

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MISSION STATEMENT	1
COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT & STAFF	2
PRESIDENT'S REPORT	3
MANAGER'S REPORT	5
COUNSELLORS' REPORTS	7
SUPPORT WORKER'S REPORT	13
FINANCIAL COUNSELLOR'S REPORT	15
COMMUNITIES FOR CHILDREN REPORT	17
NO INTEREST LOANS SCHEME AND BACK TO SCHOOL SUPPORT PROGRAM	18
SERVICES	19
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	21
EMERGENCY RELIEF	27
STATISTICS	28
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	29

MISSION STATEMENT

CRANBOURNE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT SERVICE INC

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide an independent, free, impartial and confidential information, referral and support service to all members of the community.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSES

To assess the needs of people who access the service seeking assistance.

To provide direct aid and assistance for the people of Cranbourne and District who are in need of relief from poverty, sickness, distress, misfortune, destitution, homelessness or helplessness.

To provide people with information about, and referral to the services they require.

To provide a volunteer program which enables personal growth and a high standard of service delivery.

To coordinate a local network of community information providers.

To facilitate the provision of counselling services.

To facilitate the activities of local people and organisations who wish to contribute their time and/or resources to community service.

To pursue donations and subscriptions from benefactors, benevolent societies, philanthropic trusts and like organisations as a means of providing relief and services to people from Cranbourne and District.

To inform Government and the Community about the need of the local community of Cranbourne and District, in order to obtain, maintain and improve services.

To pursue funding from Government, Corporate and Community sources to obtain, maintain and improve services in response to local needs.

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

President:	George Nicol	Ordinary Members:	
Vice-President:	Ros Larke	Una McGuire	Dawn Wilson
Secretary:	Judy Symons	Anne Manning	Louise Morgan
Treasurer:	Julie Jones	Di Mainwaring	Margaret O'Callaghan

VOLUNTEER STAFF – 2010/2011

Anne Haylock	Louise Morgan	Gabriele Lindemann
Sue Hopkins	Una McGuire	Sharon Mills
Judy Symons	Susan Arlove	Dianne Bush
George Nicol	Julie Jones	Simone Peters
Ros Larke	Dawn Wilson	Inoka Ratnasekera
Di Mainwaring	Anne Manning	

STAFF – 2010/2011

Manager:	Leanne Petrides
Counsellor:	John Lewis
Counsellor:	Joan Cavanagh
Counsellor:	Jenny Hyland
Counsellor:	Kaye Jones
Financial Counsellor:	Robyn d'Argent
Administration Officer:	Cathy Willmott
Support Worker:	Doug Thompson
CfC Outreach Information:	Ann Proud
CfC Outreach Information:	Flora Warren

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This is my second report as President of CISS Committee of Management and it has been a wonderful experience working with a committee of one fellow and nine lovely ladies. I must say this committee has been very enthusiastic and easy to work with, all very keen to put their thoughts and ideas forward when called upon. Thanks ever so much for your dedication.

In what seems to be the norm, it has been a very tough year with too many clients and not enough funds. Still it was a very interesting year. Unfortunately we never receive the funds we would have liked, never the less we struggle on.

As reported last year, the City of Casey has made all of the building available to us. Just before the end of 2010 we held a working bee one evening with overwhelming support from the workers at all levels. We even had some of the ladies bring along their other halves, thanks so much to Peter Jones & Ian Symons. This was in preparation for the refurbishing to commence early in the New Year. Gabriele got started on the outdoor garden which is looking ever so good & peaceful, just the spot to go and calm down after a stressful time with a not so easy client. Thanks you so much Gabriele. The plans for the alterations were drawn up; these were very closely overseen by Leanne, Cathy and of course the Committee of Management.

Mid February the builders moved in and renovations got under way. This was carried out with the minimum of interruptions to our staff; most of the noisy work was carried out outside our normal working hours. By mid March Barry and his gang of workers had the Eastern side of the building ready for the big move. On the 15 March the office was closed for two days, this was to enable the biggest working bee CISS has ever seen, with almost everyone coming along and partaking in the clean up and move from West to East. Once again we were lucky to have Ian along to assist with the heavy lifting and re-positioning of notice boards; Ken Jones rebuilt desks and put them into their new position. My thanks go out to these chaps for without them I don't know how we would have got the work done. I might just mention our administration officer Cathy Willmott who carried out the supervision of all the changes any time Leanne was absent. Cathy you did an outstanding job and handled the pressure without showing any stress whatsoever. Thanks Cathy, and thanks everyone, for a very smooth transition.

On Wednesday the 17 March the doors opened to our clients, most of who seemed to enjoy the new surroundings as much as us. At this point in time work commenced on the old section with completion around the 30 May. This means each of our counsellors has their own office and a separate waiting room. The Volunteers have enough interview rooms to carry out their work and the clients have a very bright and cheerful waiting room.

On behalf of the Committee of Management I would like to thank all who have made this transition possible. The City of Casey, the Mayor Councillor Shar Balmes, her fellow councillors and the city council staff.

A very special thank you to Cr Kevin Bradford for all the support over the years he has been on Council. Thanks to Sophia Petrov for all she has done to make this happen. Also, the Architects, Barry the builder and all of his staff we thank all of you. By 30 May all personnel were settling into their new settings. SECASA have moved to the West end of the building and there is still room for what is hoped still further support organisations which will add to the services we provide.

Our NILS program is still helping families in need of household goods. Thanks Julie and Louise, please keep up the good work. The Outreach CfC ladies Ann and Flora, our thanks go out to both of you.

The Back to School Program once again helped so many families to educate their children. Also this past Christmas we were able to help many families with toys along with extra food, all of which were kindly donated. I would like to thank all who have made donations so this service is possible. My thanks to all the ladies who knit and donate woolly clothing to help needy people keep warm during the colder weather.

Now it's time to thank all the paid staff and volunteers for their devotion, their dedication in trying to help our clients in their time off need. I must thank all who have made donations throughout the year, without their support we could not operate.

Many thanks to all the committee members who give up their time to assist setting guidelines which are required for CISS to operate so smoothly. To our very efficient administration officer Cathy, who does such a wonderful job. Last but certainly not least our manager, Leanne Petrides. Leanne works so hard and effortlessly for CISS. The time she puts in, the meetings she attends, telling the public what we are doing for our clients and how we need their support with donations to enable us to carry on helping. My thanks and admiration to the both of you.

George Nicol
President

*“You make a living by what you get, but
you make a life by what you give”*

Winston Churchill

MANAGER'S REPORT

It is with great pleasure that I present my thirteenth annual report as Manager of the Cranbourne Information and Support Service. This has been a very exciting year for CISS, and as always, my report gives me an opportunity to reflect on the year that has passed, thank the individuals and organisations who have supported us, and to report on issues for our community and areas of development for our agency.

This year has produced both opportunities and challenges for our agency and staff team – and the financial year of 2011-2012 promises to bring many more such developments. Indeed when I reflect on the 12 years I have spent at CISS, the changes, which seem incremental on a year-by-year basis, are vast when viewed as a whole. In my first report (in 1999), I referred to the approximately 1,600 episodes of emergency relief assistance provided, and I am amazed when I compare that with the more than 6,000 episodes of ER assistance provided this year! Similarly, our funding has increased dramatically in order to attempt to keep pace with that demand, and as such, I would like to officially recognise the City of Casey and the federal Department of Families, Housing, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs for their continued funding and support of our staff and services, and thank them for their strong belief in the excellent work we undertake. I am particularly pleased to report that the Federal Government, following much lobbying from the sector, and support from our local MP, Anthony Byrne, re-funded both the ER and Vulnerable Groups programs for a further three years.

Of course, the most significant event of the financial year has been the renovation and move into our extended building. I would like to formally thank the City of Casey for their financial investment, vision, and support of CISS through this process. I must single out Councillor Kevin Bradford for his unstinting pursuit of this outcome over many years and Sophia Petrov (Director Community Services) for her support also. This move has attracted many positive comments from clients and staff alike, has enabled us to attract more outreach services and programs, and to deliver a truly holistic and dignified service to clients.

As you will see from the statistics presented throughout the report (and particularly on page 28), our services continue to be in high demand across the Casey South region. The team of workers at CISS support a broad cross-section of people from our local community – some of whom are working for low incomes, but the majority of whom receive Centrelink benefits, and staff are fully committed to delivering best possible outcomes for individuals and for our community.

The ACOSS Australian Community Sector Survey 2011 shows that while there an overall increase in services delivered by welfare and emergency relief agencies, one in twenty people are turned away. That certainly echoes the situation at CISS, where despite our very best efforts, every day there are some people we are unable to assist.

Two of main issues we confront at CISS on a daily basis are those of housing stress and transport disadvantage. Many of our clients requesting emergency relief are forced to do so because they are left with so little money each fortnight after paying their rent or mortgage. This often forces them to make choices between purchasing food, paying for essential services such as utilities and health needs, or items like clothing. In many cases, clients are living in unaffordable accommodation that they simply cannot sustain in the long-term. This forces some individuals and families into untenable housing options such as rooming houses, caravans, sheds, garages or cars.

In this area, many people are further disadvantaged by the lack of public transport, forcing them to rely on cars they can often ill afford – we have noticed a surge in the number of people requesting assistance with transport costs, as well as people struggling with the costs of owning a running a car on a small income.

Our dedicated team of volunteers provide a comprehensive suite of services to clients in crisis. Due to the complex nature of issues clients often present with, volunteers have to be multi-skilled and resourceful, while also making the client feel respected. On any given day, volunteers will be providing support with emergency relief, information, referrals to both internal and external programs, advocacy, negotiation and liaison, as well as utilising Utility Relief Grants, Telstra vouchers, Discretionary Fund, and Education Assistance. For more complex cases requiring a case management approach, they are able to refer to our Support Worker, Doug.

Our CISS volunteers continually inspire me with their capacity to tirelessly and yet respectfully respond to people who are often vulnerable, disillusioned, angry or desperate. The volunteers respond professionally, and with empathy and respect, to individuals and families in crisis across our community. I would like to officially recognise their continuing hard work and support of me, the agency, and of course, our community.

Of course none of the work we all do could be done without the strong partnerships and connections that CISS has within our community. We continue to work closely with our sister agency – Casey North Community Information & Support Service, and our joint projects - the Casey No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS) and the low-income resource guide go from strength to strength. Our partnership ensures an approach that includes the whole municipality when developing programs, and delivering services. I would like to thank the Manager of Casey North CISS, Susan Magee for her invaluable support.

Our partnership with Windermere Child & Family Services, through the Communities for Children program funded by the federal government, has led to strengthened links not only with Windermere, but with many other organisations thanks to the work of our Infolink team. We also work very closely with The Salvation Army Cranbourne Support Services, particularly in delivering the annual Back to School Support program.

As well as delivering services to the community, we are committed to networking both locally and at a broader level. Our clients and community continue to benefit from CISS being represented on and involved in many consultative committees, projects, and groups. Indeed, a large part of my role is representing CISS staff and client issues in a variety of settings and to a broad cross section of stakeholders. One important outcome of this representation and advocacy is that CISS remains front and centre as an agency that understands, and achieves.

As usual, we have a number of people and organisations to thank for their support throughout the year. It is never possible to mention by name everyone who supports our agency, so please take time to read the acknowledgements on the last page of our Annual Report. All of these groups contribute in meaningful ways to keeping CISS functioning well, and we recognise them all.

As always, I would like to extend my thanks and congratulations to the Committee of Management for their continued vision, hard work, and support. I would like to take the opportunity to recognise our counselling team – John (who sadly retired from our team through the year), Joan, Jenny, and Kaye and our financial counsellor, Robyn – most people would be unaware of the often extraordinarily difficult issues they have to work with. I would also like to acknowledge Doug, our Support Worker, and Ann and Flora, the Infolink team. Cathy, our administration officer, always deserves a special mention for her commitment and dedication. All of them continue to work extraordinarily hard, and their contribution to the agency and their support of the volunteers and me has been invaluable.

I encourage everyone to take the time to read our Annual Report and I look forward to another year of working with CISS for the residents of Casey South.

Leanne Petrides
Manager

COUNSELLOR'S REPORTS

Joan Cavanagh

It is with pleasure that I present my eleventh Annual Report to the AGM of the Cranbourne Information and Support Service.

The CISS counselling service has undergone changes this year with the departure of John Lewis and with Doug Thompson joining the team as our male counsellor. The physical environment has also changed with the refurbishment of the building to provide us each with our own office and new furniture. We are very grateful for morale implications of the new offices.

The work at CISS continues to be challenging and rewarding. I continue to be grateful for the working culture provided by CISS and for the generosity extended in providing outside supervision and professional development. It is commendable that the importance of supervision and professional development to the counselling role is recognised and funded by the organisation.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

During this year I continued to participate in weekly peer supervision with Jenny Hyland and Kaye Jones with Doug Thompson also joining the sessions. I am always grateful for these meetings which are vital for good communication, good clinical practice and mutual support. Robyn d'Argent will also join our meetings from time to time.

I also continue to receive external supervision with Ann Garden as well as Dr Ingrid Sturmey, Director of Counselling at Relationships Australia.

Professional development programs I have attended this year included the AARC Annual Conference "Love, Desire and Obsession"; Working with Bisexual Men (Gamma Project); a one day workshop on Problem Gambling; Bereavement Following Suicide (Living Hope) and I also obtained my Apply First Aid Certificate (as part of PACFA registration requirements).

STATISTICS

(Statistics in parentheses provide a comparison to the 2009/10 financial year)

During the last financial year, 346 counselling sessions were held (compared to 187 during the previous financial year). A total of 427 (214) clients attended appointments. As in previous years the issue of clients not attending counselling appointments continues to be a problem (69 appointments not kept). This is especially evident in the school holidays.

Waiting lists remain short with clients usually being seen within a week or two. As in other years the majority of my clients (68.4%) were female.

Counselling sessions by location	Number	Percentage
Cranbourne	329 (137)	95% (73%)
Hampton Park	4 (27)	1% (14%)
Casey South	11 (24)	3% (12%)
Outside above areas	2 (2)	1% (1%)
TOTAL	346 (187)	100%

Counselling Sessions by Income of client.		
Pension or benefit Income up to \$20,000	187 (91)	54% (49%)
\$20,000- \$30,000	12 (7)	4% (4%)
\$30,000- \$40,000	11 (25)	3% (13%)
\$40,000 - \$50,000	43 (14)	12% (7%)
Over \$50,000	93 (50)	27% (27%)
TOTAL	346 (187)	100%

As is usually the case, the highest percentage of clients (54%) accessing our services are in the lowest income bracket. The second highest (27%) is the highest income bracket, as was the case last year.

Client Contacts by Type.	Number	Percentage
Total Number of Clients	427 (214)	100%
Males	135 (62)	32% (29%)
Females	292 (152)	68% (71%)
Individual sessions	265 (160)	76% (85%) of total sessions
Number of couples	70 (27)	24% (15%) of total sessions

ISSUES RAISED, in order of frequency: -

1. Personal
(includes trauma, grief, personal development, stress management, alcohol and drug dependence etc)
2. Relationship
3. Separation / Divorce
4. Family
5. Crisis Management

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks as always goes to Leanne, Jenny, Kaye, Doug, Ann, Flora, Cathy, Robyn, Volunteers and to the Committee of Management for their role in supporting our work and for creating and sustaining a positive working environment. Thanks also to the SECASA counsellors who share working space.

Joan Cavanagh
Counsellor

Jenny Hyland

I am pleased to present my seventh annual report to the AGM of the Cranbourne Information and Support Service. My working hours have increased from 15 to 17 hours per week (Tuesdays and Fridays). My CISS clients continue to be challenging and rewarding to work with. The issues with which they present are varied, stimulating and at times overwhelming. The richness of their life experiences continue to challenge and extend my knowledge, awareness and skills as a counsellor. It is always an honour to be invited into the client's world at such a personal level.

I continue my work as a counsellor at Chisholm for one day a week but will be resigning from that position at the end of the 2011.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

I continue to receive monthly supervision from Leni Foster, psychologist in private practice at Mind Body Therapies. Leni provides me with professional guidance of the highest quality with regard to working with my clients, and also mentoring on other work related issues. She has also drawn my attention to some valuable resources which have subsequently been shared with the counselling team at CISS.

The CISS counsellors continue to meet once weekly for peer supervision. These sessions provide an excellent opportunity to receive guidance with difficult cases, to share ideas and to catch up. As Doug now has a counselling case load, he has been attending these sessions over the past year and has provided a valuable contribution to our case discussions. As Robyn provides financial counselling to a number of CISS's counselling clients, she also attends peer supervision meetings from time to time. Robyn's financial perspective provides the counsellors with a broader understanding of our clients' needs.

During the past year I have attended the following professional development sessions either through CISS or Chisholm:

- Post Traumatic Stress Psychotherapy Course – Australian College of Trauma Treatment. Windermere (7 hours).
- Vicarious Trauma: When Helping Hurts. SECASA (6 hours).
- The ABCs of Gambling Counselling. Gamblers Help. (7 hours).
- Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction. Shambala (15 hours).
- First Aid Level 2. Salvation Army. (14 hours).
- You've Really Got a Hold On Me: Love, Desire and Obsession. Australian Association of Relationship Counsellors. (8 hours).
- Bisexual Men and Their Female Partners. GAMMA Project. (7 hours).

STATISTICS

During the last financial year 307 counselling sessions were provided to 218 clients. These numbers reflect an increase in both the number of clients and number of sessions conducted. Statistics also reflect an increase in the number of female and male clients and the number of couple and family sessions conducted. As reflected in the figures, the percentage of clients in the lowest economic bracket has decreased, with the highest number being in the \$20,000 - \$30,000 income bracket. The number of "no shows" and cancellations have decreased by 50% this year. This number is largely represented by Emergency Relief clients who visit the centre in great distress and who are then referred for counselling by ER staff. The needs of new clients have generally been met in a timely fashion with a shorter waiting period than previously.

Counselling sessions by location	Number	Percentage
Cranbourne	264 (219)	86% (79.92%)
Within our catchment	34 (15)	11% (5.47%)
Outside our catchment	9 (41)	3% (14.96%)
TOTAL	307 (274)	100%

Counselling sessions by income	Number	Percentage
Pension or benefit Income up to \$20000	75 (97)	25% (35.27%)
Between \$20000 and \$30000	87 (44)	28% (16%)
Between \$30000 and \$40000	59 (57)	19% (20.72%)
Between \$40000 and \$50000	31 (21)	10% (7.63%)
Over \$50000	55 (56)	18% (20.36%)
TOTAL	307 (275)	100%

Client Contacts by Type.	Number	Percentage
Total number of clients	218 (196)	100%
Males	69 (52)	32% (26.66%)
Females	149 (143)	68% (73.33%)
Number of couple sessions	58 (42)	19% (15.27%) of total sessions
Appointments not kept	50 (100)	36.49%
Consultations with other professional staff	20 (2)	

ISSUES RAISED, in order of frequency: -

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Relationship | 4. Domestic Violence | 7. Separation/Divorce |
| 2. Family | 5. Anger Management | 8. Loss & Grief |
| 3. Personal | 6. Other | 9. Sexual Abuse |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CISS as always remains a terrific place to work. The service we provide here has real value and meaning for so many of our clients. Leanne as always sets an example which I believe is conducive to encouraging staff to give their best. It is a privilege to be part of the counselling team from which I gain an enormous amount of support, help and encouragement. I would like to thank the Committee of Management for their ongoing support of the counsellors' professional development needs and for their generosity in terms of the time they give to ensuring that CISS is a happy and efficiently run Centre.

Jenny Hyland
Counsellor

Kaye Jones

It is my pleasure to present my fifth annual report to the AGM of the Cranbourne Information and Support Service. For the second half of 2010 I worked an extra ten hours per week but this year have reverted to my original 20 hours per week spread over Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Unfortunately surgery necessitated a little over three weeks off work and I am grateful to CISS for the support given to me during my recovery.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Our weekly counsellors' meeting has now moved to a Tuesday, which enables Doug Thompson and Robyn d'Argent to join Joan Cavanagh, Jenny Hyland and me for peer supervision. This allows for an easy interchange of information and ideas and is working very well. I have also continued to receive valuable monthly professional supervision from Hans Schmidt in Knoxfield.

Professional Development this year has included attendance at a SECASA workshop on Sexual Abuse Counselling, a workshop on Problem Gambling, a workshop on Vicarious Trauma and a two-day seminar on Counselling Adolescents. As always, I am grateful to the CISS Committee for making these possible.

I have also attended three free events - a one day workshop on Counselling Bi-Sexual Men & their Female Partners and two evening seminars which covered different aspects of Autism.

STATISTICS

In this past financial year 415 counselling sessions were provided to 262 different clients.

Counselling sessions by location	Number	Percentage
Cranbourne	323 (289)	78% (80%)
Hampton Park	1 (4)	0% (1%)
Lynbrook	17 (4)	4% (1%)
Pearcedale	0 (2)	0% (1%)
Tooradin	19 (10)	5% (3%)
Outside our catchment*	55 (52)	13% (14%)
TOTAL	415 (361)	100% (100%)

**Those attending from outside the area are ex-clients who have moved plus some from the ADHD Support Group.*

Counselling sessions by income	Number	Percentage
Pension or benefit Income up to \$20000	134 (156)	32% (43%)
Between \$20000 and \$30000	59 (56)	14% (15.5%)
Between \$30000 and \$40000	60 (56)	15% (15.5%)
Between \$40000 and \$50000	100 (53)	24% (14.7%)
Over \$50000	62 (39)	15% (11%)
Unknown	0 (1)	0% (0.3%)
TOTAL	415 (361)	100%

Client type	Number	Percentage
Total number of clients	262 (222)	100%
Males	67 (57)	25% (26%)
Females	195 (165)	74% (74%)
Number of couples	33 (18)	12% of total sessions
Number of families	0 (0)	0% of total sessions

ISSUES RAISED, in order of frequency: -

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| 4. Personal | 6. Anger Management |
| 5. Relationship | 7. Chronic Illness |
| 6. Separation / Divorce | 8. Anxiety & Depression |
| 7. Addictions: Drug, Alcohol, Gambling | 9. Other |
| 8. Childhood Sexual Abuse | |

Over the past year I have taken on several new clients who have been referred through the ADHD Support Group which has been set up and facilitated by Communities for Children workers, Ann Proud & Flora Warren. These clients are almost all mothers of boys with ADHD and also, in many cases, Asperger's Syndrome.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The renovations of the CISS premises have meant that for the first time I am working out of only one room with all my resources to hand. This has made a huge difference in reducing stress and has made my work much easier. The clients have commented on how nice the building looks and how much they appreciate seeing me in the same room each time. The atmosphere in this part of the building is calming and the separate waiting room is excellent, especially considering that previously clients had to wait by the entrance in full view of everyone.

As always I have been very grateful to the volunteers and other staff of CISS for their continuing hard work and support, and especially to Leanne and my fellow counsellors for their advice, support, understanding and ongoing assistance.

Kaye Jones
Counsellor

SUPPORT WORKER'S REPORT

The number of sessions conducted during the last 12 months has increased by 75% with those of last year (157 to 274).

The referrals to me have been from many different areas including for the larger part, the front-line CISS volunteers, also the counsellors, Enhanced Maternal & Child Health, Connections, WAYSS, Schools and Centrelink.

While there has remained a need for financial help, ie through vouchers and discretionary funds, there is a large component of the assistance given as advocacy on behalf of the clients. Again the months of December, January and part of February have been mainly devoted to working with Julie on our Back to School Program (BTS). The number of families seen was up from 240 last year to 287 this year, and the value of the assistance went from \$37,000 to \$46,878. The Educational Assistance Program (EAP) has also continued during the year, and from February to September, we saw 51 families, assisting them to the value of \$5,862.

STATISTICS (July 2010 – June 2011)

CLIENTS

	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	TOTAL
CLIENTS	17	21	29	21	18	12	15	17	24	11	13	25	223
SESSIONS	26	25	35	28	21	12	18	23	30	14	13	29	274
NEW	10	13	18	12	11	6	8	11	14	4	7	16	130

LOCATION

	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	TOTAL
3977	13	16	20	16	14	7	10	12	18	8	9	21	164
3976	1	2	6	4	3	3	3	4	5	-	1	2	34
OTHER	3	3	3	1	1	2	2	1	1	3	3	2	25

GENDER

	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	TOTAL
MALE	6	7	15	9	5	6	5	8	10	8	4	10	93
FEMALE	11	14	14	12	13	6	10	9	14	3	9	15	130

COUNSELLING

With the retirement of John Lewis during the year, I have taken up some of the counselling sessions as required. Among other things, it has given CISS the opportunity to offer clients the option of seeing a male counsellor if they have requested it.

In this financial year I have conducted 63 sessions, ranging from relationship issues, domestic violence, separation, self esteem among others. I have appreciated both the opportunity and the challenge in doing this part of my work.

ISSUES PRESENTED: -

The main issues that are being presented are financial, housing problems, increased costs of rents and utilities and costs associated with medical expenses. For a lot of the clients coming in for assistance, the main problem is that the money coming into the household, (ie Centrelink payments) doesn't cover their basic living costs for food and shelter. This includes young families through to the aged pensioner.

By far, the largest group of Centrelink recipients seeking our assistance were Parenting Payment Single (PPS), with both Disability Support Pension (DSP) and New Start (NS) also being well represented.

The following are areas where assistance was given: -

Financial	Education
Housing – Rental/Mortgage	Immigration/Visas
Advocacy	Drug/Alcohol
Health Disability Issues	Child Support/Separation
Domestic Violence	Centrelink Problems
Legal	Bereavement
Employment	Assistance with Forms/Resumes
Census	

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

During the year I attended a number of courses, and also represented CISS at information sessions. These included: -

- Tenants Rights – Tenants Responsibilities
- ABC's of Gambling Counselling
- Cross Cultural Training (New Hope)
- Domestic Violence Training
- Bi-Sexual Men and their Female Partner
- Fighting Fair – Mediation & Conflict Resolution
- Representing CISS at CIVic Vulnerable Families meetings
- Presentation to Connections
- Presentation to Enhanced Maternal Child Health Services

Doug Thompson
Support Worker

FINANCIAL COUNSELLOR'S REPORT

I am pleased to present my first report to the AGM of the Cranbourne Information & Support Service. In 2010 my working hours were 52 per fortnight however, due to the large work load, my hours were increased to 60 hours per fortnight.

From the very first week, I received referrals to work with vulnerable people and families in the Cranbourne and surrounding areas. Most of my referrals come from the volunteers that work in the ER area of CISS. I also receive a large number of referrals from other services in our area; e.g. WAYSS, Windermere, Oz Child, Department of Human Services, Office of Housing, SECASA, Integrated Care, New Hope, Connections, Good Shepherd, Money Help, Migrant Resource Centre, local churches and even local real estate agents have contacted me regarding concerns about their client's wellbeing.

There are a number of clients who access CISS for combined counselling and financial counselling services. The issues presented are usually complex and intertwined and create much stress for the client. Our service delivery ensures a holistic, effective, timely response.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As part of my employment in 2009, I was asked to complete my Diploma in Financial Counselling and this was achieved in 2010.

Ongoing professional development has included attending training every three months with the Financial & Consumer Rights Council.

Additional training included: -

- Gambling issues
- Infringements and the law
- Working with indigenous people
- Energy hardship
- ASIC and Consumer Action Law Centre information day
- Smart meter workshop
- Applied suicide intervention training
- Power of attorney and administration orders workshop
- Working with people with mental health issues
- State Trustee professional development
- Understanding and managing challenging behaviours workshop

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to all the staff and volunteers for an enjoyable place to work. From the moment I arrived, I have been made to feel part of one big support network. Also, a big thank you to the Committee of Management for your support last year during difficult personal circumstances.

Robyn d'Argent
Financial Counsellor

FINANCIAL COUNSELLING STATISTICS (July 2010 – June 2011)

NEW CLIENTS

	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	TOTAL
NEW CLIENTS	15	10	13	16	9	12	8	12	20	16	18	21	170
MULTIPLE SESSIONS	29	34	26	32	29	27	10	35	30	21	28	36	338

LOCATION

	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	TOTAL
3977	37	38	30	39	27	30	14	39	44	30	33	48	409
3976	6	5	9	8	9	7	5	7	7	6	8	9	86
OTHER	1		2	1	2		1	1		2	3		13

ISSUES

	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	TOTAL
DEBT MANAGEMENT	28	37	27	36	32	22	16	47	38	35	34	47	399
CREDIT CARD	23	31	16	18	27	32	16	35	38	29	28	42	335
ADVOCACY	32	35	30	30	29	24	18	38	41	31	32	49	389
BANKRUPTCY	6	14	8	12	16	4	7	14	4	9	10	8	112
MORTGAGE	29	25	15	9	4	6	7	24	18	18	21	30	206
CAR LOAN	15	22	6	4	7	3	8	17	20	8	17	17	144
PHONE	23	25	21	9	17	19	13	30	13	21	25	37	263
UTILITIES	23	15	32	21	19	16	14	28	27	20	26	36	277
RENT ARREARS	2	5	3	1			6	8	8	7	12	9	61
U.R.G.	2	2	4	13	10	6	10	16	13	5	8	11	100
CENTRELINK	13	9	6	4	8	2	8	11	8	10	13	17	109
FINES	11	10	13	14	12	9	8	18	16	8	7	10	136
RATES	9	6	7	9	4	7	5	23	16	16	6	17	125
ACCESS SUPER	5	10	9	6	5	3	2	6	1	7	3	7	64
FAMILY ISSUES	12	11	16	18	17	14	5	26	16	12	21	22	190
MENTAL HEALTH	12	12	15	14	12	9	11	20	22	18	20	22	188

CRANBOURNE COMMUNITIES FOR CHILDREN 'INFOLINK' REPORT

The last financial year has been wonderfully challenging and busy. We have presented to several organisations and schools in the area, including a group of first aid workers, who administer daily medication to children with ADHD. We have also presented to Wesley Mission whose volunteers provide live in care for children suffering from ADHD. Our ADHD Support Group has delivered its first year of support with a total attendance of 70 parents/grandparents and 11 children. We have also provided follow up services for several of the attendees with CISS. Kaye Jones has once again made available her counselling services to these families and her wonderful skills are invaluable.

Centro Shopping Centre is once again our largest outreach service providing information with 382 clients and 438 referrals/enquiry issues.

We are currently in talks with Cranbourne Centrelink to provide a weekly outreach service to their clients. The necessary paper work has been completed and we are waiting to hear back from Canberra as to the outcome.

We look forward to another exciting year.

Ann Proud & Flora Warren
'Infolink' Team

STATISTICS

GENDER

Male	91
Female	291
Total Gender	382

ENQUIRY ISSUES

Information & Referral	282
Crisis Intervention	4
Family Counselling	12
Financial Counselling	4
Advocacy Negotiation	5
Tax Help	1
Accommodation Register	1
Volunteer Register	2
Volunteer Training	6
NILS	4
Family Relationships	2
Housing	11
Health Wellbeing	48
Benefits Concessions	4
Education Training	12
Employment Needs	1
Consumer Problems	5
Community Issues	31
Other	3
Total Enquiry Issues	438



No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS) – Cranbourne Site

The Casey No Interest Loans Scheme commenced operation in April 2001 at Casey North Community Information & Support Service Inc. The Cranbourne Information & Support Service Inc was invited to assist deliver the program across the southern suburbs of Casey, and we have delivered this program in partnership ever since.

NILS enables approved low income earners obtain affordable credit for essential household goods such as washing machines, fridges, computers, heaters and furniture.

In the financial year 2010-2011, 23 loans were issued from the Cranbourne site, totalling just over \$15,000. Clients are able to utilise Centrepay to repay their loans at an affordable rate without placing additional strain on the household budget. Eighteen loans were repaid during this period to a total of just over \$13,000.

Back to School Support Program

The Cranbourne Information & Support Service Inc (CISS) delivered its fifth Back to School (BTS) Support program between the months of November 2010 and March 2011, in conjunction with The Salvation Army Cranbourne Community Support Services.

The Salvation Army Cranbourne Community Support Services contributed \$14,000 towards this program. A further \$15,000 was received from The R.E. Ross Trust, and \$12,750 was provided through CISS from various sources including CISS funding and donations. An additional \$4,000 from The R.E. Ross Trust was provisioned for use towards educational needs that present throughout the year.

The money was used to assist families in the Casey South community with the costs of sending children to school, and covered items such as non-voluntary fees, textbooks, stationery, shoes, uniforms, and sundry items like lunch-boxes and bags, etc.

A total of 286 families were assisted, which consisted of 641 children (55 being VCE students), attending 57 schools. Of the 286 families seen, 44.4 % were new to the program, and 96.8 % of families were in receipt of Centrelink payments.

Julie Jones
Back to School Program Coordinator

*“To achieve greatness, start where you are,
use what you have, do what you can”*

Arthur Ashe

SERVICES

Information and Referral

Information and referral services are the core activity of the agency, and are available on a wide range of subjects including:

- * Accommodation
- * Community Affairs
- * Education
- * Employment
- * Health
- * Legal
- * Support Services
- * Counselling
- * Consumer Affairs
- * Emergency Relief
- * Environment
- * Income
- * Recreation
- * Transport

Trained volunteers provide information in person or over the phone. A current, comprehensive community information database, pamphlets, booklets, and manuals enable access to thousands of agencies, services and procedures. Data is maintained on National, State, regional and local agencies, and provides people with improved access to resources and services, and knowledge of their rights and responsibilities.

Crisis Support

An intervention service is provided for people in crisis. This can include a 'listening ear', support, practical assistance (such as filling in forms or writing letters), information, and referrals to appropriate specialist supports. Demand for our crisis support service grows each year as increasing numbers of people present with complex needs and numerous issues.

Emergency relief is provided for people experiencing financial hardship, and includes food, food vouchers, gas and petrol, Met tickets, nappies, baby food/formula, and pharmaceutical needs. Guidelines and eligibility criteria apply, and a 'holistic' rather than 'bandaid' model of service delivery is used.

Counselling

A generalist crisis intervention and counselling program is provided, with individual, couple, and family counselling offered; and specialist counselling is also available for adolescent and adult males. The service is free and available to individuals, couples and families who live or work in the Casey South area.

Advocacy and Negotiation

This is provided on behalf of clients with Government departments, service providers, utility companies, landlords, businesses, and neighbours, etc, with regard to issues including debts, services, complaints, and procedures. Emphasis is placed on the client developing these skills for future use.

Casey No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS)

The Casey No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS) offers low-income earners an accessible source of credit for the purchase of essential household goods with an achievable repayment plan that does not compromise the household budget.

NILS is jointly operated by CISS and Casey North CISS, and commenced in April 2001 with a small amount of capital. Since inception, the program's capital has increased significantly, which has allowed us to respond more effectively to the need of the Casey community.

This scheme continues to grow, with many clients now on their second or third loans.

Share Accommodation Register

A register for people looking, or offering to share accommodation is available on site. Sharers are resourced with a "Sharing Kit", and staff can act as mediators in establishing share arrangements. Sharing can be an economical and practical way of finding accommodation in the local area, and this free service has enabled many people find suitable, affordable housing, and is a useful community resource.

Tax Help

Volunteer staff are trained by the Australian Taxation Office to assist people fill in simple tax returns. This service is offered to people on low incomes, the aged, people with disabilities, people whose primary language is not English, Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders, young people, pensioners, unemployed, and people with literacy or numeracy difficulties. CISS is the only agency providing Tax Help in the Casey South area, and the demand is such that many people cannot be assisted.

Volunteer Register

A register of service providers and community groups who offer opportunities for people interested in volunteer work is available on site.

Volunteer Program

CISS volunteers undertake an extensive training program, including a nationally accredited course – "Assess and Provide Services to Clients with Complex Needs", orientation, and a probationary period before becoming accredited community information workers. A focus on personal development enables volunteers to further develop particular skills or interests in fields such as public relations, information management, research, administration and computers, amongst many more.

*"It is not the Napoleon Bonaparte's who change the course of lives,
but the people you have never heard of"*

Tolstoy

EMERGENCY RELIEF

Many of our clients are dealing with complex personal and financial issues that dominate their lives. Almost 13% of clients attending our agency for assistance with emergency relief are approaching us for the very first time, reflecting both the growth in population, and the number of families in our region living below the poverty line, and therefore increasingly dependent on the welfare system to survive.

It is important to note that all people accessing our service receive a comprehensive and holistic service, often receiving a range of support services in addition to material aid. Some people requesting emergency relief may only require assistance once, but generally, families in this area need further support during times of crisis or prolonged hardship. Requests for assistance with transport costs (both petrol and public transport expenses) have increased substantially from the previous year, and the need for assistance with medical and pharmaceutical costs also remains very high.

Once again, we are proud to acknowledge the support of many local organisations and individuals who donated to our Emergency Relief program throughout the year. We received donations from Lawson Poole Daylight Lodge, Ulysses Club Shearwaters Branch, Inner Wheel Club of Cranbourne, Rotary Club of Cranbourne, Cranbourne Arthritis Support Group, Cranbourne Country Women's Association, Hampton Park Uniting Church, Hazard Solutions, Trios Taberet, Cranbourne Bluelight Disco, Balla Balla Community Centre, Mr George Brown, various anonymous donations and the City of Casey.

During the last financial year, almost \$200,000 was distributed in emergency relief on over 6,000 occasions, and a further \$48,900 was distributed through the Back to School/Education Assistance Programs. This would not have been possible without the federal department of Families, Housing, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs, The R.E.Ross Trust, The Hunt Club Community Fund, The Salvation Army Cranbourne Support Services and the Dandenong Magistrates Court, as well as additional support from local churches, donations from the Ritchie's Stores Community Benefit Card, and the afore-mentioned groups and individuals. We also received and distributed \$7,000 of Telstra vouchers.

STATISTICS

Please see the following graph for a breakdown of service provision.

We provided some type of assistance on over 15,500 occasions to more than 8,100 households. As usual, emergency relief was our most utilised service, with over 6,000 requests for assistance. This was an increase from the previous year, and translated to a total of 7,163 adults and 7,655 children who benefited in some way from our emergency relief service. The majority (55%) of people attending our agency were aged between 25-39 years, with a further 35% aged between 40-59 years. Four percent of clients were under 24 years of age, and six percent were aged 60 or over.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We extend our thanks to the following individuals and agencies for their support, donations or assistance to clients and staff of the Cranbourne Information & Support Service:

City of Casey Councillors and Staff
Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)
Department of Justice Victoria – Southern Courts Fund
Community Information Victoria
Woolworths Limited
Ritchies Stores Ltd – Cranbourne
Windermere Child & Family Services
The Salvation Army Cranbourne Support Services
The R.E. Ross Trust
St Vincent's de Paul Society
Techdeck Computer Service (John & Derek)
Pharmore Pharmacy
Centrelink - Cranbourne
Australian Taxation Office – Tax Help Program
Cranbourne Lions Club

- ***For donations to CISS Emergency Relief Fund –***

- Lawson Poole Daylight Lodge
- Ulysses Club Shearwaters Branch
- Inner Wheel Club of Cranbourne Inc
- Rotary Club of Cranbourne
- Cranbourne Arthritis Support Group
- Cranbourne Country Women's Association
- Hampton Park Uniting Church
- Hazard Solutions
- Balla Balla Community Centre
- Cranbourne Bluelight Disco
- Trios Taberet
- Mr George Brown
- Anonymous donations

“The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much, but whether we provide enough to those who have little”

Franklin Delano Roosevelt