

JUNE 2017

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Message from the CEO

Hello All,

I am delighted to let you know that our financial situation is more more positive than last time I reported to you.

RAW has received a commitment from the State Government for funding of \$1.7 million over three years. This will provide a secure base for the future, enabling us to continue and further develop our vital outreach support and community development work across Tasmania. The State funding, announced in the recent Budget, complements other program funding and philanthropic donations.

We are very appreciative that the State Government has acknowledged the importance of RAW and we say thank you to all our supporters who help promote the importance of RAW's outreach and community development work in rural Tasmania.

We have recently heard that \$30,000 has been made available to RAW as part of the Circular Head Stimulus Package. While we still need to obtain the details of this funding, it will help RAW to provide workshops and other emotional support to workers along with the wider community at Edith Creek who are facing the challenge of redundancy and the impacts of the facility closure.

We are continuing to explore diverse sources of financial support to ensure the ongoing sustainability of RAW, I will provide updates as these developments come into fruition.

RAW has recently commissioned evaluations of our two main program areas. These will be used to refine services and activities and ensure that we are meeting the mental health and wellbeing needs of rural Tasmanian's into the future.

The Centre for Rural Health (CRH) at UTAS is evaluating HaRC, the Healthy and Resilient Communities program. The CRH is using a case study approach to explore the strengths of HaRC and identify what qualities can be replicated in other communities to achieve stronger community resilience and capacity building.

The Outreach program is being reviewed by a team of six social work students from UTAS, two based in each of the three regions of Tasmania. This approach will give invaluable experience of rural service delivery to the students and provide data to help refine the outreach program and its future focus.

RAW clients, rural businesses, health professionals, community leaders and the general public will be consulted during these evaluations, so we hope you will be keen to give us your feedback and suggestions.

I look forward to continuing to meet and work with RAW's wide range of service users and supporters over the winter months.

Until next edition,
Liz

Liz Little, CEO RAW Tasmania

AGFEST 2017

Rural Alive and Well attended this year's AGFEST in May. Both the board and staff enjoyed the opportunity to greet new and old mates of RAW.

This year RAW was a part of two site locations, a rural services hub in conjunction with Rural Business Tasmania, Aurora, Centrelink, Primary Employers Tasmania, Tasmanian Women in Agriculture and Rural Biz Training. RAW was also a part of Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association site.

Preparation and planning was a mighty task which was completed by our Business Services Team as well as help and input from the Outreach Teams.

CEO Liz Little was kept busy with media commitments and also accepted a \$5,000 cheque from the Tasmanian Farmers Graziers Association, presented by Peter Skillern, TFGA CEO. These funds will be used to assist our specialist case worker placed in flood affected areas of the North / North West of Tasmania.

RAW looks forward to attending 2018's AGFEST, which we hope to meet even more of you next year.



Liz Little, RAW CEO accepting a \$5,000 cheque from Peter Skillern, TFGA CEO



Darren Thurlow (RAW Southern Outreach Team Leader), all set up in the RBT Rural Services Hub

RAW set up in the TFGA site



Dianne Fowler (RAW Treasurer), Ian McMichael (RAW President), Tony Barker (RAW Northern Outreach Team Leader), Rebecca White MP and Nicholas dAntoine (RAW Public Officer)



Dr. Rob Walters (RAW Board Member),
Hon Guy Barnett MP, Hon Michael
Ferguson MP and Deputy Lord Mayor
Alderman Ron Christie (RAW Board
Member)

Dr Rob Walters (RAW Board Member)
and Rob Fairs (LAFM)



Dr Rob Walters (RAW Board Member), Rob Fairs (LAFM) and Deputy Lord Mayor
Alderman Ron Christie (RAW Board Member)

Meet RAW's Newest Staff Members

Jacqui Morris - Case Worker

Jacqui is originally from Townsville, Queensland. She moved to Tasmania in 1998 and has lived in Latrobe for 19 years now. Jacqui was a Remedial Massage Therapist for 20 years, running a business in Latrobe.

She decided to wind down her massage business to go to University full time to complete a Bachelor of Social Work. Jacqui also has a Diploma of Counselling.

Since becoming a Social Worker, Jacqui has worked with Laurel House Sexual Assault Services as a Crisis Support Worker dealing with post-traumatic stress, suicide and self-harming. Jacqui has also been working in the community at the Child and Family Centre in East Devonport supporting young families who have experienced family violence, mental health issues, drug and alcohol abuse and homelessness. She has developed good networks with organisations such as Safe Homes, Safe Families, Child Safety, Anglicare, Mission Australia and Mental Health Services.

Jacqui believes that community work is very rewarding as it brings its own strength by empowering the individuals and families who live there, building resilience within the community in times of need.

jmorris@rawtas.com.au

Ann Hughes - Project Manager - Student Unit

Ann Hughes, previous RAW HaRC Facilitator, has returned to RAW as a Project Manager of the Student Unit. Ann is qualified both as a social worker and a librarian - she believes that both fields help people gain the strengths and resources they need to live their lives to the full.

Ann has worked in a range of government and community roles - as paid worker, volunteer and board member. She has a strong commitment to building a fair and caring society so has been active in social justice campaigns and advocacy for changes in policy including the women's movement, employment, food security and refugee rights. She's worked in mental health, probation and parole and with older people, amongst other areas, and is a long-time supporter of TasCOSS, the peak body for the community sector.

Ann has family connections to rural enterprises in her home state of Victoria and is co-owner of a small farming business there. She lived for a number of years in the beautiful Huon Valley.

Ann loves walking and reading, learning to speak French and Italian – and is a very crummy but enthusiastic student of the piano.

ahughes@rawtas.com.au

Healthy and Resilient Communities (HaRC)

In 2016 RAW initiated the Healthy and Resilient Communities (HaRC) project. This project is working in partnership and alongside communities in rural Tasmania over three years, encouraging stronger community participation in local suicide prevention and wellbeing activities. It has been made possible with the support of the Ian Potter Foundation, TasNetworks and the Cape Hope Foundation.

To date we have established HaRC groups in Geeveston, Huonville, Ross, Georgetown, Bothwell, Tasman Peninsula and emerging on the East Coast with all at varying stages of establishment and all completely different from one another. We are currently also working on establishing an overarching larger HaRC group to service the South East.

The last month has seen Amity Deans, our community resilience facilitator working alongside Daniel Vautin, Regional Community Development Manager, for the Local Drug Action Team grants. The Geeveston Cares HaRC were successful in obtaining development funding of \$10,000 through the Alcohol

and Drug Foundation to strengthen the group's initial application and to develop a prevention focused community action plan and project.

We have also engaged with the UTAS Centre for Rural Health who will be running an evaluation of the HaRC project. This is an extremely exciting opportunity to gain valuable insight as to what processes, approaches and mechanisms work well to establish and sustain community led and volunteer facilitated groups. We certainly are looking forward to working with the evaluation team this year.

HaRC is increasing its presence in communities on the East Coast, St Helens and Derwent Valley and would like to hear from community members, service providers and organisations already in these areas to gain insight into and build networks within these communities.

For further information about the HaRC Project or establishing a HaRC in your community, please contact RAW's Community Resilience Facilitator Amity Deans on 0427 418 345.



Jayne Pike - Outreach Worker

finished my Social Work Degree in 2015 and started as an outreach worker for RAW in February 2016. Coming from a fishing family in St. Helens - a small rural community on the east coast of Tasmania, I knew a fair bit about the issue facing individuals and families in rural communities but had a lot to learn about the issues faced by our rural farmers.

I have worked for RAW for just over a year now and have my feet firmly planted on the ground ready to assist anyone within the Break O'Day area down to Bicheno in need of help with mental health and well-being issues or feelings of suicide.

Depression can affect anyone at any time. Research shows that 'talking to a mate' can reduce feelings of suicide and depression. As an outreach worker I chat to people requiring assistance and often this helps. If the person needs more help we refer them to other organisations and then follow up to ensure the person received the help they needed.

If you live in the Break O'Day area and feel that a chat from a RAW worker will help your mental health and well-being please give me a call on 0439 689 430 to arrange a convenient time and place to meet.
jpike@rawtas.com.au

To find out who your local Outreach Worker is, see our [Area of Service brochure](#)

How to Talk to Young People About the Series ***13 Reasons Why***

13 Reasons Why is a popular Netflix drama series that explores issues affecting school age teens, including bullying, drugs, alcohol, rape and the aftermath of suicide. The drama series is based on the best-selling adult novel by Jay Asher. The story takes place just after a teenage girl completes suicide. She has left a series of 13 tapes behind dedicated to the people who she believes are the reasons why she made her final decision.

The dramatisation of the events covered in *13 Reasons Why* has the media across the world asking whether this is a responsible and safe representation of suicide. The topics covered are real and close to home to many. We strongly urge you to open the lines of communication with the young people in your life if they have seen the show, or if you are planning to see the series with them.

[How to talk to young people about 13 Reasons Why](#) is a fact produced by Headspace, the Australian youth mental health service that may help.

Online Safety at Home

RAW urges families to review their home online safety, particularly with online media and social networks alerting us to a dangerous online 'game' called the 'Blue Whale suicide challenge'.

Blue Whale involves the player signing up to play and agreeing to follow instructions over the course of 50 days. An administrator assigns a series of tasks that the player must accomplish including self-harming, listening to songs, watching horror movies and waking up at unusual hours.

On the 50th day, the controlling manipulators behind the game reportedly instruct the player, often a teenager, to suicide. To date there are no confirmed cases in Australia.

The Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner website has further information to assist parents with online safety <https://esafety.gov.au/esafety-information>

If you or someone you love is in crisis or needs support right now, please call 1300 HELP MATE, Lifeline

on 13 11 14 or Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467. Young people aged 5 to 25 years can call Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800

RAW IN THE MEDIA

Rural Alive and Well Inc's recent activity in our local media.

JUNE ISSUE

Funding Certainty for Rural Alive and Well

16th June 2017

Bream Creek mates gather to celebrate country spirit

10th June 2017

Tassie in grip of ice age

7th June 2017

Tasmanian agriculture should be marketed like its tourism industry

6th June 2017

Cape Hope Foundatin spreads hope to City Mission, Starting Point Community House and Rural Alive and Well

5th June 2017

Anniversary of June 2016 floods a time for reflection

4th June 2017

Community and state support have eased Tasmania's loss in 2016 floods

Rural Alive & Well appointed flood relief worker to help cope after the 2016 floods

2nd June 2017

Budget backs farmers' efforts

MAY ISSUE

Taking on the last taboo

25th May 2017

Mental Health Council Responds to Health Focused State Budget

22nd May 2017

Tasmanian budget 2017

16th May 2017

Tasmanian pre-budget announcements so far

15th May 2017

Significant new investment in mental health

12th May 2017

Call for unity on rural issues

9th May 2017

Rural organisations call on politicians to support rural communities

4th May 2017

Rural Alive and Well to receive \$1.7 million three-year funding deal in the looming State Budget

Rural Alive and Well to receive \$1.7 million in Tasmanian budget

Rural mental health funding in state Budget

Tips for good mental health

Good mental health is more than just the absence of mental illness. Here's 8 tips for building good mental health.

1. Build relationships

Having good relationships with other people is the most important factor contributing to a sense of well-being. This can include family, friends, workmates and others in the community. Investing time and energy in your relationships can lead to great benefits for all involved.

Every relationship we have can teach us something, and by building positive relationships with others, we will be happier and more fulfilled and feel more supported, supportive, and connected. To assist in building better relationships:

- Ensure that the relationship you have with yourself is a positive one.
- Accept and celebrate the fact that we are all different.
- Actively listen to hear what other people have to say.
- Give people time and "be present" when you are with them.

- Develop and work on your communication skills.
- Manage mobile technology and be aware of its pitfalls.
- Learn to give and take constructive feedback.
- Open your heart and find the courage to trust.
- Learn to be more understanding and empathetic.
- Treat people as you would like to be treated yourself.

2. Exercise and stay healthy

Exercise has been shown to increase wellbeing as well as reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety. Good physical health is related to better mental health so a healthy diet, avoiding excess alcohol or drugs, make sure you have regular check-ups with your doctor. It can be hard to keep motivated and all kinds of barriers can get in the way of exercise.

Try the following to assist in being active all year round:

Make getting fit enjoyable. Pick an activity (or range of activities) that appeals to you, since you're more likely to keep to an exercise plan if you like it.

- **Choose activities that suit your lifestyle.** Consider your budget, physical abilities and amount of free time.
- **Involve the whole family in keeping fit.** Arrange for outings that are physically active, such as walking the dog, rowing or hiking.
- **Make exercise a social event.** Find a friend or family member to be active with so you can motivate and reward each other, or make some new friends through a class or club.
- **Check out local exercise options.** Opportunities to be active in your neighbourhood may include leisure centres, sports clubs, parks, walking trails, swimming pools or exercise classes.
- **Plan ahead for bad weather.** Head to your local swimming pool or gym to exercise indoors.
- **Have fun getting physical.** Go dancing, fly a kite, throw a Frisbee, take the dog for a walk along the beach or swim in the sea – you're not limited to sports and structured exercise programs.
- **Get active around the house.** Housework, washing the dog and gardening are all physical activities that burn calories and help keep you fit.
- **Keep some exercise equipment at home.** Options include exercise DVDs, a stationary bike, skipping rope or fitness ball.
- **Look for incidental ways to move your body every day.** For example, walk or cycle to the local shops, instead of driving the car. Use the stairs instead of the lift or escalator.

3. Develop gratitude

Count your blessings. Try keeping a gratitude journal and write down 3 positive things for each day. This can lead to increased well-being. To assist in cultivating try to:

- Notice your day-to-day world from a point of gratitude and be amazed at all the goodness we take for granted.
- Keep a gratitude journal. All it requires is noting one or more things you are grateful for on a daily basis. No fancy notebook, no computer program required.
- Identify something or someone with a negative trait (the cold conference room), switch it in your mind to a positive trait (the conference room with a great view).

- Explore where it fits in your life. Gratitude requires humility, which the dictionary defines as being "modest and respectful."
- Give at least one compliment daily, whether directly to a person or by sharing your appreciation of something ("I love how quiet it is in the morning, don't you?").
- Ask yourself when you find yourself in a bad situation: What can I learn? When I look back on this, without emotion, what will I be grateful for?
- Vow to not complain, criticize, or gossip for a week. If you slip, rally your willpower and keep going. Notice how much energy you were spending on negative thoughts.
- Sound genuinely happy to hear from the people who call you on the phone. Whether they respond with surprise or delight, they'll feel valued.
- Join a cause that's important to you. Donate money, time, or talent. By getting involved, you'll better appreciate the organisation — and it will appreciate you more, too.

4. Identify and use your strengths

We all have different strengths and weaknesses but finding out what you are really good at and using those talents can increase well-being. Using your strengths to help others or contribute to the community creates a sense of meaning and purpose. Working out your strengths means, that you will understand your personality better, determine your strong points opening the opportunity for acknowledgment and the ability to appreciate the best parts of yourself.

Scientists have identified 24 different personality strengths, which everyone has to some degree - you might have lots of one strength and not so much of another. Check them out and have a think about which ones might apply to you:

After you've looked at the list below, and you've read about the 24 different strengths, you need figure out which of them *most* reflect you. These are known as your 'top' strengths, and they're the ones you will want to be most aware of.

Virtue	Strength	Explanation
Strengths Of Wisdom And Knowledge	<i>Creativity/originality</i>	You are great at thinking of new and creative ways of doing things, or solving problems.
	<i>Curiosity</i>	You are interested in and curious about the world and love new experiences.
	<i>Open-mindedness/critical thinking</i>	You think things through and examine issues from all angles before making any decisions.
	<i>Love of Learning</i>	You love learning new things and being known for the knowledge you have.
	<i>Perspective and wisdom</i>	You have a mature way of looking at the world that makes sense, so you can give other people good advice.
Strengths Of Courage	<i>Honesty/ Integrity</i>	You are honest. You speak the truth and live your life in a genuine way.
	<i>Bravery</i>	You are strong and courageous enough to deal with challenges and take on difficult situations.
	<i>Persistence</i>	You finish what you start. You will work towards goals despite the challenges that you might face along the way.
	<i>Zest</i>	You're energetic and passionate about life. You throw yourself into everything you do.
Strengths Of Humanity	<i>Kindness</i>	You are kind and generous and will go out of your way to do nice things for others.
	<i>Love</i>	You value love and close relationships. You love others and they love you.
	<i>Social Intelligence</i>	You have a good understanding of yourself and of other people. You have good insight into your own motives and moods and can judge the motives and moods of others.
Strengths Of Justice	<i>Fairness</i>	You treat everyone equally and fairly.
	<i>Leadership</i>	You have vision and are good at making things happen by organising and leading people.
	<i>Teamwork</i>	You work well in a group or in a team. You work hard for the good of the group.
Strengths Of Temperance	<i>Forgiveness</i>	If you are wronged, you tend to forgive people for making mistakes.
	<i>Modesty</i>	You don't need to brag about your accomplishments. You let them speak for themselves.
	<i>Prudence</i>	You're a careful person. You think things through and consider all the options before you say or do things.
	<i>Self-Control</i>	You have discipline. You can keep your feelings and actions in check when you need to.
Strengths Of Transcendence	<i>Appreciation of Beauty</i>	You notice and appreciate excellence and the beauty around you. You're one of those people who will stop to smell the roses!
	<i>Gratitude</i>	You notice the good things that happen to you and you don't take them for granted. You thank people.
	<i>Hope/Optimism</i>	You expect the best for the future and you plan to achieve it.
	<i>Humour/ Playfulness</i>	You like to laugh and to make other people laugh.
	<i>Spirituality</i>	You have strong beliefs about the higher purpose and meaning of the universe.

To work out what your dominant (or top) strengths are, use the following tips:

- **Ask other people.** People in your life are likely to notice stuff about your personality which you haven't. Chat to a family member, friend, teacher, boss, or even a counsellor about what they see as the best parts of your personality.
- Have a think about some of the **compliments** you've received in the past. Do people ever compliment a particular part of your personality? It's pretty likely to be a strength of yours.
- **Figure out what you are most proud of.** If you're proud of something you have done/achieved (for example, winning your grand final footy match), then think about what parts of your personality you used to achieve it. Did it require focus, creativity, bravery etc?
- **Ask yourself, when do you feel most like yourself?** The things about your personality that make you most happy are likely to be your top strengths. For example, you might be happiest when you're making other people laugh. This could indicate that you're kind and compassionate (and hilarious).

5. Create flow

Flow is the state of being so highly involved in an enjoyable activity that you lose track of time. This usually happens when the level of challenge is about right for your level of skill. Flow can happen during work, hobbies, creative arts or sports. They are activities that totally absorb us, challenge without over stressing us and make us feel fulfilled. They provide an extra psychological boost which create the feeling of "flow."

Everybody's got their own sources of flow. For you, it may mean chasing the perfect wave; for someone else it may be in kitchen baking, bowling or getting the hands dirty in garden. Whatever your flow, it will make you feel effective, confident and in control. To obtain more flow, try to:

- **Identify the high points of your day.** Try to note when you've got that "in the zone" feeling. Or reflect back at the end of the day to see what made you feel good. Then try to do those activities more.
- **Not look for flow in passive pursuits.** Watching TV, for example, doesn't offer the challenge that tends to spark flow. And once you improve at a task, considering raising the level of difficulty in some way.
- **Inject flow into some regular activities.** If you inject more meaning or ingenuity into routine tasks, you can make them more rewarding. In one study of hospital cleaning staff, some were unhappy with the job, but others upped their pleasure by creating new challenges, like working more efficiently or helping patients.

6. Give to others

Making a contribution to the community, however small, increases social well-being. Many people feel a sense of contributing through meaningful work, but this could also mean volunteering, helping a neighbour or performing small acts of kindness. Take some time to do the things you really enjoy. Pleasant events can lead to positive emotions that can cancel out negative feelings.

7. Spirituality or religion

For some people, being involved in spiritual or religious practices can improve well-being, help in coping with stress and reduce symptoms of mental illness. This can include belonging to a faith

community, meditation, prayer, mindfulness or practices such as yoga and Tai Chi.

8. Seek help

If you are struggling to feel happy, cope with everyday life, find meaning or feel connected to others, see your doctor, take to your local RAW Outreach Worker or a mental health professional. 1 in 5 Australians will experience a mental disorder at some time in their life - depression, anxiety and substance abuse are the most common disorders.

Not sure what to do next?

If you or someone you know are finding it difficult to manage mental health issues, Call 1300 HELP MATE to talk to an Outreach worker, alternatively try The Mindspot Clinic's FREE service for Australian adults who are experiencing difficulties with anxiety, stress, depression and low mood. The Mindspot Clinic provide online Screening Assessments and Treatment Courses is available on their website: <https://mindspot.org.au>

Annual Rural Alive and Well Royal Hobart Show Luncheon



We are here to help

Times have been incredibly tough for farmers across Tasmania these past few months, we were hit with horrific dry conditions, followed by a dairy crisis and now

some of the worst floods Tasmania has seen. Our Outreach Workers understand these crises and are ready to help those in need. We are a mate in the tough times, here to talk and provide information to see you through, forward you on to the right support services and provide you with support through thick and thin. Don't hesitate to call an Outreach worker today, have a look at our [Outreach Workers here](#) and phone the one in your area. To talk to someone now phone our hotline 1300 HELP MATE (1300 4357 6283).



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