

the link

youth health service



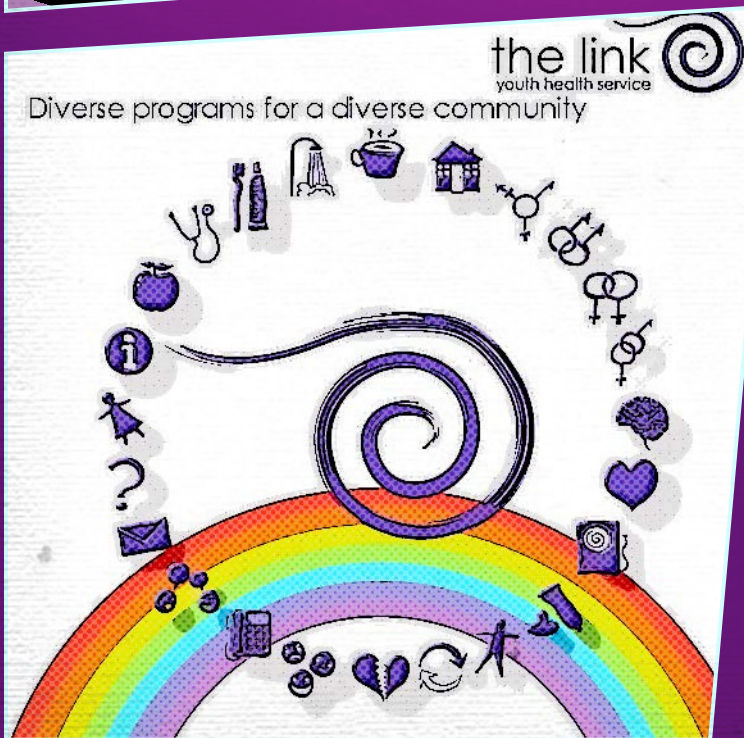
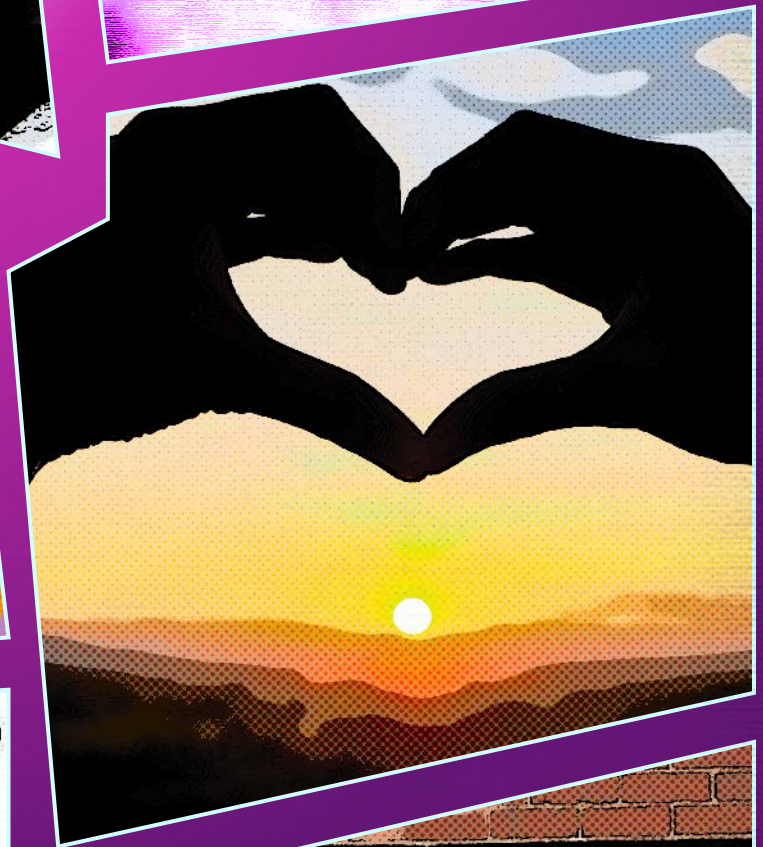
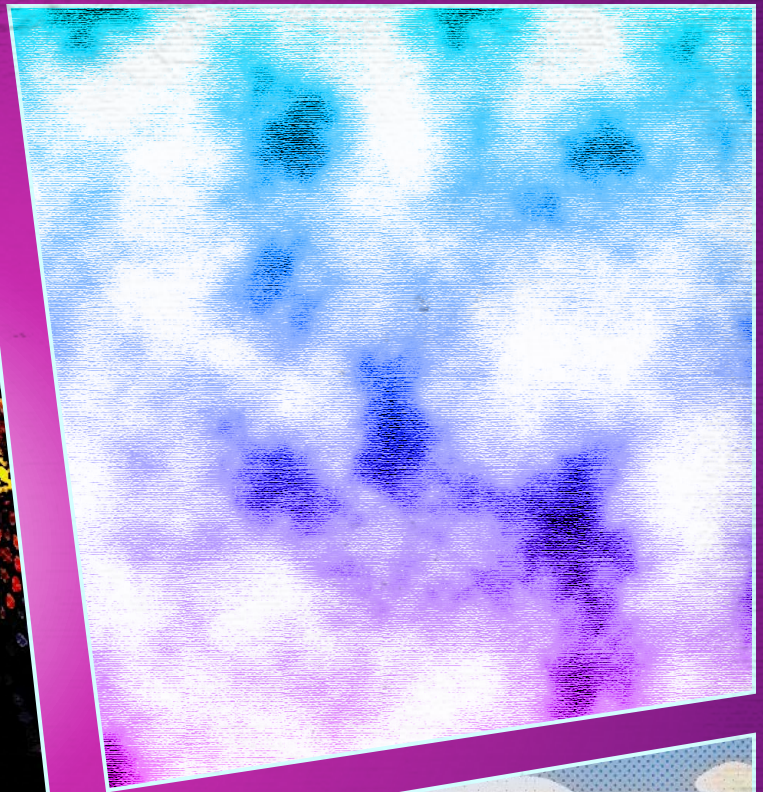
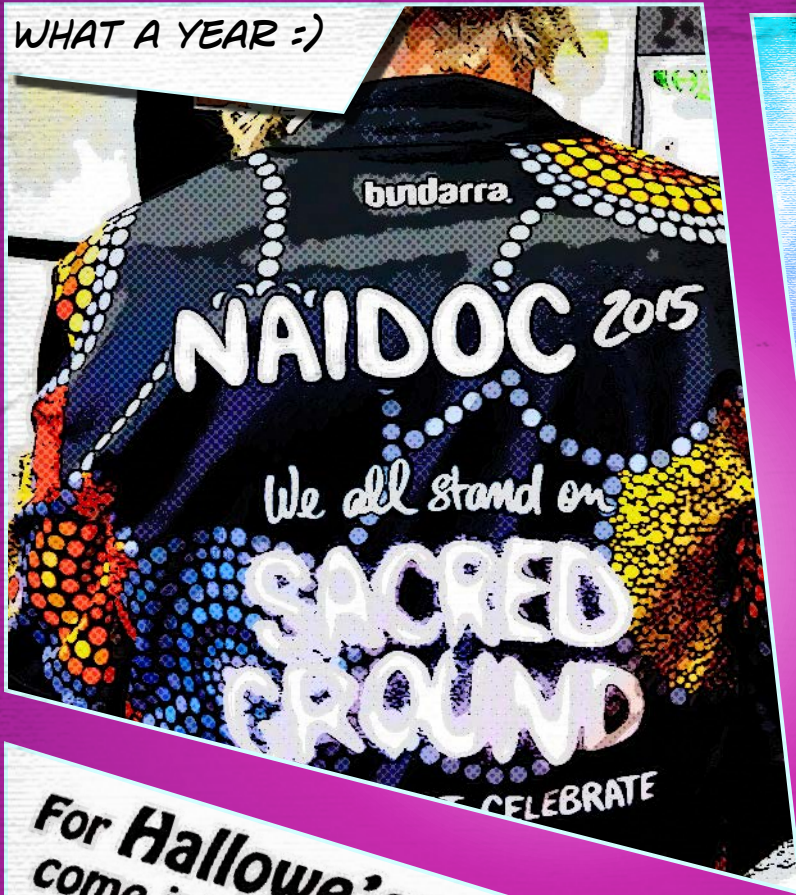
ZZZAPPI!



THE 2015-2016

ANNUAL REPORT

WHAT A YEAR :)



THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This year's Annual Report of The Link Youth Health Service demonstrates a successful year of ongoing operations, the important range of programs undertaken by the service and a range of new initiatives underway.

The Board continued its correspondence with the Australian Government's Minister for Health, Hon Sussan Ley in an attempt to address the lack of early psychosis youth services programs in Tasmania. Advice was received that funding for mental health services including headspace would now be managed by the Primary Health Networks and our current agreement would now run until June 2018. At the same time it was also necessary to begin the work of creating greater connection between staff and service delivery at headspace Hobart and The Link and an independent consultant was engaged to provide a project plan for this work and cross agency systems were developed. National evaluation of existing early psychosis programs occurred during June with staff and board members invited to participate. In September, The Link was pleased to host a successful short information sharing meeting with Minister Ley.

The Finance Subcommittee of the Board worked with staff to consider and make decisions about a new finance system. After due diligence XERO was chosen and roll out has commenced. The development of an enhanced webpage and new data base for client information and reporting were also approved.

The Board would like to thank Sally Walters for temporarily returning as admin/receptionist during 2015/2016, Cathryn De Soza for her work as Finance Officer and Kirsty Leaf (headspace Community Health Educator). We welcomed the following appointments - Miranda Ashby (Manager, headspace Hobart), Emily Rawlings and Bernadette Carroll (Youth Health Workers) Kellie Bryan (AOD Case Manager and Intervention Worker) Erin Crean (headspace Community Health Educator) and Maggi Boughton (Executive Support Officer).

The Board undertook further review and updates to the constitution and worked to describe roles and responsibilities of all Board members and executive positions. A Board workshop in October commenced a process to address succession planning over the next 12 months, given the impending retirement of long serving Board members

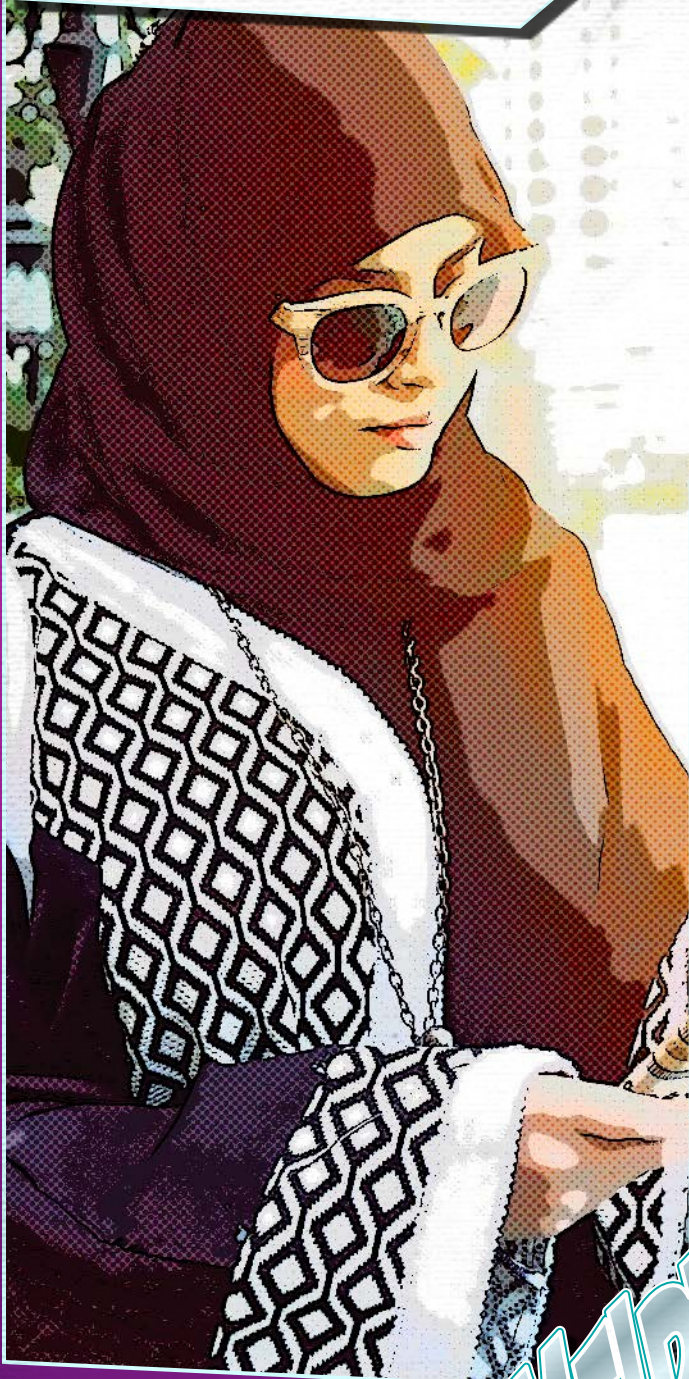
The Board would like to formally recognise all staff at The Link for their various and valued contributions to programs and services over the last year as evidenced in this Annual Report, as well as the leadership provided by David Perez, Tania Hunt and Miranda Ashby. The Board would like to acknowledge the work by staff who submitted successfully for new projects: a research project with Orygen on the effects of headspace interventions; a Department of Social Security pilot to assist young people with mental health concerns to undertaken training or employment; and working with Cornerstone Youth Health Services (funded by Primary Health Tasmania) to provide mental health services for vulnerable young people. In addition headspace Hobart was one of 12 centres invited to develop, trial and implement a new National Data Reporting Tool. UTas is also conducting a clinical pathways review which began in June.

The Board would like to acknowledge that the financial position of The Link continues to be positive.

In conclusion I would like to thank my fellow Board members for their time, ideas and contributions over the last twelve months and pay tribute to retiring members Bec Poke and Mayda Flanagan (who served for several terms as Board Secretary).

JUDY HEBBLETHWAITE

THE LINK IS A SAFE PLACE TO BE



SAFE AND CONFIDENTIAL



Another year, and another new range of challenges and opportunities. The Link Youth Health Service reached 26 years old + during this reporting period and as an organisation moved past adolescence. The Link has been adapting to change and responding to our clients needs over time and this year is no different.

Changes mid-contract, to our funding agreements and a move towards outcomes-based reporting, as well as changes with funding structures and the way we collect data, have at times provided challenges. But this has also given us the opportunity to work closer with our funding partners with the vision to develop better data collection and reporting systems, and to better measure the impact The Link has on our clients lives.

Throughout the year new partnerships have been formed and some older ones reinforced. We welcome our new partnership with Primary Health Tasmania as the new funders of our youth mental health program, headspace Hobart.

We also acknowledge our continued partnership with Public Health Services and the Alcohol and Drug Service. We value our relationship and the opportunity that we have to improve the health of young Tasmanians. We would not be able to accomplish what we have, without the long term collaborative relationship that exists between our organisations.

This report gives me an opportunity to officially thank the work of our staff at The Link. We have a variety of programs, funded under different streams and by different organisations, with a plethora of reporting and outcomes requirements, but for the most part, we have one team. One that works for the benefit our our clients and for the improved health of young Tasmanians. So my sincere thanks to all the staff for your work throughout the year and my appreciation of your commitment to our clients.

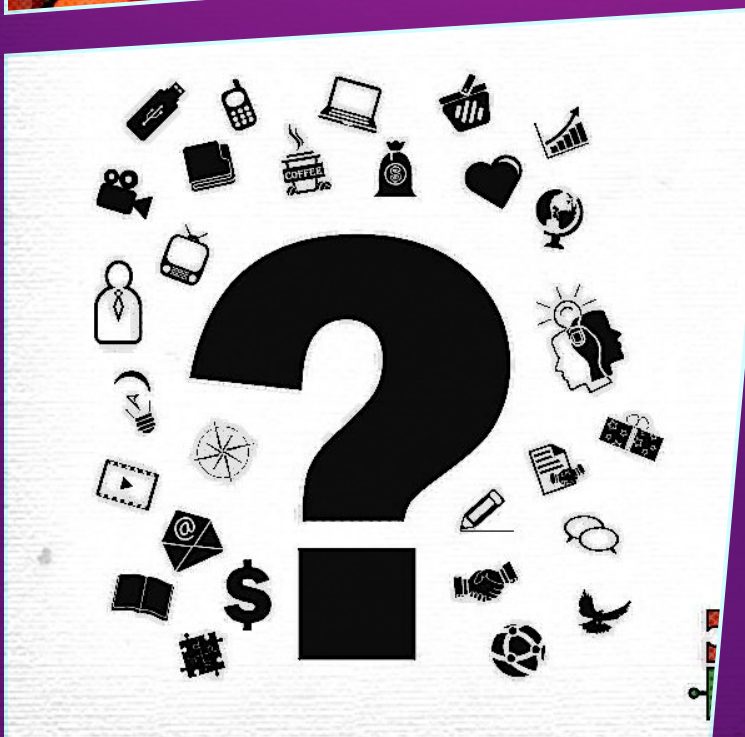
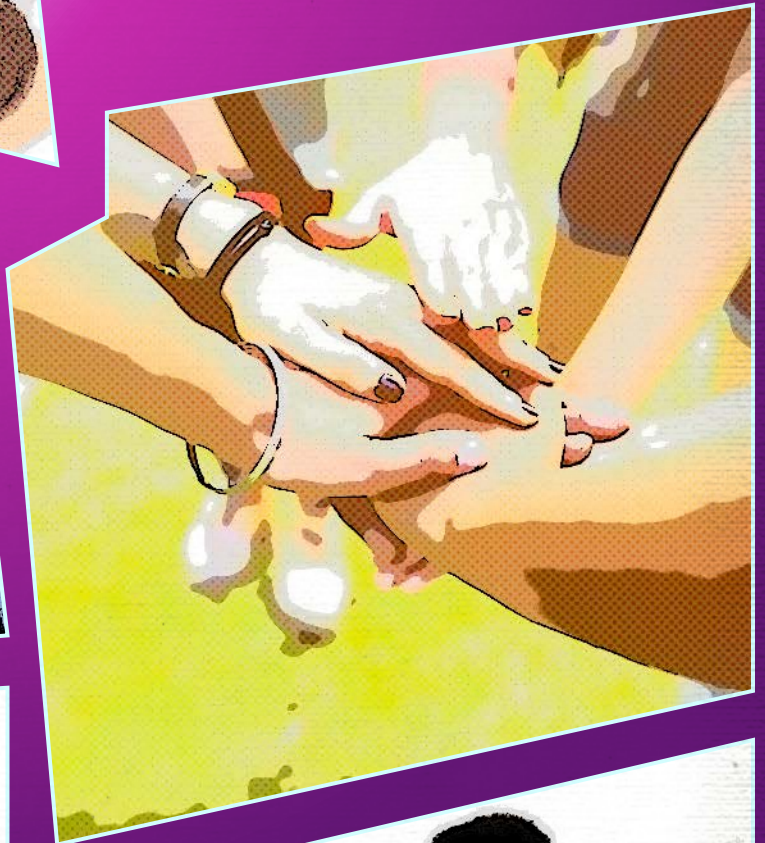
I also would like to commend Tania Hunt and Miranda Ashby for their contribution to getting The Link to where it is now. There will always be improvement, we should always keep learning, but we are in a good financial and strategic position. Without their management support and vision we would not be here. I also acknowledge Michelle Fay, the previous headspace Hobart Centre Manager, and welcome Maggi Boughton in the new position of Executive Support Officer

The Board of The Link Youth Health Service has brought experience and oversight to the organisation and have provided strong support to the management team. The Board have also contributed and advocated for the young people of Tasmania through lobbying for better outcomes at a State and Federal level. I want to thank the Board for their commitment and support throughout the years.

The Link remains committed to a collaborative approach to the delivery of health services to young people in Tasmania and we look forward to implementing the changes necessary to evolve in a changing world and to continue to provide HEALTH HELP, to the young people of Tasmania.

DAVID PEREZ

A PLACE I CAN TRUST



OPERATIONS MANAGER REPORT

2015/16 was an incredibly busy and productive year for psychosocial programs at The Link.

Work undertaken in 2015 to increase the organisations capacity to deliver AOD outreach services in the community proved fruitful. We successfully negotiated the introduction of AOD outreach services at New Town Boys High School, Claremont College and Hobart College whilst consolidating existing outreach services delivered at Karadi Aboriginal Corporation. We also experienced a notable increase in the number of young people accessing AOD counselling and support on site. A large proportion of young people accessing AOD services presented with problematic AOD use and mental health comorbidity.

The Open Access Area remained incredibly popular with an increase (30%) in the number of client contacts this year (5838) compared to the same report period in 2014/15 (4082). Young people predominately accessed the service to respond to their health and well being needs in the areas of sexual health, mental health, alcohol and other drugs, food security and personal care.

Whilst the type of health issues experienced by young people were not dissimilar to previous years, food security remained a significant area of concern for service users. The popularity of our food program continued to grow with large numbers of young people accessing food and using our cooking facilities. This provided an opportunity for staff to develop a rapport with young people, resulting in increased client engagement and self referral. The popularity of this service has exceeded our expectations.

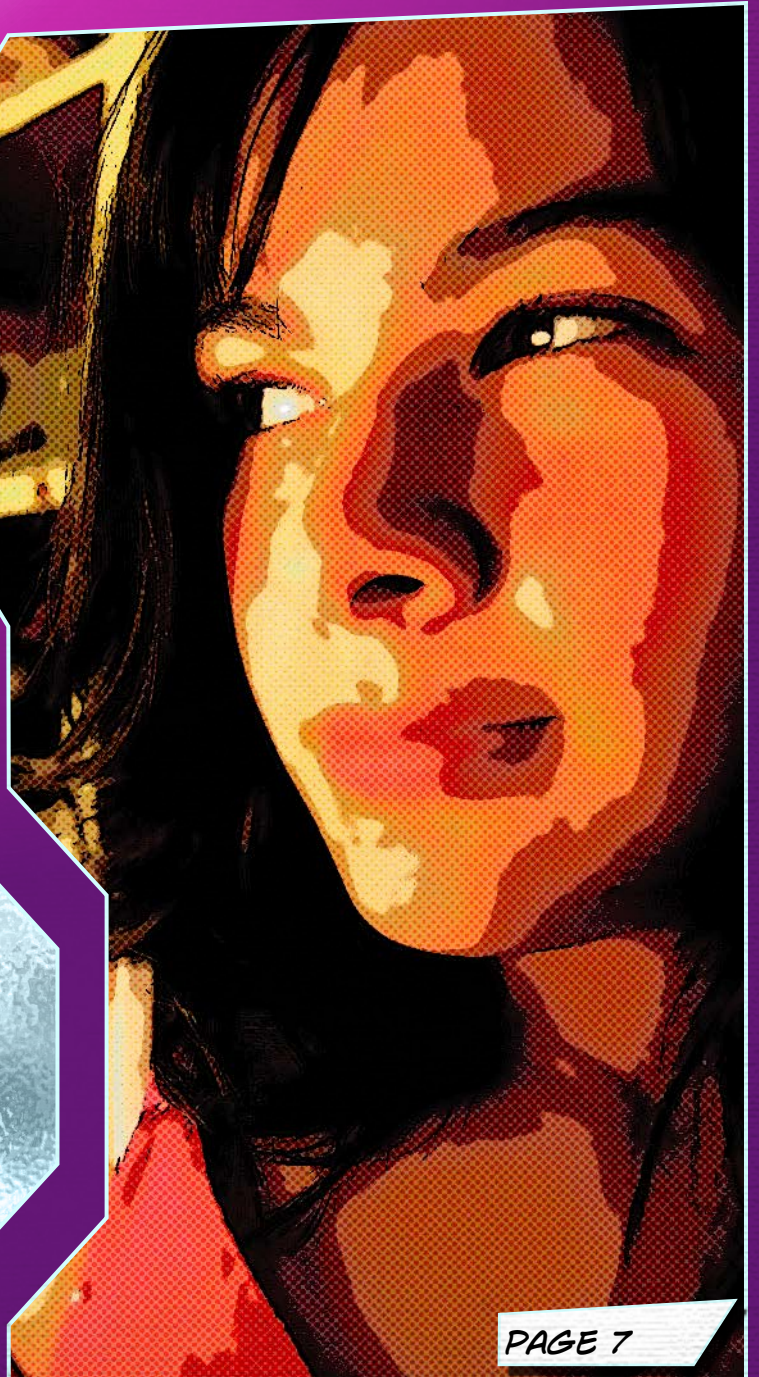
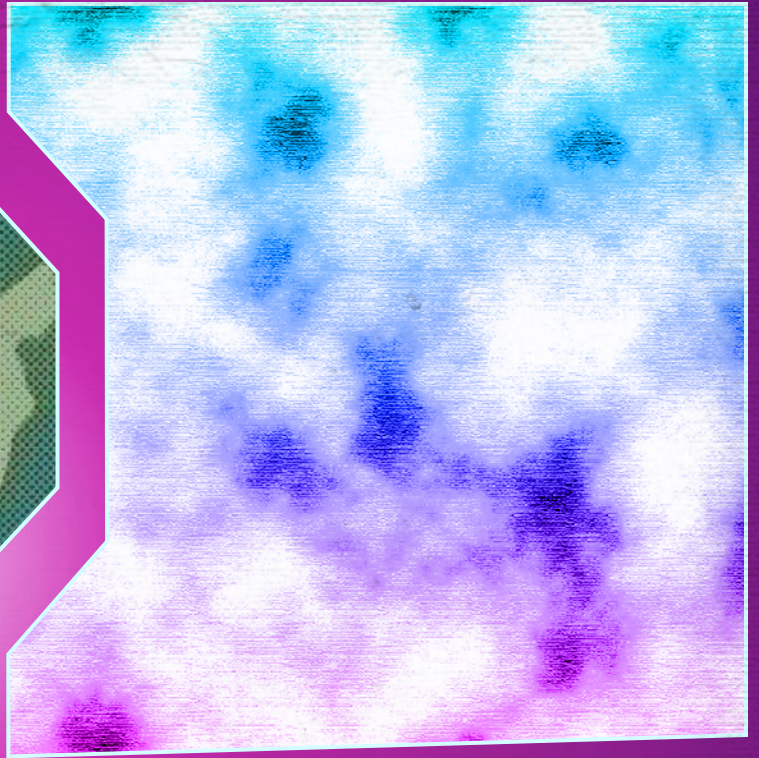
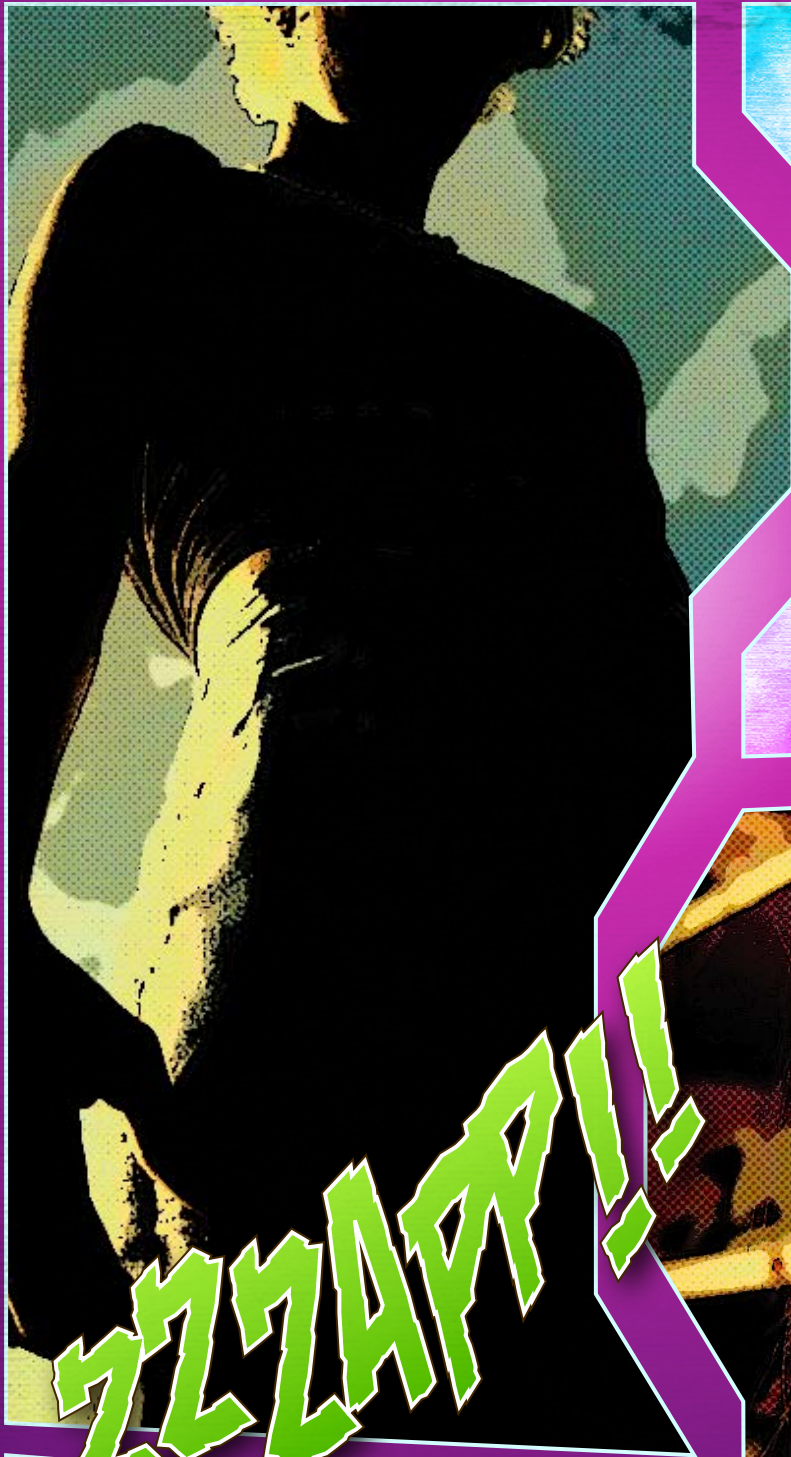
We also experienced an increase in the number of young people presenting with complex mental health issues, in particular individuals with a mental health diagnosis who were unable to access early intervention/prevention services or tertiary mental health services. This proved challenging at times due to limited referral options and resource limitations and reinforced the need to continue advocating for youth mental health services to address gaps in the service system.

Improvements made to our Open Access Area including the introduction of a phone and tablet charging station 'charge bar' and audiovisual equipment was well received. Our charge bar, designed to charge mobile phones and share health promotion information, assisted young people to remain connected with their support networks, particularly after hours and was used daily. Our audio-visual equipment, in the form of a flat screen television, was used daily to convey health and well being messages on a diverse range of topics relevant to young people.

I would like to acknowledge and thank my team - Duncan, Kellie, Andrew, Berny, Emily and Sally for their hard work, commitment and professionalism throughout the year and I really couldn't say it better than one of our clients...

***'Everyone at
The Link is so lovely. Couldn't have
a better team to rely on. Keep up the
good work'***

TANIA HUNT



The Hobart headspace program has changed significantly during the financial year. In this period the federal government announced a raft of funding and function changes for headspace National, and a change of funding provider for all headspace centres, to the newly formed Primary Health Networks. We look forward to working with Primary Health Tasmania.

Changes within the management team at headspace also occurred during the year. Michelle Fay, the inaugural headspace Hobart Centre Manager resigned, and Steven Bradford moved from the position of Clinical Lead to private practitioner with the service.

Miranda Ashby became the Centre Manager at the end of January 2016, and has worked alongside the headspace staff and The Link Management Team, to guide the headspace program through this period of change.

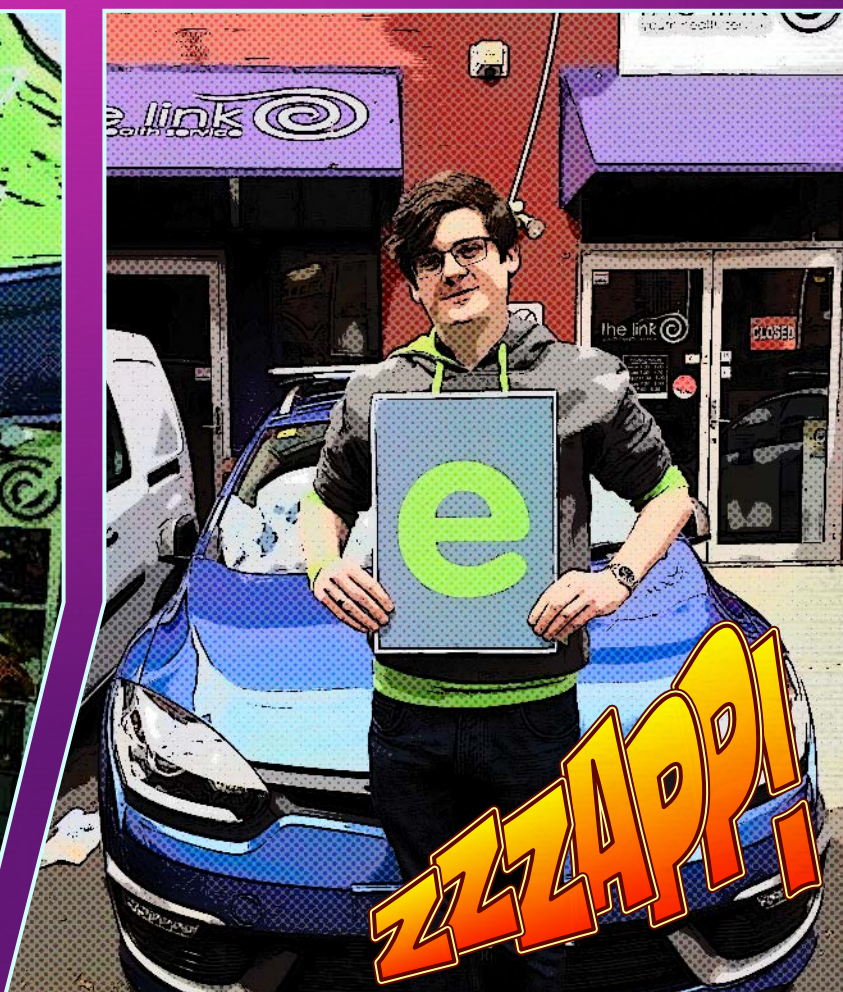
headspace Hobart Centre service activity continued to be above the National headspace Centre average for the year. headspace continues to provide a range of services to young people including mental health, engagement and assessment, alcohol and/or other drug support and physical or sexual health services.

Identification of early mental health issues, intervention and prevention messages, and help seeking and coping strategies were distributed throughout local communities in Southern Tasmania. The Community Health Educator, Youth Engagement Workers and other staff members of The Link provided a range of innovative presentations to schools and colleges and supported local community organisations' events such as The University of Tasmania's O Week, Tas Pride March, Rainbow Prom, RU OK Day, Wear It Purple Day and NAIDOC Week.

The Youth Reference Group continues to be a source of inspiration for innovative ways to connect with young people around mental health issues. The Youth Reference Group, through the assistance of a Grant from The Mental Health Council of Tasmania, developed a film "Making Through The Dark". The film's concept, story line and production were youth led, and focused on a Youth Reference Group member's story of how he dealt with depression.

MIRANDA ASHBY

HEADSPACE HOBART OUT AND ABOUT AT EVENTS



YOUTH HEALTH FUND COORDINATOR'S REPORT

A total of 961 formal health assessments with young people were conducted throughout the 2015/2016 financial year. 1,085 health items/services were approved for payment through the Youth Health Fund. A further 64 orders for toiletries were also made by YHF Access Workers.

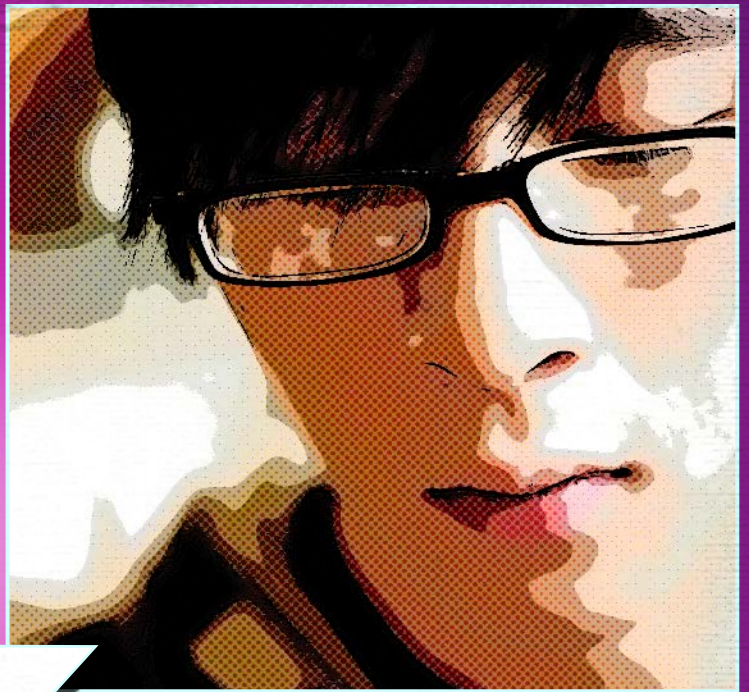
Access to particular Sexual Health Services remains a primary health concern and continues to place an imbalance to the cost of services provided through the Fund. Having to rely on limited private services is problematic and adds to the burden of decision-making and positive health outcomes for young people. One example of this is during this reporting period a major health provider ceased operations in the North, and a North West Practitioner retired. This means that all young people must now travel to Hobart for surgical TOPs, or other complicated procedures.

The Youth Health Fund continues to maintain regular contact with hundreds of Service Providers across the State. We have a growing number of Service Providers who are specialists delivering services to young people. We have built great rapport with most providers and they understand the complexities of gaining access to health services, particularly by young people. As waiting lists continue to grow, more young people have to turn to the Youth Health Fund for financial assistance. It is unacceptable that someone requiring a tubal ligation has a wait list of 5 years through the Public System.

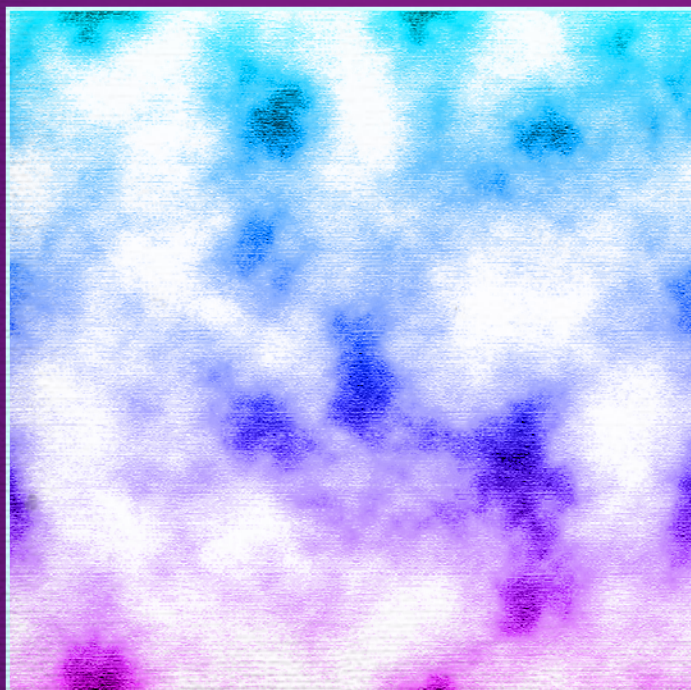
Having worked as the Youth Health Fund Coordinator for over 17 years, I am still very proud to be part of this wonderful and practical Fund for young people. It is very satisfying when young people have their health needs met (sometimes resulting in major positive life changes) without the barrier of capacity to pay.

MARIANNE WYRSCH





I LIKE BEING RESPECTED AND NOT
BEING JUDGED :)



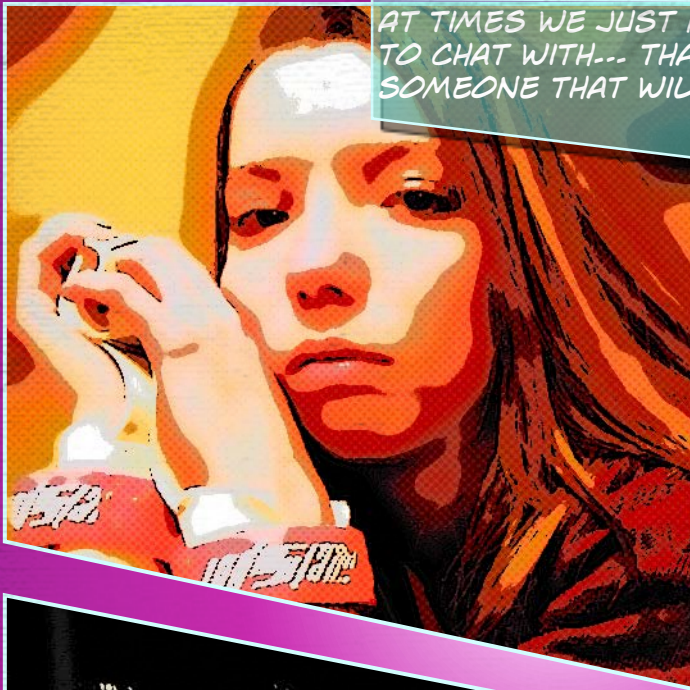
2015/16 has been another successful year for the Link, with all of our primary funding agreements remaining in place. We have also managed to secure additional funding through headspace with the addition of the Y-Com validations study.

The Link's balance sheet remains strong. Despite the creep effect caused by the CPI and ERO increases being below real wage inflation, the Link's management team have managed to increase our level of service across the board whilst remaining within budget.

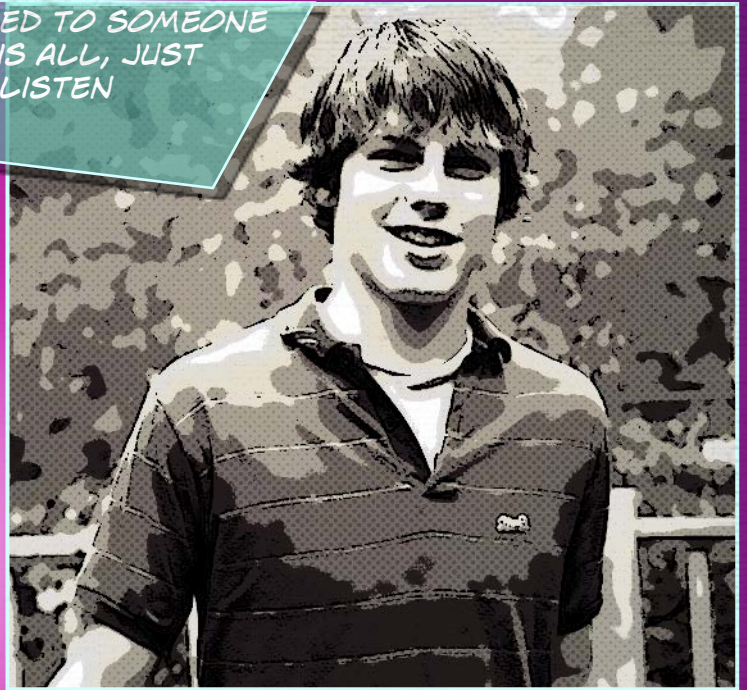
Unfortunately we lost Cathryn from the Finance team this year, and have been unable to secure a suitable replacement for her as yet, although we hope to in the near future. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Cathryn for all of her work in the role, and wish her well for the future. The 2016 year saw the end of MYOB as the choice of software, having successfully transferred our accounting functions over to Xero for the coming financial year and beyond. We have also worked closely with Accru to ensure that all of our accounting practices and systems are up to date with recommended best practice.

The Finance Committee has met infrequently throughout the year, but will likely take a more active approach following the provision of the external advice on financial processes and reporting as we move into the 2016/17 year.

ROBERT MEREDITH



AT TIMES WE JUST NEED TO SOMEONE
TO CHAT WITH... THAT IS ALL, JUST
SOMEONE THAT WILL LISTEN



ON THE ROAD TO HEALTH HELP



OUR TEAM

FINANCE:

ELIZA LEE
CATHRYN DE SOZA

YOUTH HEALTH WORKERS:

ANDREW BADCOCK
EMILY RAWLINGS
BERNY CARROLL

OUR BOARD:

JUDY HEBBLETHWAITE - PRESIDENT
KIM BOYER - VICE PRESIDENT
ROB MEREDITH - TREASURER
JOHN BOROJEVIC - MEMBER
MAYDA FLANAGAN - MEMBER
HELEN BARRETT - MEMBER
REBECCA POKE - MEMBER
MICHAEL HILL - NEW MEMBER

MANAGEMENT TEAM:

MARIANNE WYRSCH - MANAGER YOUTH HEALTH FUND
BETHANY SMITH - CLINICAL LEAD
MIRANDA ASHBY - CENTRE MANAGER HEADSPACE HOBART
TANIA HUNT - OPERATIONAL MANAGER
DAVID PEREZ - CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

RECEPTION AND ADMIN:

TANIA CERRITELLI
JULIE DOWNNIE
SALLY WALTERS

GPS:

ALISON EDWARDS
REBECCA GRANT
JENNY PRESSER

YOUTH HEALTH FUND

MARIANNE WYRSCH -
MANAGER HEADSPACE
HOBART
EMILY RAWLINGS

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT WORKERS:

LYNDEL DEAN
ERIN CREAN
PHILLIP MCKAY
RENAE PEPPER

IT & MAINTENANCE:

GRAEME MITCHELL
JON VINEY
GARY WATERSON

COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATOR:

KIRSTY LEAF
SHELAGH CURTAIN

YOUTH REFERENCE GROUP:

ALETHEA ALLEN
DAKODA LEARY
NAOMI SEARLE
LUCY REES
CONNAH JOHNSTONE
KIMBERLEY SCANLON
LILY CHURCHILL
HANNAH GODFREY-MULLINS
ROHAN GREEN
BRENDON PAGE
AMBER LLOYD

PSYCHOLOGISTS:

CLAIR GRAHAM
KELLY PETTIT
ADELA MARRONE
HELEN MIDDLETON
DONNA SHEPPARD

WHAT PEEPS LIKE ABOUT THE LINK

'The food provided really helps to reduce the anxiety and barrier for us to speak up to the staff'

Haven't personally needed yet but been with friends that sighted relief after dealing with staff and outcome :)

I am now able to speak up, in a way it is a big reason my depression has improved, kind of saved me a little

"All the workers are open minded, friendly and remember your name, it makes you feel really cared for."

"... there is showers, food and someone to talk to"

"Willingness to help anyone without judging"

"The sense of anonymity and trust"

"The food really helps to reduce the anxiety and barrier for us to speak to the staffs"

"The communal sitting area, complete strangers will happily sit and chat with one another"

"Everyone at The Link is so lovely! Couldn't have a better team to rely on"

"Easy access and confidential"

' You guys are excellent! Thanks for your help in providing young people with this excellent facility. I only wish I could remember the name of the kind lady who helped me at your centre so I could tell you how excellent she is!'

"The Link doesn't always get enough funding/donations and sometimes the fridge is empty. When cash is low, some of us really rely on The Link to get us through."

I would just like to express my thanks and gratitude to you and the Youth Health Fund for the funding to cover the cost of my son Jhett's braces. Next year when my youngest child turns 8 I will be taken off my Single Parenting Payment and placed onto Newstart. I will be living under the poverty line along with hundreds of thousands of other Australians. The \$6000 cost for Orthodontics would have been way beyond my financial capability. Thank you again, your team sure have lifted a burden from my family.