



Laurel Times



Hello from the team at Laurel House and Laurel Place!

It is mid-year already and another edition of Laurel Times is here for your interest - providing a little insight into the happenings at Laurel House and Laurel Place.

We are currently working on revamping our logo and brochures which you may see within the next edition. As always, we do welcome your feedback!

Coming events...

3 July - 10 July: National NAIDOC Week

Laurel House and Laurel Place will attend and participate in a range of community activities across the Brisbane, Sunshine Coast, Gympie, Murgon and Cherbourg areas throughout the week.

4 August: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day

This year's theme is 'Little people, big futures' - check out the beautiful posters we've received from SNAICC which we will display to mark the day.

Queensland Child Protection Week. 6 - 12 September 2015

Laurel House and Laurel Place will again join with other community and government agencies to present a range of activities promoting child protection.

October - Sexual Violence Awareness Month

More in the next newsletter about the Freedom Run and other activities we have planned for this annual event.

DATE CLAIMER

Annual SVAM Freedom Run

Sunday 18th October from 2pm.

This year there will be races and activities for the kids as well as the 5km Fun Run. Fun for all the family! More details next issue...



Domestic & Family Violence Prevention Month

Laurel Place walks with Cherbourg community to raise awareness

It was a sunny Tuesday morning on the 12th May, when we joined in with community members, other community services and the children from Cherbourg school to mark Domestic & Family Violence Month.

**NOT NOW
NOT EVER**

Stepping out to the beat of drummer, Frank Malone, the walkers, many in purple shirts bearing the "Not now, not ever" theme, attracted a lot of attention from local residents who gathered on their front verandahs and in their front yards to show their support.

With the steady drumbeat and the children chanting "No more violence!", the sight and sound of the parade sent a strong message that violence is never okay.

The morning also included talks by local speakers, lunch, games and goodie bags for the children with resources and giveaways from participating services. Laurel Place were happy to provide icy poles for all the children after their terrific effort during the walk.



Laurel Place



from Gympie & Murgon...

Well, we're half way through the year already, and in the first half of 2015 we've been delighted to be working with lots of new people at both our Gympie and Murgon offices. It is indeed a privilege to be able to share a part of the lives of truly strong, resilient and resourceful women, men, and young people, and share and understand how they are able to keep going even at difficult times.

It's been very exciting to be able to offer our group programs at both offices as well, with our Creating Safer Families program running in Murgon, and our DBT group, Living Skilfully, continuing in our Gympie office. We are now into the second module of Living Skilfully, Emotion Regulation, and learning all about how we deal with emotion, and the important functions of emotion.

One of the most important principles of our service is safety, and one of our passions is to be able to provide information and education for the prevention of sexual violence. As we go into the second half of the year, we hope to offer young people across our communities this information, through our Let's Get Savvy about Sex, and our Let's Get Savvy about Sexting programs. We also enjoy joining in with other local prevention initiatives, and found our participation in this year's Domestic Violence Prevention Month Gympie activity, a 'Peace Begins at Home' march down Mary Street on May 5 highly rewarding.

We look forward with anticipation to the rest of 2015, and continuing work with, not only our clients, but our partner agencies as well. If you'd like to know more about Laurel Place Gympie or Murgon, please don't hesitate to contact us or arrange a visit!



Good luck Amber!

Since the last newsletter Laurel House were very happy to welcome Amber to the counselling team while she completed part of her practicum requirements for the Masters of Clinical Psychology at the University of Sunshine Coast.

During her time with us, Amber worked with the team for two days a week, applying her skills, knowledge, and training in psychology within a counselling service context.

Amber became a valued member of the team, and we wish her luck in her future endeavours.

Laurel House values the opportunity to support the learning experience for students in understanding the specialised nature of our work.



"Understanding the dynamics, risks and impacts associated with sexting..."

Let's Get Savvy about Sexting is an educational program which has been developed by Laurel House and delivered in collaboration with school-based health nurses to high school students across the region.

The program was developed in response to the growing need for young people to understand the dynamics, risks, and impacts associated with engaging in sexting behaviour, and increase awareness of how to minimise these risks,

and access help and support if needed.

The program was piloted at the end of 2014 in three schools, Caloundra, Nambour, and Noosa Districts State High School. The program was positively evaluated and is now in its second phase with several schools including the program within relevant curriculum.



Laurel House is very excited about this project, and the partnership with the school-based health nurses has enhanced capacity to ensure it is

delivered to as many students and schools within the region as possible.



The Yarnin' Circle



Biddy Adams.

**Liaison & Support Worker -
Indigenous Program**

SCSASV Inc acknowledges the Gubbi Gubbi people as the traditional custodians of the land on which Laurel House and Laurel Place are located in Maroochydore and Gympie, and the Wakka Wakka people as the traditional custodians of the land on which Laurel Place is located in Murgon.

Since the last newsletter, I've had the pleasure of being involved in a number of community events across the regions.

On the Sunshine Coast, it was great to be a part of **Booin Gari** once again. The service has taken part in this event for many years. Hosted by United Synergies in Tewantin, it gets bigger and better every year, and the new location on the banks of the Noosa River this year, made for a very pleasant day at the office

I also took part in the Sunshine Coast Reconciliation Group's **Inaugural Recognise Coastal Walk** along the beautiful Golden Beach esplanade. The 5km walk was really special as I got to share it with my daughter, daughter-in-law and granddaughters. The sausage sizzle, the entertainment and the colourful shirt we received as a reward for the walk, were a lovely way to finish off the evening. And my

granddaughter and many other kids thoroughly enjoyed joining in with the Gubbi Gubbi dancers for the last dance of the night!

Our service information stall at the **Well Persons Health Check Day** in Gympie was well attended, and we had a ringside seat to the great entertainment on show. Our congratulations to North Coast Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation for Community Health for this event which we have been pleased to participate in over the ten years it has been held.

In Cherbourg, the energy of the local kids was the highlight of both the **Youth Week Community Day** where we held a service display, and the **Domestic & Family Violence March** we participated in.



Left: Close the Gap Day display in the Maroochydore office

Displaying our Support

Right: International Women's Day display in the Maroochydore office



Working with Mandalas

Some clients at Laurel House have been using Mandalas to support their work in exploring their life skills and introducing a simple calming technique.

Mandala is a Sanskrit word and basically means "circle" or "centre". There are natural Mandalas all around us, like the sun, the moon and even a humble spider web. Even in our community, when we talk of a circle of friends or even our nightly ritual of forming a circle around a dinner table. The circle is a very significant symbol in Aboriginal drawing and painting. On it's own it is the symbol for 'child', but used with other symbols, it forms the basis for many other symbolic elements.

Any shapes, colours or patterns can be used to fill the circle. Most clients feel supported to be creative and report feeling a greater sense of calm, when completing a Mandala at the end of or during a session.

Once we talk of Mandalas we notice them everywhere. So grab some pens and crayons and see where your creativity takes you. There are websites like www.chatfirst.com.au where you can print off detailed Mandala's for colouring.



A Message from the Board

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It's halfway through the year and it seems the older I get the faster life goes and things continue to be busy.

expertise and effort from the Laurel House staff that went a long way to helping this particular child.

I recently heard some news regarding a 12 year old client who had been involved with Laurel House, Dept Child Safety and Police. It appears that after some prolonged involvement that recent developments have made this child significantly safer. It's been a long and difficult road and it serves as reminder to me about the important and significant service that our staff at Laurel House and Laurel Place bring to the community. It also shows me that although we don't always get the outcome we want, that even just letting people know where and how to access services is important. We can't force people to talk about sexual violence but we can be there for when they are ready. I also acknowledge the



I also would like to take the opportunity to get the word out for this year's Freedom Run that is going to be held on the 18th of October at Kawana. Last year my whole family donned the t-shirts (after some debate from my eldest daughter) and took part in the run, which was an enjoyable and fun family afternoon. We even got a coupon for a hot chocolate which we had on the way home as a little reward for our efforts. I'm looking forward to it again this year and when I told my family it was coming up they were all super keen (except my eldest daughter who just rolled her eyes at me). I'm in training and am looking to beat our treasurer, Eric, who managed to come second last year. Hope to see you all there.

2015 National Aboriginal Wellbeing Conference



I was one of 80 delegates who recently attended the inaugural two-day National Aboriginal Wellbeing Conference in Ballina. The theme of the conference was '*Lateral violence - everybody's business*'. It featured a range of presentations and workshops by Aboriginal speakers who have experience and expertise in the field of lateral violence.

The conference focused on the issues relating to lateral violence and showcased a number of innovative programs being delivered within our communities to address the impacts on

individuals, families and communities.

The conference was aimed at both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal workers who have Aboriginal clients, or who wished to improve their current understanding of the key issues which effect Aboriginal peoples, and how these can impact on service delivery.

Apart from the opportunity to listen, to learn and to network with some inspiring people, one of the highlights for me was the very personal and engaging Welcome to Country by Aunty Nancy Walker.



The Indigenous Community Liaison & Support Worker pictured with community elder Aunty Nancy, and Conference organizer Mel Brown.



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