



**FAMILIES & CHILDREN
TASMANIA**

ACTS
2018



2020 - 2021 State Budget Submission

TASMANIA'S CHILDREN & FAMILIES PEAK BODY

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Board Member

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TASMANIA

Who We Are And Who We Represent

Our current Families and Children (FACT) Members



FACT is a recognized member of the Peaks Network in Tasmania –

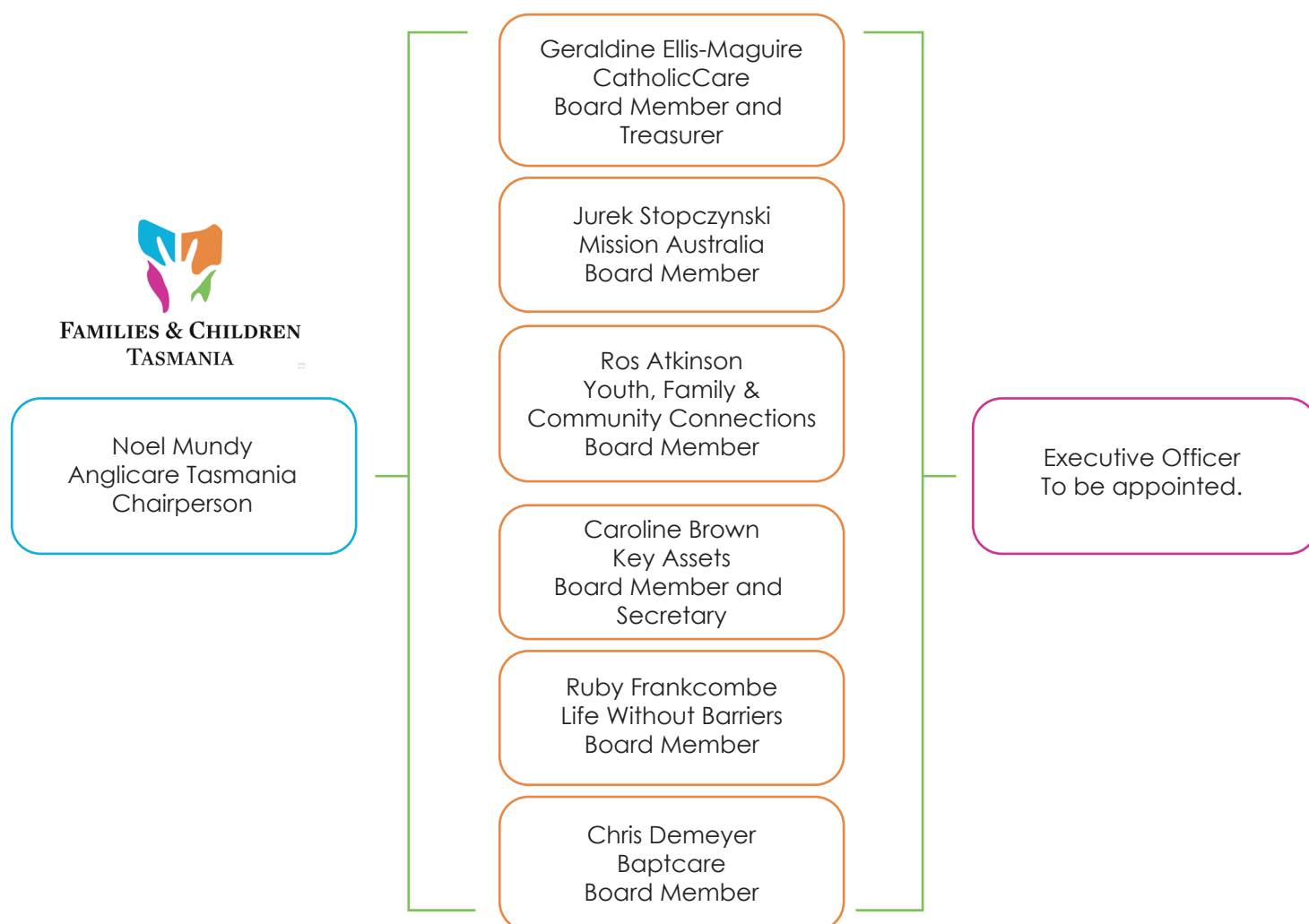
In 2016, members of the Peaks Network recognised that there was no Peak Body representing children and their families in Tasmania. As a result FACT was approached to become a recognised member of the Peaks Network and has since participated in a range of initiatives including input to the Human Services Blueprint for Tasmania. This is an overarching document that describes the vision and fundamental conditions for human service delivery in this State, irrespective of any future policy changes. FACT continues to be the only non-funded Peaks Network member.





FACT's Governance and Current Association Structure

FACT is represented by seven experienced board members who all hold senior positions within the families and children wellbeing sector in Tasmania. As of September 2019, FACT was no longer able to fund an Executive Officer. This has impacted the Child and Family Wellbeing sector as only limited information is now being shared across the sector. It is our intention, that should FACT be successful in receiving funding, a recruitment process will immediately take place to appoint an Executive Officer.





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Achievements by FACT

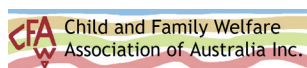
over the last twenty four (24) months –
demonstrating evidence of the need for a funded peak
body in Tasmania focusing on families and children.



Currently and throughout Covid19, FACT has participated in all Peaks Network meetings including input on a Parliamentary Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's economic response to COVID, as well as feedback provided to the Premier and the Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Council on behalf of FACT and our Members. FACT is the only non funded Peaks Network member.



FACT has initiated a collaboration with NAPCAN, ChildWise, Australian Childhood Foundation and Key Assets to develop the "Child Friendly Island" initiative. It takes an island to raise a child, will result in the design and delivery of resources at an individual family, organisational and community level.



FACT is the Tasmanian representative for the national peak body, the Child and Family Welfare Association of Australia. CAFWAA is represented by the seven state and territory peak networks, with FACT being the only non funded state Peak Body.



FACT continues to be the Tasmanian representative contributing to the national research currently being undertaken to identify the role, services, support and assessment required for Kinship Carers. This includes identifying the number of informal carers that exist within Tasmania and contributing to the national conversation through CAFWAA.



FACT has been invited to be the sole representative for Tasmania to the Australian Childhood Maltreatment Study Advisory Group. This study is the first national study of the prevalence of all five forms of maltreatment in Australia. The study is being led by the Queensland University of Technology.



FACT and its members have continued to proactively provide feedback to the Department of Communities on aspects of policy and service delivery relating to the Children Advice Referral Service and out-of-home care reforms for both now and in the future.



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Achievements by FACT

over the last twenty four (24) months –
demonstrating evidence of the need for a funded peak
body in Tasmania focusing on families and children.



FACT has enjoyed meeting regularly with the office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People providing input to submissions and thought leadership on the wellbeing of children in Tasmania.



FACT has contributed to the conversation on key Government initiatives between FACT members and Departmental staff. This includes; OOHC, foster care recruitment, CARS, Strong Families Safe Kids, Child Wellbeing framework, and the Department of Education's Student Wellbeing framework and One Watch..



FACT proudly assisted the Department of Communities to organise and participate in the Our Voice Our Future Search conference. This has included participating in ongoing interest groups to ensure implementation and sharing relevant information with all of our members.



FACT accepted the invitation to attend the Premier's Health and Well-being Advice Council Forum in Hobart. This provided an excellent opportunity to update our members on numerous initiatives, which has since led to further partnering towards wellbeing.



In August 2019, FACT hosted Dr Lucy Peake from the United Kingdom to commence a #kinshipcare knowledge exchange between carers, NGOs, civil servants & politicians in Hobart. Some quick wins & long term policy goals were immediately identified.



FACT hosted Dr Sue Packer, NAPCAN's inspiring Board member & Snr Australian of the Year as the keynote speaker for the FACT Tasmania annual lunch at Parliament House. The lunch provided the opportunity for a large number of members, NGO's, public servants and politicians to come together to remember that wellbeing also includes being friendly and kind to children.

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Introduction

Families and Children Tasmania (FACT) previously known as the Child and Family Welfare Association of Tasmania (CAFWAT) was incorporated in 2008 as the peak body representing child and family wellbeing in Tasmania. Historically the organisation was run by a Board of Volunteers and represented organisations that focused on child and family services in Tasmania, including children and families at risk, and children in out-of-home care.

In 2017, once off funding was provided to FACT by CatholicCare, Anglicare, Mission Australia and Uniting, as well as funding from the Sidney Myer Foundation towards the Home Stretch Campaign, to enable the employment of an Executive Officer for a period of eighteen months. This decision was made to demonstrate to both the Tasmanian Government and to the sector, that there was a requirement for a funded peak body that focuses on families and children, particularly at a time when the Government was driving through many long-term initiatives relating to child and family wellbeing.

Key Government initiatives that FACT has been able to provide relevant and valuable input to have included; out-of-home care, child safeguarding, family wellbeing, child protection, health, and educational outcomes. FACT stands with the Government on the need for the community to play a role in ensuring the wellbeing and safety of children in this state, however it is our belief that this can only be achieved with a focused peak body that is advocating for and driving initiatives in consultation with our members and the broader Tasmanian community.

The child and family sector is requesting a recurrently funded peak body. A funded Tasmanian peak body will represent the entire early years, childhood, adolescence, early adulthood, and their families, as well as the services that support them through advocacy, lobbying, sector representation, service and policy development, designing initiatives, and overseeing the delivery of critical projects (for example a centralised and ongoing marketing program for the identification of foster carers and volunteers).

In Tasmania, the Department of Communities Tasmania as well as other Departments contract the community sector to undertake the important work of ensuring child and family wellbeing, this is particularly evident in the Government's investment in family support. For this reason it is important to note that FACT is the sole peak body in Tasmania with a focus on Families and Children. The former Family Support Services Association (FSSA) was amalgamated into CAFWAT (now FACT), and the Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT) continues to focus on Youth.

Members of FACT recognise the ongoing need for a dedicated child and family peak. Particularly one that has a focused broader remit, covering all child and family wellbeing services. This can be evidenced by the large number of letters of support from our members that have been attached to this request for funding. FACT is applying for recurrent funding to ensure that the funded child and family support sector, is represented by its chosen peak body.

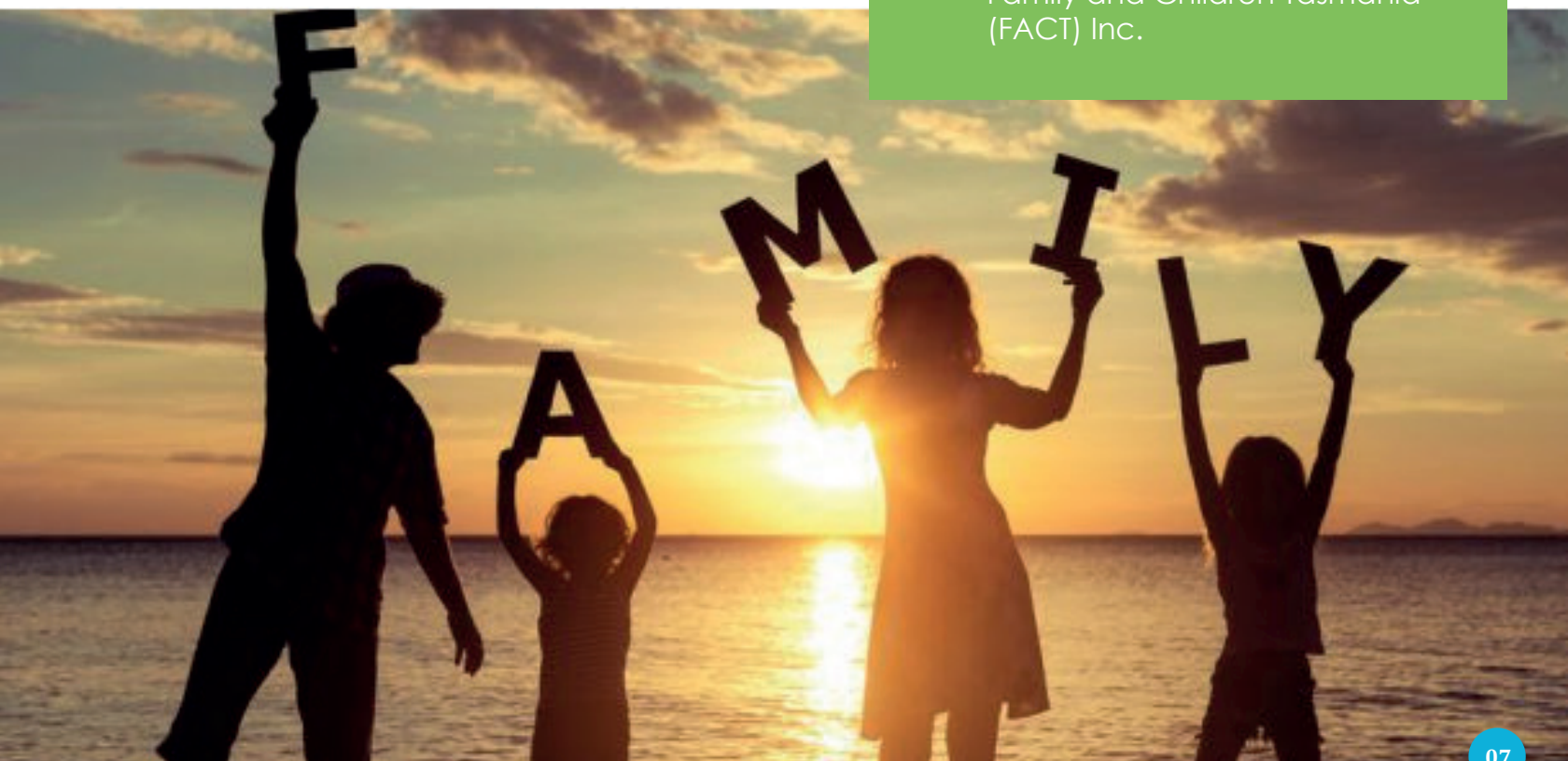


Invited by the Peaks Network to be a member, FACT is seen by the Tasmanian community sector peak bodies as being the logical body to provide expertise and information on family and children matters. Our membership of the national peak body in this sector, the Child and Family Welfare Association of Australia (CAFWAA), is also an acknowledgement of our peak status.

The 2008 3p Consulting Review of DHHS Funded Peak Bodies noted the need for a funded peak body to represent the Family and Children Sector, and this sector has grown considerably since then. A funded peak body's value proposition is to provide one place, for the family and child sector to disseminate information, coordinate responses, interface with government, initiate projects and provide a sector wide response rather than just from one NGO, and to provide public commentary that is supportive of government instrumentality.

Recommendations

1. As the families and children sector is relevant to a number of portfolios including Communities, Education, DPAC, Tourism, Police and Justice, FACT recommends that funding could be from either one department or shared amongst two or multiple departments.
2. That Family and Children Tasmania Inc. (FACT) is given recognised Peak status by the Tasmanian government and government officers.
3. That the Tasmanian government recurrently funds the Child and Family Sector Peak Body – Family and Children Tasmania (FACT) Inc.





Key Issues

The members of FACT voted in support of our organisation being the voice to represent their organisations, all of whom operate in the child and family sector. The focus of FACT is to work in partnership with the Government to ensure successful implementation of key initiatives and services, as well as advocacy relating to the needs of children and families in this state. FACT works to the following key issues which were defined and voted upon by our members:

1. Ensuring a sustainable child and family wellbeing sector and workforce in Tasmania.

- Facilitate access to a range of professional development opportunities for sector staff.
- Co-ordinate a training calendar across Tasmania for development programs available to all organisations and the Department working in child and family wellbeing.
- Membership discussion groups with government staff.
- Networking events to encourage collaboration and engagement with government.
- Support workforce planning and development across the child wellbeing sector.
- Support FACT members to embed continuous quality improvement and participate in accreditation.

2. Developing Tasmania to be the number one child safe and family friendly Island (state)

- Assist with definition of child safeguarding training and accreditation in Tasmania.
- Develop community resources to position Tasmania as the child friendly island.
- Training for employers and first time employees (under 18) on duty of care and safety in the workplace and how to access appropriate services.
- Provide feedback, thought leadership, and evidence in practice on Child Safety Reform.
- New migrant support services for children and their families.
- Research and support policy and position papers.
- Promote the collection and analysis of data from children, families and service providers.
- Support effective representation including advocacy for children with a disability.

3. Delivering best practice in Out of Home Care – Family Based Care

- Work with Communities Tasmania to define OOHC assessment accreditation.
- Consultation with CCYP to advocate for out of home care outcomes.
- Advocacy for Grandparents raising Grandchildren, and kinship care including identification of support and financial assistance required.
- Adoption vs Permanent Care order advocacy which is now particularly relevant given that it is being discussed at a federal level.
- Provide evidence to CYS regarding different out of home care options.
- Provide evidence in practice in relation to therapeutic home based carers.
- The development of effective ongoing marketing to attract, recruit and retain foster carers as well as support via volunteers.
- Monitor OOHC benchmarking (in conjunction with Create Foundation) and ongoing training of foster carers via FKAT.
- Ensuring an effective transfer policy for foster carers is in place between all OOHC providers.



4. Supporting specialised and tailored health services for children and young people

- Review the benefits and costs of establishing specific programs in Tasmania such as a sexually abusive behavior treatment centre for children 8 years of age and upwards, drug rehabilitation services that cater for families, detox rehabilitation programs for children, and mobile outreach trauma services for children and young people.
- Define the benefits of intensive outreach services including child and adolescent mental health facility that travels to the patient.

5. Delivering strong educational outcomes for children and young people

- Demonstrate evidence in practice of educational engagement support programs/services for children and their families.
- Ensuring effective social services support for youth justice, including educational and developmental programs for the residents of Ashley.
- Defining outcomes of social workers working with the Dept. of Education.
- Providing feedback and defining outcomes relating to the Dept. of Education child and student wellbeing strategy.
- Provide teachers with the required resources to manage students with trauma and other behavioural issues in the classroom.
- Implement music programs across all state primary schools to ensure educational enrichment.

6. Addressing homelessness of unaccompanied children, and children and their families

- Homelessness and families – Development of a housing at risk strategy relating to children, and children and their families.
- Addressing homelessness of children and young people (in conjunction with ShelterTas and YNOT).
- Defining long term therapeutic programs to support unaccompanied homeless children.
- Providing broad consultation for recommendations arising from the Under 16 Homeless Taskforce

7. Delivering best practice in family support services

- Reducing the number of children entering out-of-home care by supporting families using evidence based programs with clearly defined outcomes.
- Measuring the effectiveness of the “ten hours per week” of childcare services being made available to at risk and vulnerable families.
- Ensuring that the reduction of children entering out-of-home care is matched by increased funding into family support services.
- Ensuring the voice of families are heard when they have a child or children in out-of-home care.



The current aims and objectives of FACT include:

- Represent the interests of Tasmanian families and their children.
- Represent the NGO's involved in serving families and children in Tasmania, ensuring increased collaboration.
- Participate in the planning of initiatives to support families and children.
- Promote and facilitate national standards of service delivery including ongoing and specialised training for employees working within this sector. This will also include the management of a sector wide training calendar for Tasmania that is available to both non-government and government employees.
- Undertake consultation with both the community, NGO's and private providers.
- Capacity building and workforce planning within the sector.
- Provide government with up-to-date and sector wide advice around particular areas of interest.
- Enable government to call upon FACT as a Peak Body to make public comment that is supportive of government instrumentality.
- Provide national representation for Tasmania.
- Undertake ongoing research and policy development.
- Provide support and expertise as required to government initiatives and discussions such as the contribution that FACT has made to the Children's Advice Referral Service, Safe Families Safe Kids Initiative, Child Wellbeing Framework, Child and Student Wellbeing Framework, Out-of-Home Care Discussion Paper, Out-of-Home Care monitoring, and health issues.
- Partnering with government to drive reform and to leverage service delivery excellence via our partnerships with other Peak Bodies across Australia including CAFWAA, Families Australia and the Centre for Excellence for Child and Family Wellbeing.



FACT is represented by a voluntary board of management. The structure of our association has been provided to you on Page 3 of this document.

In May 2015, consultants 3p delivered a report for government on the Tasmanian Early Years Foundation Consultations. Their findings noted that what was needed was a policy leader who focused on policy, research, projects, professional development, advocacy and partnerships. FACT and our members, many of whom participated in these consultations, recommend that these functions are best performed by FACT whose focus is early years, childhood, adolescence and early adulthood and their families. Through the funding of a full-time Executive Officer, FACT will ensure its capability to continue to perform in this capacity.

We are therefore submitting our budget submission to the Department of Premier and Cabinet with the recommendation that the Department may choose to provide funding on their own or in conjunction with the Department of Communities, and/or the Department of Education.

Links to Government Priorities

Throughout 2019 and 2020 FACT has actively engaged with Tasmanian Departmental staff to ensure that our members have been informed of Government priorities, and that Departmental staff have been able to leverage expertise and program service delivery capability. This ensures that the investment into the non-government sector remains current for the delivery of child and family wellbeing services

For example, the SFSK Advice and Referral service has been developed on a model that requires all departmental staff, service providers, mandatory reporters and community members to “step up” and play their role in ensuring child wellbeing. Our members have actively demonstrated their willingness to do this with FACT being the conduit for promoting knowledge sharing, and collective information exchange between the sector and relevant government departments.

Furthermore, FACT has demonstrated its capability to be the conduit to a broader community via workshops, information forums, and member events, all of which have included Departmental staff from Communities, Education, Health, Tasmanian Police and Justice. These workshops have provided educational opportunities and knowledge sharing between renowned guest speakers, Departmental staff, and members of Parliament. Without funding, FACT is no longer able to sustain these initiatives and over the last few months, the opportunities for further collaboration between organisations in this sector has begun to fade.



For this reason, it is FACT's belief that without a capable and funded peak body for families and children in this state, the processes of co-ordinating advice and achieving a shared understanding and commitment to reforms becomes challenging for the sector and for the Government.

Throughout 2019 and 2020, FACT continued to align its links to Government priorities, by contributing to national and state-wide discussions relating to the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Sexual Abuse. It is our belief that FACT is the obvious choice to work with the Government to develop Tasmanian standards that meet national requirements for child safeguarding. Our members include NAPCAN, the Australian Childhood Foundation and ChildWise, who are already working in collaboration with FACT to ensure that our state is able to fulfil its duty of care.

As the Peak Body representing the out-of-home care providers, we are well positioned to ensure the Government's priorities are worked towards, and at the same time, we are able to contribute to the implementation of OOHC accreditation standards. In Tasmania, FACT is the voice for the OOHC sector and alongside our members we are committed to Tasmania adopting formal out-of-home-care standards that ensures that all services delivered to Children and Young People are consistently at a high standard and are focused on improving the quality of care provided. FACT and our members are also working in conjunction to implement training accreditation standards across youth workers which will lead to more appropriately skilled workers in this state.

Over the last six months, FACT has been called upon frequently to ensure there is a focused voice for the out of home care and child and family sector in Tasmania. This has included the preparation of a submission for the Department of Communities supporting children and families experiencing problematic sexualised behaviours, as well as our continuing work on the development of a foster carer transfer protocol which remains a FACT led initiative. Furthermore, FACT has led the need for the delivery of a Certificate IV in Child, Youth and Family Intervention on the ground in this state and has partnered with ACF to make this happen. This is now a mandatory qualification in other Australian jurisdictions for all staff working in residential care. The outcome of this should be known in the next 2 months.

Recently FACT also actively engaged in the CAFWAA campaign re alcohol labelling to support a red, black and white pregnancy health warning system. This initiative was supported by the Ministers in July 2020. Throughout March 2020 to present, FACT has represented the sector by working on COVID related matters during a time when consultation was urgently required due to a rapidly changing environment. It is our belief that there can no longer be any delays in funding FACT as a recognised member of the Peaks Network in Tasmania.

Finally, as a funded peak body, FACT will be able to partner with the Tasmanian Government to progress reform and achieve lasting social outcomes, and ensure the voices of our members and the broader community are captured. It is the intention of FACT to contribute through our partnership in areas relating to overall child and family wellbeing, child safeguarding, children and families at risk, homeless children, educational outcomes, parental support, mobile outreach health services, out-of-home care, and family based care, as well as future proofing service delivery of the sector during times of risk including pandemics such as Covid19.



Budget Request

In order to ensure that the excellent work of FACT can continue, we are seeking ongoing recurrent funding.

The budget request stated below will enable FACT to continue to provide the services that we have demonstrated our capability in over the last twelve months. The funds provided will result in the employment of salaried staff, enabling us to partner with government to progress priorities, and to ensure ongoing development of initiatives that we have underway as described in our achievements over the last twelve months (stated on page 4).

Budget Item	Roles	Cost
Salaried Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sector Consultation and Coordination• Consolidation of information• Provision of independent advice• Representation to government and the Minister's office• Representative at Peaks Network & National Body• Advocacy and Representation• Administrative support• Supervision and management of the office• Media Management and Monitoring• Membership Forums• Submission Responses• Consultation to Government• Policy Development• Project Initiation and Development	\$100,000
Contribution to Operating Costs – offset by FACT membership fees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Insurance• Amenities• IT and Telecommunications• Travel	\$10,000
Total	All costs are GST exclusive	\$110,000



FAMILIES & CHILDREN TASMANIA

FACTA
0459 022 122

Should you require any further information regarding this document, then please contact Board Member, Geraldine Ellis-Maguire by telephone on 0459 022 122 or email geraldine@fact.asn.au

We thank you for taking the time to consider our submission.

Letters of support

We are pleased to provide in excess of twenty letters from our members supporting the requirement for a funded peak body in Tasmania that focuses on child and family wellbeing. These letters are provided in a separate attachment.

FACT Board Approval

The information provided in this budget submission has been approved and agreed upon by the elected Board of Families and Children Tasmania (FACT).

Noel Mundy
Chairperson

Geraldine Ellis-Maguire
Board Member and Treasurer

Ros Atkinson
Board Member

Ruby Frankcombe
Board Member

Jurek Stopczynski
Board Member

Chris Demeyer
Board Member

Caroline Brown
Board Member and Secretary