

effective community engagement  
sustainable professional commitment

## ANNUAL REPORT **2007/2008**





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# our purpose

Community Solutions Inc. is a unique organisation which recognises the significant and sustainable outcomes that can be achieved when the resources of communities, business, government and individuals are brought together to target issues of concern and opportunity.

Established in 1991 and incorporated in 1996, Community Solutions Inc. has developed to become a highly successful and effective community based organisation that specialises in the development and delivery of innovative and sustainable projects and services. These programs and services are primarily provided to individuals who are significantly disadvantaged and require direct relief and support.

With a professional management team and committed and skilled staff, Community Solutions Inc. provides the ideal vehicle for government departments, local councils and businesses to work with communities to create sustainable benefits for individuals, families and target groups.

Community Solutions Inc. has a diverse range of skills, experience and resources to support projects and services for individuals and communities throughout Queensland and Australia. Our commitment to provide innovative, sustainable and effective outcomes for individuals and communities is a key feature of our service delivery.



*commitment  
energy  
experience*



# chairperson's report

If there was ever a time for an organisation like ours to ready itself for large scale change, it is here, right now in 2008 and beyond. Key characteristics and qualities that have set us apart from other organisations and that we can be rightly proud of, have been our flexibility and capacity to make the most of opportunities that present themselves, and to think outside the square.



The goalposts and landscape for the work we do have been changed significantly. This was a predicted outcome of the Federal election in November 2007, and Community Solutions Inc has wasted no time in scoping new opportunities. This has resulted in an opportunity to consider a merge with a well regarded and like-minded organisation based in Central Queensland. This potential joining of two committed organisations will allow us to diversify and broaden our service footprint throughout regional Queensland.

The process of forming such a valuable partnership has created an enormous workload – particularly for David Curd, as General Manager, and Eric Moes, Paul Kusy and Tony McFadden who, as voluntary Directors, have committed the time to do this complex and detailed work. Against this background of complex issues, our other plans for developing a sustainable future have continued and the *Sunshine Coast Community Capital Centre* will become a reality with construction to be completed in October 2009.

This year's report would not be complete without noting the resignation of one of our longest standing Directors, Shay Zulpo. Shay's history with Community Solutions Inc has been long and fruitful, and she has made a truly significant contribution, not the least of which was the establishment of our unique and valued Street Angels service. Shay, our heartfelt thanks for your many years of service and very best wishes for the future. You will be missed. We have welcomed Tony McFadden onto the Board and we greatly appreciate his financial skill set, experience and generosity.

Behind the scenes, management and staff have continued to do 'good work' despite the stresses and strains of new thinking, directions, structures and policies and have enthusiastically delivered a wide range of high quality services that we know have truly made a difference in peoples' lives. Their collective and extraordinary commitment and goodwill will assist us to deal with the inevitable challenges that will emerge in the next 12 months. As our services expand, we continue to welcome quality staff and hope to support and motivate them with the excitement of our culture, optimism and positive attitude.

While it is an exciting time in our history and development, the costs of our new direction in time, effort, energy and thinking have been profound. Well done again to our management team, David Curd, Jenny Madden and Melinda Everett, who have led the organisation and their teams efficiently and effectively. My thanks also, to my fellow Directors who have this year, committed additional time and effort. Special thanks to our executive support Mel Anthon, who is the "quiet glue" that holds the Governance Program all together.

Good luck to us all for the exciting possibilities that lie ahead!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Thorsborne". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Margaret Thorsborne**  
Chairperson

# general manager's report 2007/2008

**After more than 10 years of committed and quality support for individuals, families and communities in need throughout the Sunshine Coast and Wide Bay Regions, it is now appropriate for Community Solutions Inc to broaden our service horizons and strategic partnerships with a view to long term sustainability and effectiveness.**



Throughout 2007/2008, our highly skilled and enthusiastic team have provided a diverse range of services for young people, families, schools, seniors and grandparents. These clients have been assisted to address needs and barriers associated with employment, training, mental illness, accommodation, personal relationships, social isolation and health. In most areas, client service outcomes have exceeded targets and expectations.

Strategically, our Board and management has continued to “look forward” at the risks and opportunities that lay ahead for our organisation, staff and clients. In response, the Board identified the need for and benefits of extending our service coverage to the central and western regions of Queensland, whilst also broadening our service portfolio to be able to provide comprehensive support for our clients.

A guiding aim has been to “*enhance the well-being of individuals, the sustainability of communities and the development of regions*” whilst ensuring that our organisation was “*sound, professional, accountable and effective*” in our service delivery. The following summary outlines key areas of achievement within our stated areas of strategic development and operation.

**OUR SERVICES** – develop, manage and implement quality projects and services that meets or exceeds relevant outcomes.

Service diversity remains a key feature of Community Solutions Inc which ensures that clients with complex needs can be provided with employment, training, case management and health support from a skilled and committed team of workers.

On the Sunshine Coast and in the Caboolture district, services have been provided for young people in need via the school based *Youth Support Coordinator* program and through a range of innovative public health projects that support families who are new to the region and young people who are in the care of their grandparents. In Wide Bay, our youth services extend to include the *Youth Support Coordinator* program, *Youth Pathways Program*, *Get Set for Work* and the *Jobs Placement, Education and Training (JPET)* program. These programs and services provide many practical options to ensure that young people can access relevant training, education and employment options.

Training and employment based services have continued to support mature age people, parents and carers who wish to return to work but may require job preparation, training or work experience to make this possible.

Case management services have been significantly enhanced through the delivery of the Peer Helper and Mentor Program in Fraser Coast which provides specific support for people with a mental illness. This is an area of service that we wish to extend in the future as mental

illness remains a national priority and a high need for local communities and families. Our Personal Support Program now provides quality case management support to more than 240+ high needs clients in the Sunshine Coast and Fraser Coast regions.

Project innovation and service diversity has evolved further with the continuation of a range of public health and research projects including *Toursmart* (public safety campaign for tourists and backpackers), *Changing Places* (support for new residents in growing communities), *Virtual Jackpot* (youth and gambling research), *Safelink* (activities and public safety for seniors), *GAP – Grandparents as Parents* (case management and social connectedness for kinship families) and *Bright Futures* (case management for children in kinship care), just to name a few.

Our Street Angels service continues to provide on-street safety net services in Mooloolaba and at major events. The fantastic Team Leaders and well trained volunteers have developed an excellent working relationship with Police, emergency services and other service providers.

OUR COMMUNITIES – build on our work with existing communities and individuals to strengthen the support we provide to them and reach new communities and individuals.

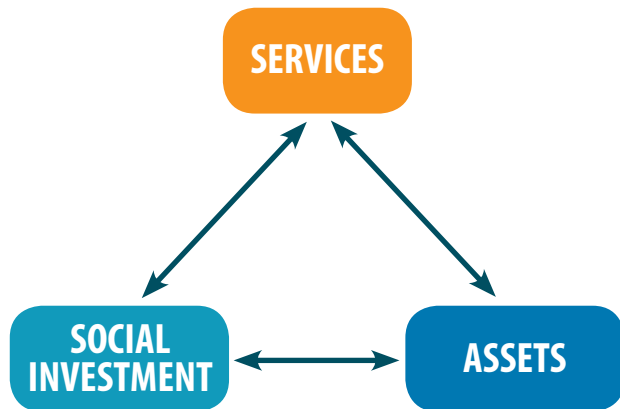
The effectiveness of our service delivery is most evident in regions where there is a strong sense of community and readily identifiable need. With this in mind, Community Solutions Inc recognised that establishing a partnership

with a like-minded service organisation located in central and western Queensland would provide the opportunity to further diversify support for our clients and extend the geographic reach of our services.

To this end, we have been in discussion with a highly respected Central Queensland based organisation, who shares a similar history, organisational culture and commitment to “making a difference”. These discussions have focused on the benefits of developing a strong partnership which may potentially lead to the merging of both organisations to form a sound and regionally focused organisation that extends from North Brisbane to Mackay and west to Emerald with offices, staff and services located in many small regional communities. This decision will be reached after an extensive Due Diligence process has been undertaken and managed by an external third party.

OUR SUSTAINABILITY – Govern, manage and support our valued staff and limited resources responsibly and strategically whilst building capacity to optimise the services we can deliver in support of communities and individuals.

Ensuring a sustainable operation through implementing compliant processes, retaining skilled and committed staff and most importantly, providing quality service delivery for clients is a complex and challenging responsibility for volunteer Board Directors. Fortunately, Community Solutions Inc. has been well served and professionally supported by committed people who



accept the responsibility to guide our organisation towards a preferred and positive future.

Our sound financial position achieved through prudent financial management has enabled the organisation to implement an asset development program which includes securing an ideal service site for a purpose built community service centre – The Sunshine Coast *Community Capital Centre*. The construction of this valuable community asset commences in November 2008 and will be available to support clients in late 2009. This will be an important first stage of our strategy to “create community capital” and key social infrastructure to underpin service delivery in the communities in which we operate.

The legal structure underpinning Community Solutions Inc. has also evolved in 2007/2008 with the establishment of Community Assets Australia Ltd which operates as the asset development arm of the Group. This entity will be complimented by the Community Capital Foundation Ltd which will facilitate corporate partnerships, social investment and personal philanthropy. Therefore, the Community Solutions Group will consist of specific entities and strategies to drive services, community asset creation and social investment.

Collectively, we are laying a foundation for a highly effective and sustainable community based service organisation which can make a positive difference for individuals and families at many levels within small and large communities throughout Regional Queensland.

I wish to recognise our long serving and highly supportive Chairperson Margaret Thorsborne and fellow Directors for their ongoing commitment and willingness to look forward and make key decisions when they are needed. Special thanks to Managers, Jenny Madden and Melinda Everett, our increasing number of Line Managers who create and model our positive culture, and our highly valued staff, Team Leaders and volunteers who continue to enthusiastically and skilfully help and support individuals and families in need.

Community Solutions Inc. is now well placed to undertake an exciting stage of further development and expansion whilst retaining the unique organisational qualities and positive service attributes that has been a valued characteristic of our operation since establishment in 1997.

Our strategy is clear and supported by detailed planning and professional management. The future of our organisation has significant potential for both our clients and staff.

To our Board, staff, partners and stakeholders – many thanks for your support and commitment and I look forward to working with you in the years ahead.

**David Curd**  
General Manager

# treasurer's report 2007/2008

It gives me great pleasure on behalf of the Board of Community Solutions to present the audited financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2008.



Sunshine Coast Community Capital Centre - Lake Kawana Sunshine Coast Qld



This past financial year has been one of ongoing growth as well as an exciting year of new beginnings.

Community Solutions Inc. has had a successful year financially with revenue increasing and expenditures appropriately maintained. The operating surplus of \$950,000 for the year represents 17.6 % of revenue compared with 12.1 % in the previous period.

The audited statements show a healthy balance sheet at the end of the financial year with net assets of \$3.8 million up from \$2.8 million at the corresponding time last year.


These are outstanding results and the credit for this achievement goes to our General Manager David Curd and the management team who, along with the accounts staff, provided excellent and diligent oversight of the organisation's finances.

Financial year 07/08 has also been one of exciting new beginnings. Our ongoing prudent financial management over many years placed the organisation in a position where it was able to purchase outright a key site for the construction of the *Sunshine Coast Community Capital Centre*. The audited statements show that \$1.74 million was loaned to Community Assets Australia Ltd, a subsidiary of Community Solutions Inc. for the purchase of the land. Community Solutions Inc. also provided a

bank guarantee for Community Assets Australia Ltd to finance a loan for the building of the Community Capital Centre.

This significant community development is designed to position the organisation on a sustainable financial path to ensure delivery of great community services well into the future with a lessening dependence on the vagaries of government funding.

There is no doubt that Community Solutions Inc. is entering into the next phase of its development and these audited statements reflect the very sound financial position of the organisation which enables us to move forward into the next period with great confidence.



**Eric Moes**  
Treasurer



# clients, services and outcomes



**STRONG FAMILIES AND HAPPY CHILDREN**  
 Over 150 families have received information, opportunities to participate in community programs and direct support during the past year. Information resources have been distributed to over 500 families. Support for children has included therapeutic programs, advocacy and counselling.

**OPTIMISTIC AND ENGAGED YOUNG PEOPLE**  
 In the past 12 months, over 600 young people have accessed programs including personal support, case management and information. This has resulted in many being more engaged in learning and making better choices about their future.

**HEALTHY AND ACTIVE OLDER PEOPLE**  
 Older people have an important role to play in our community and we have a strong commitment to enhancing their health and lifestyle. Over 500 older people have been supported with activities programs and lifestyle information.

**INDEPENDENCE AND DIGNITY FOR DISADVANTAGED ADULTS**  
 Case management and direct support to over 400 individuals in need. We believe that every person should be supported to make positive and productive life choices.

**TRAINED JOBBEERS ACHIEVING EMPLOYMENT**  
 Over 250 job seekers have been provided with training and job placements. Many went on to secure full or part time employment.

**SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES**  
 During the past 12 months, over 9400 people received assistance for intoxication, 470 attended information workshops and 50,000 information books were distributed statewide.

**SOCIAL POLICY INFORMED BY SOUND EVIDENCE**  
 Two significant gambling research projects on behalf of the Queensland Government with other research on behalf of government departments and private companies.

*Our staff are committed to working with the children and their parents or carers currently in our programs to help them believe in themselves, make good life choices and to experience fun and success.*



strong families and happy children



# strong families, happy children

**We believe that every child should have the best possible start in life. Although many of our client families experience numerous challenges, our staff are committed to working with the children and their parents or carers currently in our programs to help them believe in themselves, make good life choices and to experience fun and success.**

Community Solutions Inc. has a commitment to helping children and young people overcome life challenges and to develop self-belief and resilience. During 2008, our staff have worked with children and young people from infancy through to teenage years on a range of programs all designed to build capacity within individuals and their families.

## Bright Futures

Through the **Bright Futures** program, children aged 8 – 17 who live in the care of a family member are supported to develop personal optimism and to make good choices about their lives. Children in the care of family members other than parents experience significant life challenges. For many, the circumstances through which they have entered the care of grandparents, aunts and uncles and for some, older siblings, are usually traumatic. Many have parents that are dependent drug users or suffer from a mental illness, and others have parents that are no longer alive or who are currently in the prison system.

Young people in the Bright Futures program engage

voluntarily in: counselling, support programs, therapeutic programs, lifeskills programs and recreational activities. Over the past 12 months, young people have participated in support groups and recreational activities such as yoga, Pilates, belly dancing, soccer, Ju Jitsu, bowling, lawn

bowls, laser games, ten pin bowling and roller skating. Therapeutic and lifeskills programs have included basic first aid training, surfing lessons, cooking lessons, self-development and anger management programs.

The 45 young people in the Bright Futures program have, in general, participated in both recreational and therapeutic support group activities. Carers report that the children enjoy and look forward to Bright Futures activities and that they have noticed positive changes in their child with an increase in their ability to resolve difficult situations. Anecdotal feedback suggests that the program is playing a positive role in the futures of the children and their families.

## Families Actively Better

The **Families Actively Better (FAB)** program was a 12 month program that promoted the theme that being active and healthy needs to start at a young age, through a diverse range of games, modified sports and age appropriate activities. Targeting families with children aged 6 years and under, the program message of “families



**bright futures**

Bright Futures is a service designed to increase optimism and support for young people in kinship care.

**To be eligible, a young person must:**

- Be aged between 10 and 17, AND
- Live full-time with family members other than parents

**Young people in the program will be supported through:**

- Individual counselling, support and case management
- Access to therapeutic and support programs
- Access to living skills programs
- Recreational opportunities
- Links to community support

For more information, or to access the program, please contact Children's Home Community Solutions on:  
P: 5437 9499  
M: 0417 767 303  
Email: [brightfutures@community-solutions.com.au](mailto:brightfutures@community-solutions.com.au)

Bright Futures is supported by funding from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing under the National Risk Drug Strategy Community Partnership Initiative.



having fun together" underpinned all activities with a view to establishing a life-long positive attitude towards a healthy and active lifestyle.

FAB provided regular fun activities including games and modified sports, along with fun food and cultural experiences to promote positive nutritional messages. Activities were also held in the local community during school holidays.

Strong relationships were developed with Landsborough State School and Landsborough Child Care where activities were held each week. Participation from local children and families was excellent with a range of fun activities offered including scoop ball, ribbon dancing, balloon yoga and kite flying just to name a few. Children were provided with a *FAB Tool Kit*, a box that each child could personally decorate and contained instructional cards for each activity the children undertook. The *FAB Tool Kit* was a practical resource that the children could take home where activities could be replicated with their family. Other activities included excursions to local dairy farms and the establishment of a vegetable garden at the local primary school.

## Changing Places

For families moving into a new area, establishing contacts with local services and people can take time. **Changing Places** is a project offered throughout the southern Sunshine Coast local government area to support families with children aged 12 years and under, to establish contacts and feel at home in their new community. Changing Places has provided many families who are new to the area with valuable support in sourcing activities, schools, medical services and other agencies to meet their needs. It has also helped people to connect with each other and for new families to feel comfortable in their new community.



Are you a **new family** to the Caloundra area?

**CHANGING PLACES**

Supporting families with young children who have recently moved to the Caloundra Local Government area

Would you like to

- Know more about your community?
- Find out about services that can assist your family?
- Get to know your neighbours?
- Link into fun community activities & events?
- Share your experiences and learn from other families?

For more information or to register your interest, contact Community Solutions Inc.  
PH: 5477 3155  
Email: [changingplaces@community-solutions.com.au](mailto:changingplaces@community-solutions.com.au)

Community Solutions Inc.  
Supported by Australian Government  
Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs



*We believe that every child and young person should have the best possible start in life.*



optimistic and engaged  
young people



# optimistic and engaged young people

**We believe that young people should be given every opportunity to engage in learning, to feel positive about their futures and to be supported to overcome adversity.**

## Job Placement Employment and Training

For young people who experience homelessness, there are significant barriers to many aspects of life. Finding employment is a significant challenge as most homeless young people also experience a range of additional barriers. The **Job Placement Employment and Training (JPET)** program provides assistance for young people aged between 15 and 25 who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The program aims to help young people re-engage with the community, stabilize their current personal, housing, educational situation and to eventually find and sustain employment.

Our JPET staff work with young people in a flexible and personalised program that assists young people to deal with their personal difficulties with the support of a case worker. Through JPET, young people in the Bundaberg, Maryborough and Hervey Bay areas have been assisted with routine matters such as budgeting, shopping, cooking, personal hygiene as well as re-connecting with school or flexible learning programs and finding employment.

## Youth Pathways Program

In the Hervey Bay, Maryborough, Gympie and Bundaberg areas, the **Youth Pathways Program** provided case management support to over 500 “at risk” young people. The aim of Youth Pathways is to assist young people to make a successful transition through to completion of Year 12 (or its equivalent) and ultimately, to further education, training or employment and active participation in the community. Clients were encouraged to overcome multiple barriers to re-engage with school and/or find employment.

The Girls Mentor Group undertaken by Youth Pathways workers, was one of 2008’s successes. The girls met weekly and discussed topics such as school attendance, support networks, personal safety, drug and alcohol use and goal setting. Whilst the program was being implemented, truancy was decreased and young people’s improved attendance at school resulted in positive educational and employment outcomes.



## Youth Support Coordinator Program

The **Youth Support Coordinator Program (YSC)** is delivered by Community Solutions Inc. in 10 schools throughout the Sunshine Coast, Caboolture and Bundaberg areas. The YSC Program provides early intervention services to young people at risk of premature disengagement from education, due to social or emotional issues. The target group for the program is young people 13-17 years, that are most at risk of disengaging from learning, and their families.

YSC Program objectives are to assist young people in resolving life issues impacting negatively on their school engagement, support young people to remain connected to learning or training opportunities and to assist young people to access the supports they need to remain out of statutory, crisis and intensive service systems.

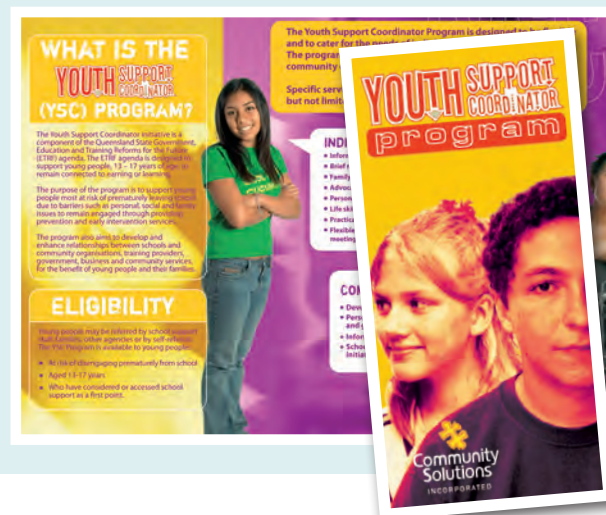
During 2008, 115 young people have received moderate to intensive support by Youth Support Coordinators with the prevalent issues being family conflict, truancy, school refusal, mental health issues, peer conflict, violence, physical/emotional and sexual abuse, neglect, sexual health and grief/loss.

As with many case management support services, there have been service challenges for the YSC Program this

year including support for clients and families with intensive needs, increased service demand, incorporating the program into school environments and geographic coverage of our 10 schools. However, the successes of the YSC Program always far outnumber any challenges. This year was no exception, with the YSC Program continuing to provide a diverse range of programs and services. In addition to intensive individual family counselling and support, program achievements have included: Early Intervention Programs for young people, such as, Healthy Relationships, Girls' Rock and Water, Helping Friends Peer Mentors, Work Preparation Skills and Health, Hygiene and Self Esteem. Community Development Projects have included activities such as, Family Fun Day, Wilderness

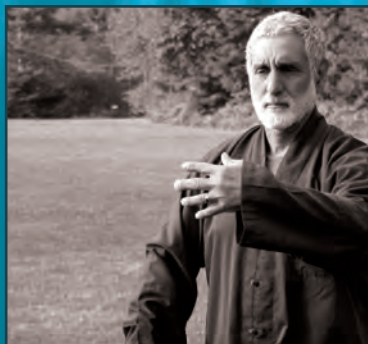
Warriors, Indigenous Group Programs, Cultural Diversity Day, Tobacco Awareness Film Project and Holiday Activity Care Programs.

Our focus for 2008/2009 is to continue to build upon the strengths of existing programs and service models and to continue to support our dedicated staff to work effectively with our young and "at risk" clients.

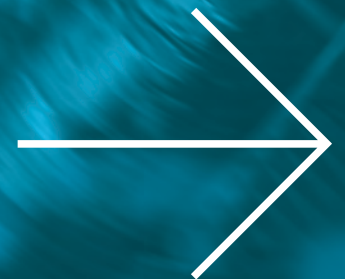




# healthy and active older people



*We recognise that older people have an important role to play in our community.*





# healthy and active older people

**At Community Solutions Inc. we recognise that older people have an important role to play in our community and we have a strong commitment to providing programs that enhance their health and lifestyle.**

During the past year, Community Solutions Inc. has continued to increase and broaden the programs we offer to older people. We have worked collaboratively with individuals and groups throughout the Sunshine Coast to ensure that programs are targeted and maximise the resources of the community.

## Stay Physically Active Project

The **Stay Physically Active (SPA) Project** provides Sunshine Coast residents aged 60 and over with the opportunity to try a wide variety of low impact physical activities with a view to improving their health and contributing to the prevention of falls. The program offers activities in locations from Caloundra, through the Hinterland and throughout the Central Sunshine Coast and Noosa areas. Participants can try the same activity once per week for 6 week blocks, then experience a different activity.

With an overwhelming response from the community, it is clear that older people appreciate cost effective opportunities to be active and to socialise. Through *Stay Physically Active*, participants can try tai chi, swimming, yoga, walking, aqua aerobics, balance and strength, group

walks, croquet, tennis, dancing and rowing. Morning or afternoon tea is provided with each activity along with health information relating to falls prevention, physical activity, nutrition and medication use.



## Grandparents as Parents Program

Community Solutions Inc. is privileged to work with a very special group of older people who have put their hopes, dreams and retirement plans on hold to dedicate their lives to raising their grandchildren. It is hard to imagine the impact that parenting young children could have on people aged 60 years and over. Not only are some families supporting grandchildren with a lot of love and very little money, others have health concerns and ongoing custody issues with their children, the parents of their grandchildren.

The **Grandparents as Parents Program (GAP)** provides support to this very special group of people, some with quite unique needs. The ages of the children they are parenting range from 7 weeks to 17 years with some grandparents having 4 children in their care. Reasons for grandparent care include: Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Neglect/Abandonment, Abuse (Physical, Psychological, Sexual), Mental Illness, Death of parent(s). In addition to parenting their grandchildren, some of our grandparents are also carers for incapacitated or terminally ill partners.



During 2008, the Grandparents as Parents Program has provided support to 1300 people, with direct support through counselling, home visits and family mediations to 162 people. The scale and significance of this project continues to amaze and motivate our staff and the Sunshine Coast community. During the last 12 months, we have been overwhelmed with offers of support in the form of clothing, footwear, school stationery, food and Christmas hamper donations. The generosity of organisations such as Caloundra's Inner Wheel, who every year cater a Christmas lunch for the grandparents must also be acknowledged.

The Grandparents as Parents (GAP) Program provides

weekend recreational activities, picnics, regular fun days and individual family support through home visits, case management, group meetings and referral. The program also encourages social interaction, mutual support and involvement in local activities, as well as access to resources and services. Families are supported to participate in funded camps and holiday activities so grandparents and children can enjoy social interaction and help strengthen their family unit. GAP also delivers a web based information package specifically aimed at grandparents on the parenting of young children. The website ([www.grandparentsasparents.com.au](http://www.grandparentsasparents.com.au)) contains information about a broad range of services and support agencies available to grandparent carers.

### Safelink

The issue of social isolation and fear of crime has been addressed on the Sunshine Coast through the **Safelink** program. Through public education and a calendar of outings with transport supplied through the Community Solutions' bus, people aged 60 and over were provided with information and experiences to assist them to make better use of local public spaces. Regular outings to the beach, public parks and tourist attractions provided participants with a wonderful opportunity to connect with each other and the program workers.





*People experience a range of challenges in life and we believe that every person should be supported to a position of dignity and self determination whereby they make positive and productive choices.*

independence and dignity  
for disadvantaged adults



# independence and dignity for disadvantaged adults

Community Solutions Inc. approaches case management with a partnership philosophy believing that positive outcomes are best achieved when there is a genuine spirit of partnership between clients and their case workers. People experience a range of challenges in life and we believe that every person should be supported to a position of dignity and self determination whereby they make positive and productive choices.

Mental illness is a major contributing factor in the dysfunctionality of the lives of people and those around them. Clients with mental illness often also experience homelessness, drug and alcohol issues, social isolation, poor communication skills, and social problems such as domestic violence, trauma and financial problems. Many have serious functional limitations that impact on their day to day living.

## Personal Helpers and Mentors Program

Mentally ill people need to be assisted to achieve independence and dignity in their lives, and to be able to function as members of the community. The **Personal Helpers and Mentors Program (PHaMs)** is a service through which clients with a severe functional limitation resulting from a mental illness are supported through a strengths-based recovery approach. Community Solutions Inc.'s PHaMs staff work closely with each client to provide non-clinical support that assists individuals to a position of independence. The **Personal Helpers and Mentors Program** is part of the Australian Government's National Action Plan on Mental Health and is currently delivered by Community Solutions Inc. in the Maryborough and Hervey Bay areas.

A PHaMs success story from 2008 involves a client who presented to the program with major anxiety and depression. His barriers were multiple but he was committed to becoming a functional part of society. His problems included alcohol dependency, homelessness, anxiety, sleep deprivation and depression, but his major love in life is art, and with a focus on this he has worked through his barriers. Through an individual recovery plan developed with his case worker from Community Solutions Inc. he has now achieved housing and is able to meet rent payments. He has recently overcome his alcohol dependency and with the support of his case worker is now seeing a general practitioner that has prescribed suitable medication to overcome his anxiety and sleep deprivation. This client is well on the way to functionality within the community and his story demonstrates the practical focus of PHaMs and the importance of strengths-based recovery.

## Personal Support Program

The **Personal Support Program (PSP)** supports 240+ people with multiple barriers who live in the Sunshine Coast and Fraser Coast regions. Through PSP, individuals who experience long term unemployment as a result of

multiple barriers are supported to find work within the community. Although not all clients are ready or able to engage in full time employment, the program's flexibility allows for clients to be supported to achieve as much employment as they are able to manage.

In implementing PSP, Community Solutions Inc. utilises a strengths-based model which sees each client supported to focus on what they can do rather than what they cannot. Through social opportunities, clients with social barriers experience interaction in groups and this plays an important role in rebuilding what is for some, shattered confidence. The personal support programs are far more than a service bridging the gap between employment and non-employment. We continue to pride ourselves on the dedication of our staff to genuinely making a difference in the lives of our clients. We look forward to meeting new clients in 2008/2009 and to helping them achieve independence and hopefully employment in their respective communities.



## PSP case study



A wonderful example of the work done by our PSP case workers is a client who was referred to our Hervey Bay PSP service after arriving in Tuan State Forest from Katherine in the NT. Her barriers included alcohol abuse, serious health issues, accommodation, low numeracy and literacy levels, poor verbal skills, no identification such as a drivers license, medicare card or any other form of personal identification.

Community Solutions Inc. initially found her suitable accommodation. We discussed her journey in life and she agreed to change her behaviour towards alcohol abuse, which she has done. The client had never been registered at birth and this lack of identification was proving to be a significant barrier to achieving some of her stated goals. Our staff worked with the client through a complex series of processes with Birth, Deaths and Marriages

to secure this vital piece of identification. We then set about connecting the client with a GP and she was treated for a lung infection and after blood tests, diagnosed with diabetes. The client was then connected with an optometrist and supplied with spectacles. We have had ongoing appointments with Queensland Health in relation to her dental health and she will be gaining a new set of dentures for Christmas this year.

Recently, staff were on hand to manage a crisis with the client as she suffered a heart attack. We transported her into town where she was met by Ambulance officers and flown to Brisbane for corrective surgery. She is now very well and making plans to connect with a numeracy and literacy course, save money and treat herself to a holiday. Her dream is to see the Sydney Harbour Bridge!

# trained jobseekers achieving employment

*Everyone who seeks to gain  
employment should be given every  
possible opportunity to achieve  
employment.*



# trained jobseekers achieving employment

We believe that there is a job for everyone and that everyone who seeks to gain employment should be given every possible opportunity to achieve employment. Our training and employment programs assist individuals with a range of skill sets and barriers to obtaining work. Through the dedication of our staff and the efforts of our clients, many people have been assisted to achieve full or part time employment.

## Employment Pathways Program

Through the **Employment Pathways Program**, 90 mature aged job seekers on the Sunshine Coast and in Hervey Bay have been assisted to find employment. Community Solutions Inc. staff have supported each job seeker through providing access to accredited training, job preparation support, paid work placement and links to local employers.

A critical success factor of the Employment Pathways Program has been the great support from the community for our programs, making recruitment easier and helping us to source high quality participants. This has been and will continue to be achieved through positive relationships and communication with Job Networks, Centrelink, community organisations, neighbourhood centres, indigenous and non-English speaking background (NESB) groups. The support of Skilling Solutions is acknowledged as one of the positive factors underpinning the program's success.



## My Pathways

**My Pathways** was implemented in the Maryborough area during 2008 to provide accredited and non-accredited training to indigenous people who were volunteering within the community. The outcome of the program was that following training, program participants would be more competitive and successful in applying for paid work.

Conducted over a 26 week period, My Pathways assisted 5 indigenous people to complete 16 weeks of paid work. Participants completed training certificates in Childcare and Community Services. Staff also assisted with resumes, preparation for job interviews and support to overcome social, emotional and physical barriers to employment.



## International Internships Program

Through the **International Internships Program** Community Solutions Inc. has supported undergraduate university students from the United States, Mexico, Germany and Finland to access internship positions with Sunshine Coast businesses. Providing a valuable link between tertiary institutions and business placements, Community Solutions Inc. has sourced placements and managed the ongoing operational aspects of students participating in local internships as well as experiencing life on the Sunshine Coast.

## Get Set For Work

**Get Set For Work** provides support for disengaged young people aged 15 – 17 years in the Hervey Bay and Maryborough areas. The program provides a flexible learning environment as a means of re-engaging or maintaining engagement of young people and used outdoor adventure-based activities to develop employability skills for participants.

A three day camp at Susan River Homestead was an excellent way of enhancing team spirit and encouraging the development of social skills including trust, community engagement and interpersonal skills.

Participants were required to prepare their own meals and erect shelters as well as undertake rigorous exercise in the

form of mountaineering and hiking.

Over the three day program many barriers faced by participants were explored. By working together to overcome challenges, existing participants developed respect and trust for the program co-ordinator and each other. Some also played an active role in mentoring newer participants and enforcing peer sanctions on unacceptable behaviour.

Of the 25 participants registered during 2008, three have enrolled in a hospitality course, another two participants are undertaking a retail training course whilst another participant has almost completed studies in disability services. Another participant has acquired part time employment within the retail sector. A further seven participants are currently involved in work placement programs with a range of organisations. Three participants have undertaken additional motivational training through the Hard Yakka program and one participant has commenced vocational training in construction and engineering with the view to moving through to an apprenticeship in the near future. Two participants have also returned to mainstream schooling.

## Pathways to the Future

Another Training and Employment Program targeting young people has been **Pathways to the Future**. Through this program people aged 17 – 24 transitioning to



employment either directly from school or from long-term unemployment, have been provided with individualised assistance to meet identified skill gaps within various growth industries identified in the Hervey Bay region. These included hospitality (food and beverage), construction/engineering or retail.

Although Pathways to the Future commenced in August 2008, the initial intake of eight participants has already undertaken engineering/construction modules in conjunction with the Australian Industry Engineering and Manufacturing Network (AIEM) to ensure participants obtain the relevant skills necessary to meet current job vacancies. Further recruitment for hospitality, retail and the second intake of construction/engineering is currently under way.

During 2008, Community Solutions Inc. has worked to assist with people who have multiple barriers to employment. We believe that every person who wants employment should receive as much support as possible to obtain employment. Our staff are proud of the success stories we hear from our program participants and we look forward to many more positive employment outcomes in 2008/2009.



*Community Solutions Inc. has a strong commitment to assisting individuals and communities to feel healthy and safe.*

# safe and healthy communities



# safe and healthy communities

The health and well-being of individuals and communities involves not only physical health, but emotional and mental health as well as personal and community safety. Community Solutions Inc. has a strong commitment to assisting individuals and communities to feel healthy and safe.

## Management of Public Intoxication Program

People under the influence of alcohol in public places not only experience risk to themselves, they can cause risk to others in the area. The **Management of Public Intoxication Program (MPIP)** targets the Mooloolaba, Maroochydore and Noosa areas of the Sunshine Coast and targets public drunkenness through both prevention and intervention. The MPIP service provides prevention and intervention strategies to target and reduce intoxication associated with 'Schoolies Week', pre and post nightclub behaviour particularly in Mooloolaba and Caloundra, and at major public events including those frequented by young people and visitors during holiday seasons.

## Party Safe-Party Smart

Through the **Party Safe-Party Smart (PSPS)** program, young people in schools have access to quality training and resource materials in the form of education designed to discourage binge drinking and encourage sound planning and practices around adolescent parties.

## Street Angels

Through the MPIP Program, Community Solutions Inc. has provided an on street support service, Street Angels.



Staffed by Team leaders with a group of dedicated volunteers, Street Angels operates on weekends in

Mooloolaba, and at major events across the Sunshine Coast including Schoolies Week, Melbourne Cup Day and New Years Eve. With the introduction of mobile (car and pedestrian) patrols, Street Angels is able to access intoxicated people in a variety of locations and provide immediate assistance and support.

The service also collects and collates data that will assist to identify specific community needs and issues and inform the delivery of current and future services. This review process also assists to identify best practice policies for on-street outreach and safety net services operating in similar contexts ([www.streetangels.org.au](http://www.streetangels.org.au)).

## Toursmart

For many tourists camping or backpacking in beachside locations, security is an important issue. The **Toursmart Project** has provided older and younger tourists in the Hervey Bay area with information to help them enjoy a safe and relaxing holiday. Through the activities of Toursmart, criminal activity in Hervey Bay has been logged and is contributing to further crime prevention initiatives. Tourists have received advertising products with safety

messages and tour operators have received information about securing their premises.

With the project well on the way to completion it has been a great success. The support of the reference group and local Tourist operators has been a major bearing on



the success of the project. We have worked collaboratively with the reference group in developing marketing strategies and material. The theme "Lock it or Lose it" has been chosen as the cornerstone in promoting the project.



### RaveSafe

Patrons at large music festivals, nightclub dance events and informal music activities have been supported by a team of peer helpers that attend events to provide drinking water, a quiet area to relax and a range of health advice with a focus on ecstasy and related drugs. **RaveSafe** is a non-judgemental prevention program that has provided valuable support and advice to patrons of all ages. Staffed by a committed team of peer helpers, the project has been present at large events such as Big Day Out to nightclub settings and small informal events.

RaveSafe also provides training to nightclub owners and managers with a view to creating a venue that is a "healthy setting". During the past 12 months venue owners and duty managers from clubs at the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast and in Brisbane have accessed training that contributes to accreditation in venue management ([www.ravesafeqld.com](http://www.ravesafeqld.com)).

### Queensland Schoolies Information Project

For young people participating in end of school celebrations, there continues to be a critical need for quality information that contributes to the prevention of drug related harms. Whether celebrating at the Gold Coast or another beach side location, or just having a quiet celebration with friends in a country location, young people need sound advice on legal, consumer, health and safety matters. Through the annual **Queensland**



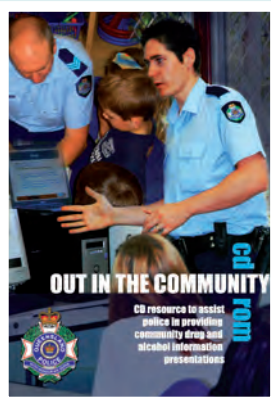
**Schoolies Information Project** Community Solutions Inc. was able to provide 50,000 information booklets to school



leavers. Community Solutions Inc. has been proud to deliver this important project on behalf of the Queensland Government for 10 years.

### Out in the Community

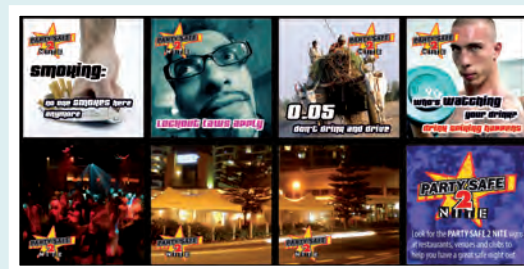
Our support for proactive law enforcement initiatives continues with the production of a DVD for police officers to assist them with providing high quality community presentations on drug and alcohol issues. **Out in the Community** provides police with presentation tips as



well as sample activities and tools for liaison with key groups such as schools, sporting clubs and community associations. *Out in the Community* will be distributed to police throughout Queensland.

### Party Safe 2 Nite

Conducted in the Mooloolaba area of the Sunshine Coast, **Party Safe 2 Nite** provided local police with a range of resources to inform the general public, visitors/tourists and licensed venue patrons about laws associated with alcohol consumption, licensed venues, Lock-outs, Anti Smoking Laws, other drug use and access to transport. The contemporary materials including wallet cards, coasters and signage provided information about many laws that patrons can find unclear. These included Queensland smoking legislation and lock-out laws. *Party Safe 2Nite* has been a success in the local area and in 2008-09 will be replicated in key tourist locations throughout Queensland.





# social policy informed by sound evidence



*We believe that "best practice" is based on a sound foundation of knowledge and quality evaluation of projects and services.*



# social policy informed by sound evidence

We believe that “best practice” is based on a sound foundation of knowledge and quality evaluation of projects and services. Our research staff have a commitment to high quality processes and reporting. During 2008, Community Solutions Inc. has supported a range of research projects throughout Queensland.

## Virtual Jackpot Phases 1 and 2

2007/2008 saw the completion of two significant research projects conducted on behalf of Queensland Treasury. **Virtual Jackpot Phases 1 and 2** explored young people’s attitudes and behaviours towards gambling. Having concluded in June 2008, the Phase 1 project explored gambling from a qualitative perspective through interviews and focus groups with young people aged between 15 and 24 years. The data gathered indicates that social networks form a critical part of young people’s gambling patterns and that those most likely to gamble in unhealthy patterns, are young males in a peer group that normalises gambling.

Although it was anticipated that the internet played a major role in the gambling patterns of young people, this was not found to be the case. Instead, it was clear that social relationships appear to be the greatest influencing factor in young people’s decisions to gamble and the ways in which they gamble. The behaviour of parents as well as the extent to which parents discuss gambling with young people is also an important factor.

Although the Phase 2 or quantitative component of the project is still underway, it is anticipated that both Phases will be used by Queensland Treasury to inform future prevention initiatives targeting young people.

Gambling also featured in data collection undertaken on behalf of the Australian National University for a project involving transient populations and their patterns of gambling. Community Solutions Inc. undertook interviews and surveys with itinerant construction workers to support a larger pool of information on population groups that also included travelling retirees.

## Queensland Visitor Surveys

2008 also saw Community Solutions Inc.’s continued good relationship with Tourism Sunshine Coast in the form of the data collection for the annual **Tourism Queensland Visitor Surveys**. Amidst high humidity and very inclement weather our teams of data collectors interviewed tourists in regions from the Sunshine Coast hinterland through to Rainbow Beach and Tin Can Bay. The Visitor Surveys form an important mechanism by which Tourism Sunshine Coast obtains information about the interests and needs

of visitors to the area.

## Australian School Students Alcohol and Drug Surveys

Conducted across Australia every three years, the **Australian School Students Alcohol and Drug (ASSAD) Surveys** provide key information regarding young people’s behaviours in relation to alcohol, tobacco and illicit substances. For the past 11 years, Community Solutions Inc. has played a strong role in these surveys with our staff coordinating and implementing the Queensland data collection. With Queensland data collection involving schools in city, regional, rural and remote locations, ASSAD is a significant data collection project.

Data gathered from young people throughout Australia, via the ASSAD Project, informs prevention initiatives from advertising campaigns through to higher level research undertaken. The survey also gathers information on sun safety and diet, providing a broad snapshot of the health behaviours of Australia’s youth.

Upcoming projects include an extensive project on entry to gambling venues and licensed premises. This will be a significant project undertaken outside of Queensland and in partnership with the Southern Cross University.

We recognise the dedication and skill of our research staff and their resourcefulness and innovation in developing and implementing research projects that are highly credible. As we look towards 2008/2009, we continue to focus on high quality and ethical research work that makes a genuine contribution to the health of individuals and populations.

### STANDARD DRINKS GUIDE

Drink Type	Volume	Standard Drinks
Heavy Beer Stubbie	375ml	1.5 standard drinks
Light Beer Schooner	425ml	1 standard drink
Heavy Beer Pot	285ml	1 standard drink
Pre-mix Spirit	375 ml	1.5 standard drinks
Spirits	30ml	1 standard drink





# board profiles



Margaret Thorsborne

Director 1999 - current

B.Sc, Dip Ed, Grad Dip – School Counselling, Fellowship Diploma - AIM

**Special Responsibilities**

Chair of the Board

Margaret has worked in the field of organisational development, workplace conflict and restorative justice for more than 15 years both for Education Queensland and as a consultant to government departments, schools and organisations throughout Australia, USA, New Zealand and United Kingdom.



Shay Zulpo

Director 2001 - current

B.Arts Soc. Sc., Grad Dip Corp Gov, Cert IV Assess & Workplace Training, Cert III Business, Qual Cancer Support (Qld Cancer Fund)

**Special Responsibilities**

Vice Chair of the Board

Governance Committee (Chair)

Shay has significant experience in community development and governance prior to undertaking her current role as CEO – Zoe's Place Ltd., Children's Hospice, a highly respected Brisbane based charity.



Paul Kusy

Director 2001 - current

B.Commerce, B.Law

**Special Responsibilities**

Secretary and Public Officer

Governance Committee

Assets and Finance Committee

Paul is a Solicitor and Senior Partner with Schultz Toomey O'Brien Lawyers with a specific focus on commercial law. He has a detailed understanding of governance and compliance within a non-profit incorporated association.



Eric Moes

Director; 1997 - current

B.Arts, Grad Dip. Soc. Sc. Member - AICD

**Special Responsibilities**

Treasurer

Assets and Finance Committee (Chair)

Strategy Committee

Eric has extensive experience in local government, community development, youth and community services. Eric has previously worked with the Brisbane Youth Service, Maroochy Shire Council and Caloundra City Council and is currently a Manager within the Community Services branch of the Sunshine Coast Regional Council.



### John Lockhart

Director 2007 - current

M.Ed (Hons) B.Arts, Dip. Teach,

#### **Special Responsibilities**

Strategy Committee (Chair)

John has 20+ years experience in the Education sector both as a teacher and administrator. John provides strategic advice to the Board in relation to education, training, parents and youth services.



### James Kinsella

Director 2007 - current

B.Urban and Regional Planning, Certified Planner

#### **Special Responsibilities**

Assets and Finance Committee

James is a certified town planner with extensive business and community networks within the Sunshine Coast community. James supports a range of community groups and service clubs. James is a Senior Partner and Director of Conics (Sunshine Coast) Pty Ltd, a leading consulting group in Queensland and NSW.



### Tony McFadden

Director 2008

MBA, B.Comm, Dip – FSIA Member - AICD

#### **Special Responsibilities**

Assets and Finance Committee

Strategy Committee

Tony is the founder and Director of James St Capital Pty Ltd, an investment and corporate advisory group assisting junior resource companies raise funds from domestic and international investors. Previously, Tony was a Director with Credit Suisse First Boston in the Investment Banking Department in New York, Hong Kong and Singapore. Tony qualified as a Chartered Accountant with Coopers & Lybrand (now PWC) in Brisbane.



### David Curd

Director 2000 - current

M.Bus Admin, B.Ed, Dip. Teach Member - AICD

#### **Special Responsibilities**

General Manager

David has more than 20 years experience in education, government, business and community sectors. In 1997, David was awarded a Winston Churchill Fellowship to study community development and drug prevention in the USA, UK and South East Asia.

# thank you to our partners, funding agencies and supporters

Community Solutions Inc. greatly appreciates and acknowledges the support of:



## Government Clients and Funding Agencies

Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing

Australian Government Department of Families,  
Communities and Indigenous Affairs

Australian Government Department of Employment,  
Education and Workplace Relations

Australian Government Attorney General's Department

Australian Government Department of Education, Science  
and Training

Queensland Government Department of Employment and  
Industrial Relations

Queensland Government Department of Local  
Government, Sport and Recreation

Queensland Government Department of Communities

Queensland Health

Queensland Police Service

Queensland Treasury

## Local Government Clients

Sunshine Coast Regional Council

## Non Government Clients

University of the Sunshine Coast

University of Queensland

Australian National University

The Cancer Council Victoria

Tourism Sunshine Coast

Sunshine Coast Daily

Australian Provincial Newspapers

## Community Partners

United Synergies Ltd

Schultz Toomey O'Brien Lawyers

## Supporters

Caloundra Pacific Rotary Club

Inner Wheel Club Sunshine Coast Inc.

Sunshine Coast Ladies Probus Club



# locations

[www.community-solutions.com.au](http://www.community-solutions.com.au)

## Sunshine Coast Offices

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### CABOOLTURE

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### HERVEY BAY

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### MARYBOROUGH

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Fax: 07 4122 3299

### BUNDABERG

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