teaching us would be building on what we are already doing. She reinforced that I was on the right track with my approach to parenting. "And hearing what other parents were going through with their toddlers made me

realise that what I was experiencing was normal. "After the first night I felt a lot better because I realised I was doing some things that were good, and by the third night I was eager to put what we'd learned into practice. And I signed straight up for another Centacare course aimed at 2-12 year olds called How to Raise Happier Kids."

## Children's Contact Service

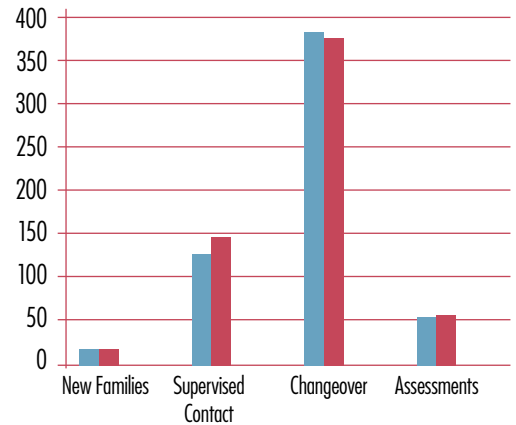
For families who are experiencing conflict or difficulties around contact and changeover arrangements for their children.

Centacare Children's Contact Service provides a venue for the safe transfer of children between separated parents, and meaningful interaction between children and non-residential parents during contact visits. Centacare Children's Contact Service is a federally funded service.

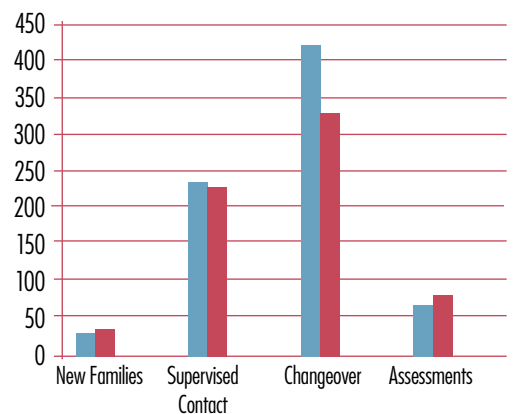
During the past financial year, this service developed electronic communication between the Contact Service and Family Court, Family Magistrates' Court and local courts as well as solicitors regarding availability of service. Staff in the service have also reviewed the contact service case management of families and developed a referral system for clients. Staff also provide referrals where necessary and advise on basic appropriate parenting skills, when appropriate.

This service continues to be provided in three Centacare sites (Wollongong, Campbelltown and Nowra).

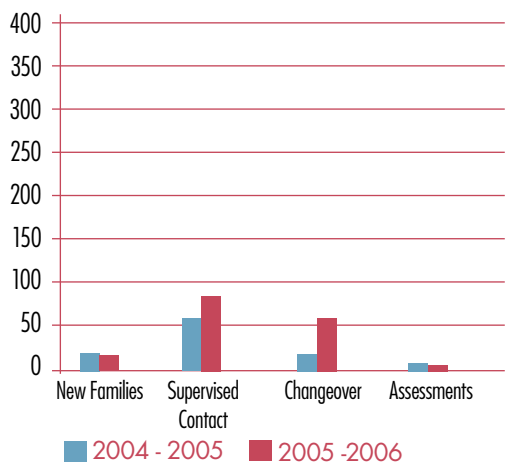
### Wollongong



### Campbelltown



### Nowra



## My work at Centacare Sr Ruth Davis



Although I am a Marist Sister, I have spent most of my working life in the state system as a registered nurse and, for many years, in management. I loved my work in Community Health so when I decided to change ministries 2 years ago it was important to choose a ministry in line with the Criteria for Ministry of my Congregation. Our Criteria for Mission states in part: "we choose ministries... where we can show the tenderness and

compassion of God to those struggling...which enable us to journey with and take a stand for the poor, the excluded... where there is the possibility of working for social justice...enabling others to take up their role in Church and Society. Consequently, with the mission of Centacare being so in tune with our desires for ministry, the decision to be part of this organisation was not a difficult one for me.

When I came to Centacare 18 months ago it was like "coming home". I feel very comfortable to be back working within the Catholic Church. I felt, and still feel, so proud to be part of an organisation that espouses the strong Catholic principles of justice and compassion to all people. The people I work with at Centacare truly try to live the Gospel in the way they act, in their compassion to those with whom they work, in

their stand for justice. The Gospel is proclaimed not in word but in action. I am delighted to be a Religious in Centacare where I can utilise fully my professional skills and experiences and also enjoy the freedom to do, at work, that which is so dear to me: to try to live and work as Mary did and bring the compassionate face of Christ to all to whom we minister. Centacare allow this in its entire staff... indeed, it encourages it.



# Aged Services

*Volunteers are recruited, trained and matched to a resident who they visit regularly.*



## Community Aged Care Packages

**This service provides practical support services to the frail aged enabling them to remain in their homes and community.**

Funded by the Department of Health & Ageing, this service provides support to frail, elderly people who are eligible for low level residential care but who prefer to remain in their own homes. The service is presently targeted at financially disadvantaged people and people of non-English speaking background in the Wollongong and Shellharbour Local Government areas. In this financial year, the Department funded 125 clients.

During this financial year this program undertook two recruitment drives and employed some highly qualified Personal Care Assistants (PCA's) for relief work to cover the periods when the other staff are on annual leave or sick.

During this period the need for community care packages diminished due to the influx of HACC (Home & Community Care) funding for community services. This has impacted on the service as it has become difficult to get clients and to run at capacity as we always have. Language spoken by PCA Workers

English	Spanish
Italian	Bosnian
Croatian	Serbian
Polish	Ukrainian
Macedonian	French
Fiji	Hindi
Urundu	Portuguese
German	Slovenian
Russian	Greek

Aged Care restructured its office team in May 2005, to ensure the Case Managers have clearly defined roles. The roles are roster, phone, intake and two positions to case manage clients and supervise staff. After an allocated period of time the staff will cycle through the different roles and become proficient at all of the many tasks associated with these positions. Eleven PCA staff are currently enrolled in TAFE traineeships and will complete their training at Certificate Three level in Aged Care.

The Department of Health & Ageing commenced an audit of community care providers during the year. Centacare performed well in the audit with very positive feedback given by the departmental representatives.

## Community Visitors Scheme

**A volunteer program that aims to lessen the isolation experienced by many residents in Aged Care homes.**

Our volunteers visit elderly people in residential care who are at risk of social isolation because of limited contact from family and friends, disability or linguistic and cultural reasons. Volunteers share conversations, hobbies, interests and social activities. The volunteers come from a variety of cultural backgrounds, including Italian, Maltese, German and Filipino.

Volunteers are recruited, trained and matched to a resident who they visit regularly.

Centacare is currently funded for 50 visitors by the Department of Health & Ageing, and has 65 visitors signed up. In some facilities (due to number of residents) morning teas are held. An International Coffee morning is held monthly at the Multicultural Village, Warrawong.

## Volunteer support

Combined support group meetings for the volunteers continue in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven with Community Visitors from Centacare, Anglicare and the Red Cross. A video or guest speaker is organised for these sessions to assist the visitors deal with a variety of practical issues, eg, Alzheimers, maintaining good relationships with residents and wheelchair management.

Community Visitors and Residents get together are held in each Aged Care Home. A staff member attends the meeting and the Community Visitors are given the opportunity to discuss any problems they might be experiencing. The residents are invited to join the group after this discussion. The Community Visitors also enjoy social outings together.

This program undertakes ongoing recruitment, as volunteers are always in demand.

## Disability Services

This service provides support to people with a disability, their families & carers.

*This role will aim to enhance the quality and spiritual life of people with disabilities and their families.*

### The Flexible Options Program

This program provides support to people with a long term disability who are ageing and/or may have an ageing carer and who are eligible for HACC services.

Personal care, domestic assistance, social support and transport is provided either by Centacare's Personal Care Assistants or brokered services. The program provides a social support group on a Wednesday evening facilitated by the casemanager and volunteers.

Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA) now has 29 clients.

### Carer Counselling & Support

This service provides support and counselling to carers who look after family members or friends who are frail aged or have a disability, with a priority to ageing carers with an ageing child with a disability. It is a collaborative effort between Centacare, Anglicare and Southern Council Group through the Illawarra Carers Respite Centre (ICRC), highlighting Centacare's commitment to building and maintaining community partnerships.

Centacare provides counselling and support across Wollongong, Shellharbour and Kiama LGA's. Anglicare provides counselling and support in Shoalhaven and ICRC provides information and advocacy across the four LGA's. Each partner is funded for 80 clients per year.

### Disability Advocate

As an outcome of the Office of Disability Project, 'Different Gifts, the Same Spirit', the Council for Disabilities and their families, and ongoing work through Centacare, the Diocese has allocated funding for a new position of Disability Advocate.

This role will aim to enhance the quality and spiritual life of people with disabilities and their families, by providing information and support to people with a disability, their families and carers in parishes and communities.

The primary goals of the position are to assist people to achieve spiritual fulfilment, reach an optimum level of independence and self-sufficiency and to enhance the feeling of inclusion and involvement in the Church.



## Disability services perform a vital need

Centacare's Office of Disability has been an important addition to Centacare since it was established with Diocesan support in 2003-4, and we are delighted that the Diocese has agreed to fund a disability worker for another two years. This program works in

the parishes helping people with disabilities and their carers, particularly helping them to access existing services and resources within the community, such as respite care.

As part of this important service, Centacare hosts a social group for people with a disability

to provide opportunities for social interaction and to overcome isolation. The group meets every Wednesday night and activities include dinner and dancing, lawn bowls, picnics, barbecues and ten pin bowling. The Flexible Options Program, established

in 2004 for the Wollongong local government area, focuses on supporting people with a disability who are ageing and/or have ageing parents. Flexible Options activities include personal care, domestic assistance, social support and transport.

## Children's Out of Home Care Services (OOHC)

Provides care and support for children who are unable to live with their birth families due to the inability of their parents to provide a safe and caring environment

### Foster Care

Centacare's Foster Care Program provides long term, short term, respite and occasionally crisis care for children who come into care between the ages of 0 to 12 years. The children have often experienced severe abuse and neglect. Centacare depends on foster carers to open their homes to children to give them love and understanding.

In 2005-06 Centacare's 58 carers, supported by 4 caseworkers, provided the following care:

Type of Care	No. of Children/ Young People	No. of Bed Nights
Long-term	38	13,627
Short-term	6	498
Respite	12	230
Crisis	0	0
After-care	1	

### Highlights for 2005-06

- Significant advances were made in the process of achieving formal accreditation from the Office for Children with the program moving from the "quality improvement" to the "accreditation" stream. A large amount of material was submitted in May 2006 with the aim of achieving accreditation by 31 October 2006.
- Re-structure of staffing was made to better meet the increasingly complex needs of our foster children. The appointment of a Child Behaviour Specialist enabled Centacare to offer a higher level of direct service to families caring for children with especially challenging behaviours, as well as to provide greater

support and training to caseworkers and other staff in the agency who work with children.

### Access

This program operates in the Macarthur and South West Sydney areas to supervise access visits between children in temporary foster care and their birth parents. Three part-time caseworkers assist in developing and maintaining positive interaction between the children and parents in a safe and non-threatening environment. The service continues until final court orders are made in relation to the children's long term care.

All children are referred by the Department of Community Services and most visits are held in the Child Care Room and outdoor play area at Centacare, Campbelltown - an appropriate and

spacious venue. Where necessary staff provide the service in DoCS offices.

### Highlights for 2005-06

- The service operated at full capacity throughout the year
- Clear protocols were drafted to enhance quality service delivery
- Regular promotional activities occurred with Department of Community Services staff
- Staff attended on-going training especially in relation to child protection
- Additional equipment, games and materials were purchased to ensure a range of activities were available to families especially those where access visits are extended over a long period.

## School Student and Family Program (SSFP)

*"There is a continued demand for groupwork in schools."*

Provides counselling services and group work to Catholic schools throughout the Diocese.

The SSFP team has continued to ensure Catholic Schools in the Diocese have access to quality school counseling, staff consultation on student welfare issues, and improved systems and procedures for pastoral care of students. A revised program manual for SSFP staff is now finalised and new evaluation questionnaires are improving liaison with Principals.

Students are referred to the program by a variety

of people and for a wide range of reasons. Many referrals came from parents and Year Coordinators, illustrating that the SSFP is strongly aligned with a pastoral care model of working in partnership with schools and families. The most frequent reasons for referral are family issues, behavioural issues, anger management, grief and loss, self harm and anxiety. There is a continued demand for groupwork in schools.

### 2005-06 Groups

- **Tools for Everyday Peacemakers** - a conflict resolution group program for K-6
- **PALS** - a social skills program for Kindergarten - Year 1
- **Amazing Me** - aims to teach Years 3/4 self control and body language through physical activities
- **Hit The Ground Running** - a transition to high school program for Year 6

### • Check It Out

- a depression prevention program for Years 5 and 6

Both counselling & group programs play an important preventative role in helping students to develop resilience, coping strategies & the ability to problem solve. This program is funded by the Catholic Education Office and relies heavily on the ongoing support of the Campbelltown Catholic Club.

## Child carers need care as well

Child Behaviour Specialist Peter Gormly says placing children in foster care isn't just about looking after the children. For the placement to be successful, the carers need to be looked after as well. Mr Gormly joined Centacare in February

2006. He has a Bachelor of Social Work and a wealth of experience working with children and families, particularly around mental health issues. Peter adds a level of expertise to the Centacare team to ensure Centacare

provides the best possible service to clients, schools, foster parents and families. Peter works in the Foster Care/Access Program but also works across the agency to provide assistance, advice and support in child-related issues.

He says it is very important for foster carers and case workers to be provided with adequate support and guidance. "Foster carers have very challenging roles," Mr Gormly said. "Often the children that they care for come from very

## Personal Support Program (PSP)

*2005-06 represented a strong growth period for PSP*

This service provides specialised support to those most in need due to the severity and multiplicity of their employment barriers

During 2005-06, Centacare, as part of a national tender coordinated by Catholic Social Services Australia, successfully bid for increased PSP work in the Shoalhaven. This tender was a measured initiative that aimed to capitalise on our successful rollover of business achieved at all four PSP outlets, while ensuring we continued our growth in a manageable way.

Clearly, 2005-06 represented a strong growth period for PSP with a one-third increase during the financial year. While the rapid growth presented some significant logistical, staffing and management

challenges, it underscores both the clear need for the services that exists in the community and the government's recognition of the professional capability of Centacare and it's frontline PSP staff to deliver quality services.

During 2005-06, PSP met all its mandated key performance indicators at each of its four locations, successfully tendered for increased business at its Shoalhaven location, negotiated outreach for its Shoalhaven PSP service into the Bay and Basin region that will commence mid-August in Sanctuary Point, and achieved a satisfactory

standard at each of its locations against each assessment criteria in Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) audits conducted early in 2006.

PSP has relocated its Shellharbour operation from Warilla to Albion Park Rail. The relocation was strategically designed to better

take advantage of public transport and geographically place Centacare where it can better service people from Dapto, Albion Park and Kiama.

During 2005-06, PSP's contracted capacity was increased at all four outlets. The table below shows the comparison in contracted capacity between 2004-05 and 2005-06:

	2004-05	2005-06
Macarthur	87	119
Wollongong	112	137
Shellharbour	67	102
Shoalhaven	37	48
Total	303	406

Note: These increases do not include the new places awarded at Shoalhaven in the recent tender mentioned above.

## Chaplaincy within Juvenile Justice

*Young people in juvenile justice are often isolated or estranged from their families.*

Centacare is the auspicing agency for Chaplaincy Services at two Juvenile Justice Detention centres within the Diocese: Reiby at Airds and Keelong at Unanderra.

Young people in juvenile justice are often isolated or estranged from their families.

The Chaplain and his assistant provide care, support and encouragement to young offenders though occasional advocacy

at court, contact with families, connections with representatives of the young persons religious/faith tradition, taking those who are eligible to leave a Centre to a church, mosque or temple, offering religious instruction, conducting formal Bible Study classes, coordinating visiting religious representatives, providing post-release support, individual support and guidance and distributing religious literature.

The multi-faith chapel at

Reiby is now completed and was officially opened on August 2006. This addition to the Reiby Centre is unique in that it is the only specifically designated chapel space within any Juvenile Justice facility in NSW.

The aboriginal pastoral visits program continues and three Koori Aunties continue to visit regularly.

Religious worship is held monthly in both Centres. On average , more than half the young offenders would attend

at any one time in both Centres. Considering this is an optional activity, this is encouraging.

Some of the challenges that lay ahead for this program are expanding the usage of the Chapel space, increasing the Sunday Worship to twice monthly at Keelong, engaging more males in the Koori Pastoral Visits Programme and ensuring Chaplains have professional inservice support.

traumatized backgrounds. They come from situations where there may be a lot of drug and alcohol abuse, or violence.

Some children also have parents who suffer from mental illness, and may have experienced very inconsistent parenting. They

may have been living in constant fear of violence, or sexual abuse.

Children may take on a significant caring role including the care of the parent that impacts on the child's well-being in both the long and short term.

These children present

major challenges and need special care. It is not like looking after your own children, so carers need special skills to care for them properly.

To provide the best care for the kids, the carers also need appropriate care. Foster carers need help to

identify different ways of managing the challenges they face".

Mr Gormly says that while foster carers do face many challenges, the rewards can be considerable.

**Right:**  
Child Behaviour Specialist Peter Gormly





## Corporate Services

Includes Administration, Finance, Human Resources & Information Technology.

*Supporting and enabling Centacare's programs and services*

### Our Systems

Centacare operates from a head office in Wollongong, a major office in Campbelltown and two smaller offices in Nowra and Albion Park. Over the last five years Centacare has increased its efficiency through the use of technology. Even with this considerable investment in technology the CLT identified a need for an independent review of our IT system taking into account our history of growth and also our potential future needs. A Centacare IT Strategy was developed.

Local Illawarra IT suppliers were invited to tender for the supply of a server network that would be based on standardised infrastructure across the agency, would centralise all of Centacare's computing resources and data files, provide reliable access from all sites and for all mobile users and provide increased levels of security. A well respected IT supplier was chosen as the successful tenderer from a pool of professional proposals.

Regular information sessions for all program teams have been conducted to keep staff up to date with the progress of the IT network project and to increase project success through staff awareness and acceptance.

As part of the IT network project it was identified that Centacare's e-filing system was in need of improvement. A new e-File Structure has been developed that introduces a standardised approach to all files across all programs with increased security for files of a confidential nature. Standardised e-filing tools and naming protocols have also been developed again to ensure a consistent approach across the agency.

A training needs analysis was conducted during the year to determine the amount and form of training required in the new network. Because of the range of staff IT skills, it is anticipated that training at various levels will be held to coincide with the 'Go Live' date in September 2006.

### Our People

The future success of Centacare rests heavily on having a skilled workforce ready and able to meet the changing needs of our work and the workplace. Centacare has devoted resources to the development of internal human resource expertise to aid us in achieving this goal.

Job Redesign was conducted in the Finance and Admin Areas in both Wollongong and Campbelltown Offices. This resulted in significant changes to roles within these two areas, resulting in enhanced productivity and efficiency as well as improved client service provision.

A new Induction Day Program has been developed which includes a greater focus on what it means to work for Centacare and the role of Catholic Social Teaching in the provision and delivery of our services.

A Review of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Committee Membership and Functioning has resulted in the reinvigoration of the OHS Committee and the importance of employee representatives coming together to improve the employer's systems for managing health and safety. The OHS Committee will continue to work on identifying risks and the development of new OHS policies.

Centacare is systematically reviewing working conditions and employment practices to ensure that human resources activities support the strategic plan and business goals and enable staff to strive for professional growth.

### Our Finances

Centacare's status as a 'going concern' is dependant on the prudent financial management of the many Federal and State Department grants and private subsidies that fund the 26 separate programs and services that Centacare provides.

This year has been a year full of change and improvement. With the appointment of a new Manager Administration and Finance many

aspects of the finance system have been identified as having opportunities for improvement some of which were prioritised and achieved this year. The remaining opportunities are included in Finance's Business Plan to be addressed in the coming year.

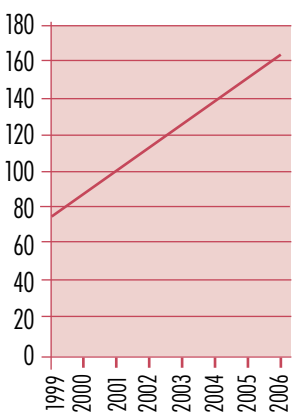
The recent recruitment of an Accountant, a Finance Officer and a Payroll Officer with a combined experience of almost 70 years gives Centacare a wealth of financial knowledge and experience that will enable a systematic approach to process improvement and documentation.

Through process mapping the Payroll Process has been reviewed, flowcharted and documented. The process has been streamlined to include an appropriate amount of checking. Double handling has been eliminated resulting in an improvement of almost five hours. Internal Audit requirements have been tightened during the year with the implementation of segregation of duties in both Payroll and Finance.

A new Budgeting System has been developed that allows for efficient budget preparation. The methodology for allocating overheads across all programs and services has been reviewed to more equitably spread costs such as occupancy, pool car usage, telephone usage and room usage. More accurate costs increase Centacare's accountability in various acquittal statements to the many government departments.

A formal system of reviewing budgets on a quarterly basis has been introduced across the agency rather than on an as needs basis by the program managers. After each Quarterly Budget Review the CLT and the Centacare Advisory Council (CAC) can rely on the accuracy of the overall financial position of the Agency and make well-informed financial decisions.

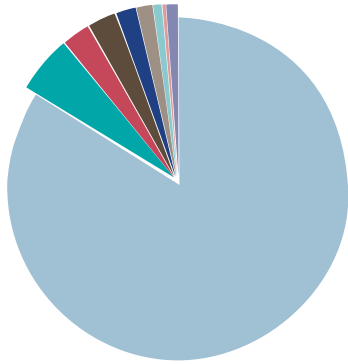
Agency Staff Growth



76 in 1999

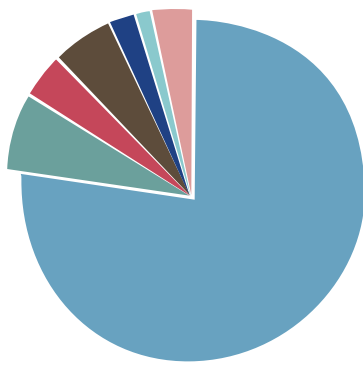
162 in 2006





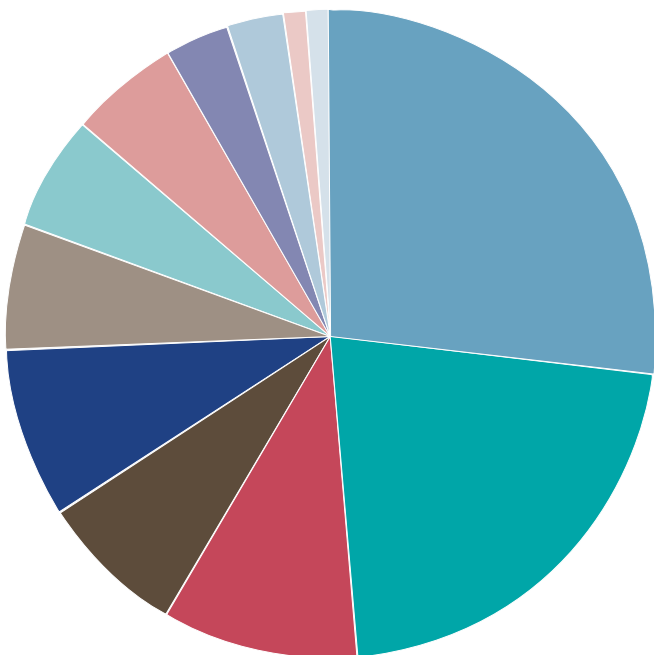
### INCOME 2005/2006

Funding Bodies	5,338,841	84%
Fees	359,078	6%
Campbelltown Catholic Club	160,000	3%
Client Payments	157,922	2%
Diocesan Funding	100,000	2%
Interest	129,812	2%
Fundraising	28,223	0%
Donations	13,476	0%
Other Income	57,630	1%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>6,344,982</b>	



### EXPENDITURE 2005/2006

Employee Expenses	4,648,902	77%
Rent & Occupancy Costs	384,375	6%
Motor Vehicle Expenses	242,349	4%
Insurance	328,915	5%
Depreciation	125,093	2%
Program Expenses	63,249	1%
Other Expenses	217,236	4%
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>6,010,119</b>	
<b>Net Surplus</b>	<b>334,863</b>	



### EXPENDITURE BY PROGRAM 2005/2006

Aged Care Packages	1,626,357	27%
School Student & Family Program	1,290,778	21%
Foster Care	561,570	9%
Marriage & Relationship Counselling	463,100	8%
Personal Support Program	502,921	8%
Disabilities Services	396,302	7%
Family Skills Training	342,333	6%
Childrens Contact Service	347,803	6%
Access	181,610	3%
Marriage & Relationship Education	177,832	3%
Chaplaincy	59,837	1%
Community Visitors Scheme	48,250	1%
Other	11,426	0%
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>6,010,119</b>	

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