



ParentsBeyondBreakup

Empowering families – Creating futures

Annual Report
2020 - 2021





For Privacy reasons no images are displayed of any of our Mums, Dads, Grandparents, Volunteers or Clients that we serve.

Parents Beyond Breakup is a national suicide prevention charity solely focused on supporting parents experiencing trauma related to family breakdown and separation. Separation from their former partner and from their children; a factor closely linked to suicide in Australia.

This Father's Day we celebrated 22 years of supporting Parents in Distress across Australia, through our National Helpline, face to face Peer Support Groups, and more recently, Online Support Groups.

Acknowledgement of country:

Parents Beyond Breakup pays its respects to the traditional custodians across the lands in which we work, and acknowledge their Elders past, present and future.

*The artwork we feature in our footer is an excerpt of an original work by Artist Kathleen Petjarre, which is owned and displayed in our PBB HQ.



Situational Distress

Parents Beyond Breakup acknowledges those living with, and managing, situational distress, isolation, hopelessness, and suicidality through family breakdown and associated social, emotional, and economic impacts.

“Every life lost to suicide is heartbreaking. It’s important to remember that every statistic represents a life lost and a cascade of grief amongst family, friends, schools, workplaces and community groups.”

Nieves Murray, CEO
Suicide Prevention Australia

Vale Russell Goodrick



It was with deep sadness that our friend, colleague and fellow Parents Beyond Breakup Board Member Russell Goodrick passed after a long illness, in Western Australia on 11th May 2021.

Russell joined our Board in 2019 after many years prior to that being involved in our organisation and our cause of supporting parents in distress through breakup. Russell was a passionate contributor both to our cause and many others in his full and involved life. His legacy of charity work and service to families in distress will forever be a beacon for us, and the many people impacted by his life.

His passing has left an empty chair in our meetings, our hearts, and our organisation.



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From the Chair

This year has perhaps been the most challenging in our 22-year history as we faced a second year of the global pandemic, devastating bushfires, floods, and natural disasters all bringing social, mental health and economic consequences for the families we exist to support. The world as we know it has changed, and now more than ever, our support services are desperately needed as the slow-burn effects of Covid 19 are yet to be felt across the community.



Change is probably the only certainty we can count on – and we have experienced that in spades this year. It has been a year of change at PBB, most significantly our ongoing ability to pivot our support services during various Covid lockdowns online.

Tragically we lost our dear colleague and board director Russell Goodrick, and his passing was a loss for our organisation as well as the various other causes he supported, and his family.

Board renewal and succession planning remains a key focus, and we have welcomed two new directors onto our board. Josie Sinnamon was elected to the board at the 2020 AGM, and Robin DeLucia joined the board to fill the Casual Vacancy created by the tragic passing of Russell. Both Josie and Robin bring a wealth of experience to the board and play an integral role in supporting the organisation across a breadth of areas.

We have also welcomed new leadership with the appointment of our new CEO Gillian Hunt who joined the organisation in April. Gillian's focus has been on creating stability across the team and volunteers, on developing and implementing our new strategy, and on embedding strong governance and OHS procedures across the organisation. We are seeing the organisation go from strength to strength and the Board and I are confident that it is in a safe pair of hands.

To our operations team and volunteers, who continue to be the mainstay of the organisation, as well as to our funders, sponsors, and supporters, I would like to thank you all for the contribution you make towards Parents Beyond Breakup. Without this we would not be able to report such a successful outcome and outlook this year.



Brendan Blomeley
Chairman

From the CEO

It has been a privilege to join an organisation with the Emotional Intelligence, Legacy, and Purpose to save lives that Parents Beyond Breakup demonstrates daily.

At the peak of the lockdowns in July we experienced a more than 30% increase in callers to our Helpline seeking support. In response to the added load on our team we have embarked on a program of seeking funding to extend our Helpline to a 24/7 operation.



With a focus on situational distress, and alleviating the distress caused to so many parents going through the 'Perfect Storm' that comes with relationship and family breakdown, we are focussing on diversifying our funding to support our growth aspirations.

The time spent developing our 2021-2024 Transformational Strategy will see us evolve into a stronger, more diverse organisation, less reliant on single funders, and with a diversified service offering for our clients. We have also seen the growth of our Helpline service measured in increases in callers to the Helpline that include Dads, Mums and Grandparents all seeking support and advice on where to turn. As always, our focus remains on delivering our mission of keeping more parents alive, healthy and in their kids' lives.

At the end of the day, it is all about Australian families and our focus on a healthy home life for children. Destigmatising mental health and suicidality and breaking down barriers to asking for help is a key focus for PBB going forward.

They say it takes a village to raise a child, PBB is all about connecting parents with our 'Village' of Peers to ensure they have the support to navigate probably the most difficult time in their lives as parents. Our organisation is but one cog in the larger machine of Australia's suicide prevention, mental health, and support network, but a very specific one – looking after our niche clientele of parents in distress. We rely heavily on the support of our past clients, our volunteers, our funders, the public, and local community supporters, to meet the needs of those most needing to be a part of our Village of Support.

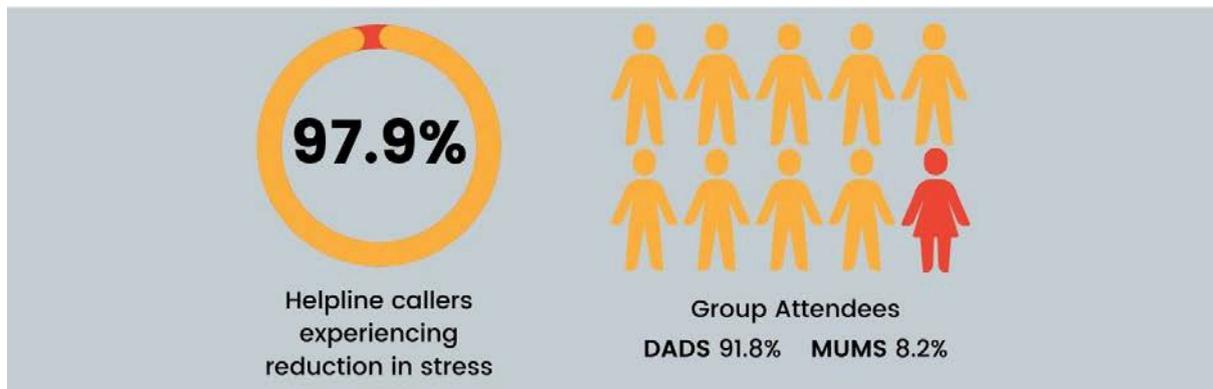
Thank you to the entire broader team for all your support over this past year.



Gillian Hunt
Chief Executive Officer



Our Year in Review



Helpline Calls

1902



Facebook Reach



Group Attendees

3071

DIDS

340,430



Peer Support Groups

361

PBB

9,951

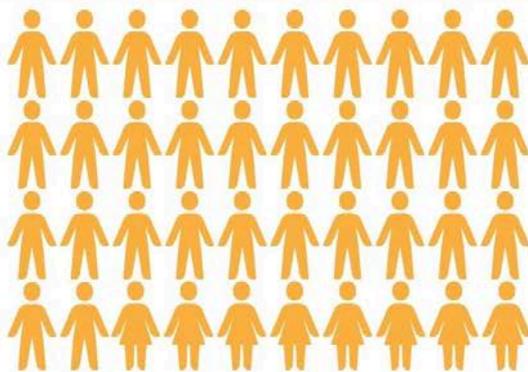
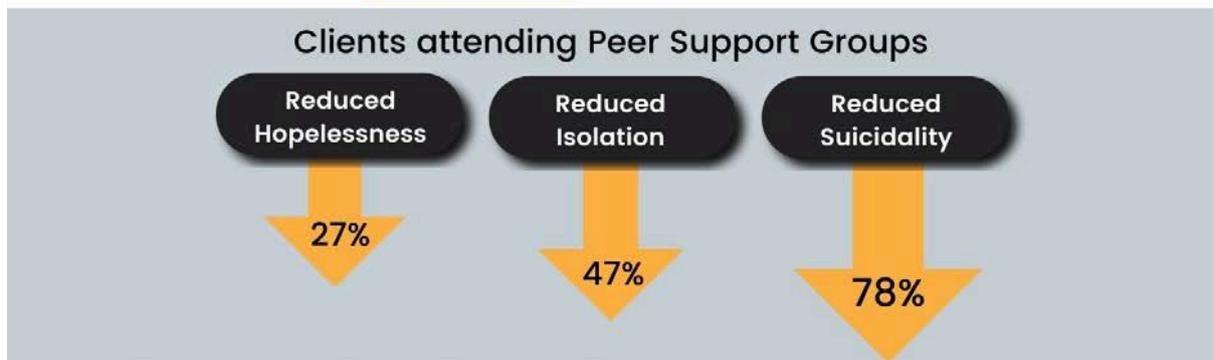


Online Peer Support Groups

266

MIDS

7,557



40 Active Volunteers



Our History

Established on Father's Day 1999 by Tony Miller OAM as Dads in Distress or “DIDs”, our first meeting was a group of separated dads on a veranda in Coffs Harbour, offering peer to peer support.

From around 2010, DIDs expanded and formed several groups operating as Mums in Distress or “MIDs”.

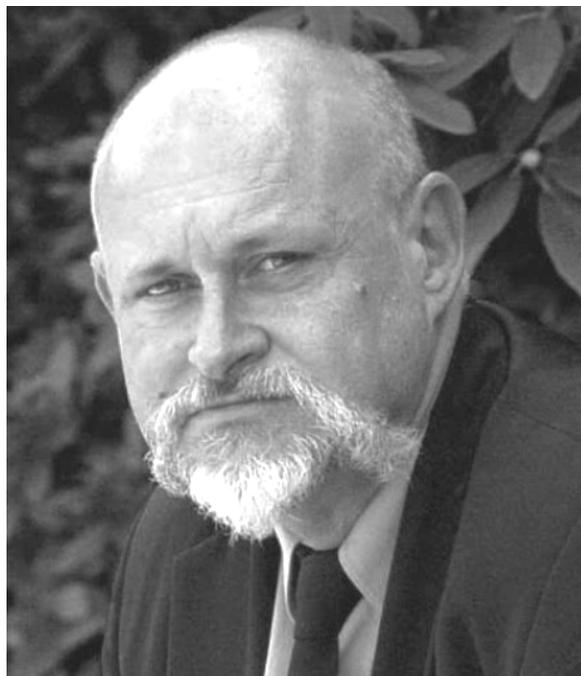
We started receiving funding in 2012 from the Department of Social Services under its Children and Parenting Support Program. Today, this continues to be our primary source of funding.

In 2015, we formed a new national company Parents Beyond Breakup Ltd, rebranded the organisation, and registered as a national charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

More than two decades on our range of services have expanded to include a national telephone helpline operating 6 days per week, online peer support groups, one to one mentorship, instant messaging service, online peer support forums across multiple social media platforms and Grandparents in Distress.

We are also active members of two peak bodies – Suicide Prevention Australia, and Australian Men’s Health Forum. Two organisations whose missions and aims we support completely.

Our core ethos remains today as strongly as it did back in 1999, to provide free support and to utilise where possible Lived Experience Peer Volunteers, all of whom have been through it themselves. This makes all the difference when you’re all out of money, and trust.





Our Mission, Vision and Values

Vision

The world we'd like to see

All children enjoy
the best possible
relationship with
their mum & dad

Mission

What we aim to do about it

Keep separating
parents alive and
in their kids lives
by providing
hope, support
and a voice

Values

One big family
Sleep well at night
Open heart, open mind
If not us, who?
Rock solid
Do more with less



The Need we Address

The Need

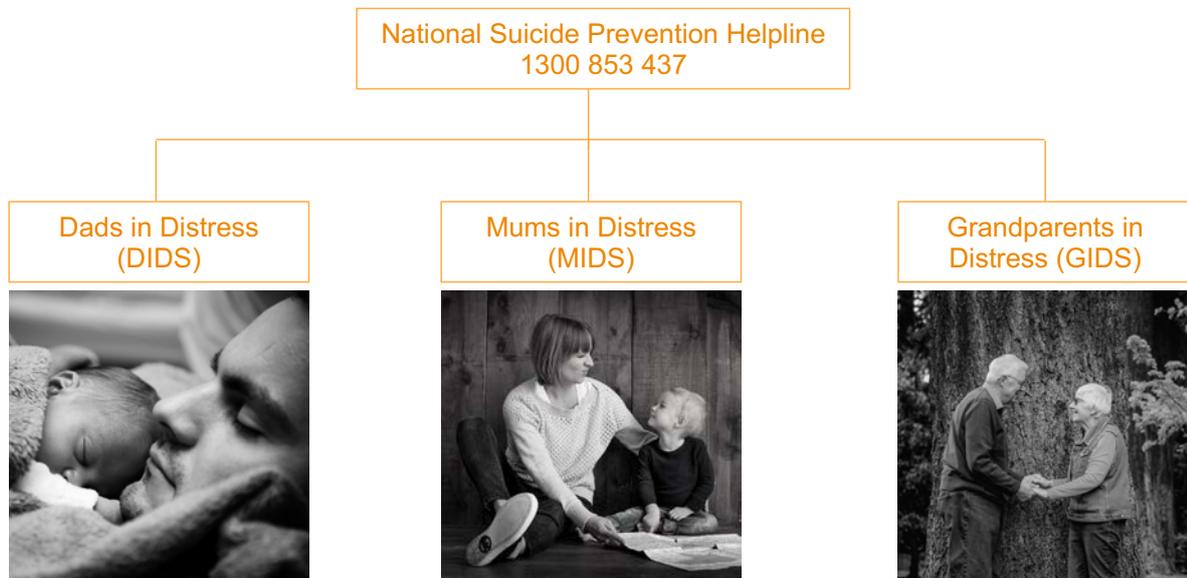
For separated parents, research has shown that:

- Relationship breakdown is a high risk factor for suicide.
- Separated people have the highest risk of attempting suicide and developing suicidal thoughts compared to other marital groups.
- In one Australian study, alienated parents, 23% (n=54) stated that they have attempted suicide in response to losing most or all contact with their children.
- Another study stated that Fathers who have lost some or all contact with their children for months or even years following separation or divorce may be depressed and suicidal.

2020

- 3,139 Australians died by suicide
- Issues in spousal relationships was the third most common risk factor for males compared to seventh for females.
- Consistent with previous years, males are around three times more likely to die by suicide than females. Males accounted for 75.9% of deaths by suicide (2,384 deaths), this represents an age-standardised suicide death rate of 18.6 per 100,000 people (compared with a rate of 5.8 for females).

Our Services



Our work

We work to make positive change happen on an individual, cultural, and systemic level. We help separated mums and dads to find more effective ways to deal with their situation; we do this through providing a range of support services including our helpline, local community peer support groups, online peer support groups and other resources. We work to raise public awareness of the devastating impacts that separation and divorce can have on parents, and to improve the way the system helps parents contribute to the upbringing of their children.

Our results

In supporting almost 5,000 families a year, separated parents are connected to a community of support that they need. In doing so we help parents cope with being separated from their children and to find the optimal path to reconnecting them. 70% of our clients say that we offer the best support that they have been able to find in this area. Over 90% of our clients would recommend our services to other separated parents.

All our team and volunteers have Lived Experience and walk alongside distressed parents in the tried and tested Peer Support Model using Psycho-Therapeutic as well as Psycho-Educational methodologies.

“ I sat outside for 6-7 weeks before I had the courage to walk inside. I’m amazed at how good this support is. It’s hard to know who to trust.” – Dad in Distress

Our Strategy

Our Transformation Strategy 2021 – 2024 is already guiding our efforts into the future. Developed with input from Volunteer Facilitators, the Operations Team as well as the Board of Directors, three key strategies have emerged that will strengthen and position the organisation for scaled growth, capacity, and increased services provided nationally to all parents in need.



Strengthen Core Business

Continuing our focus on outstanding Customer Service is the key to ongoing success for the organisation, where the culture and mindset of the organisation is always focussed on understanding and supporting the needs of all those we serve, and on continuous improvement.

The need for our Helpline to become a continuous operation, expanding it to 24/7 is sorely needed across the community. Our data shows that our current capacity is insufficient to respond to callers when they most need our support. Obtaining the resources, both monetary and human to expand the operation sustainably into the future will underpin our funding efforts for the next 12 months.

Expanding our technology base will also ensure that our infrastructure is able to cope with the increased demand across our online platforms, our helpline services and will ensure data security, privacy, and integrity.

We have supported all our frontline workers through regular training, debriefings, and the appointment of a new Employee Assistance Provider to alleviate the impact of Vicarious Trauma being experienced by our team as they deal daily with some tough conversations and situations.

We have recently embarked on an accreditation process for all our various support services through Suicide Prevention Australia to provide additional independent evaluation, certification, and validation of the quality and value of our organisational outputs and suicide prevention outcomes.

Growth and Differentiation

Alongside the organic growth of our mature service offering to Dads, there is an incredible need for our Mums in Distress service to have a massive boost in promotion, marketing, and awareness. We acknowledge the support needs for mums are slightly different to those of dads, and our focussed MIDS Growth Strategy will strengthen and expand the support available for our Mums in Distress. A key area of Parental Alienation and support resources for Mums is vital to growing this essential, yet lesser-known service.

“ I lost everything & was staying in bed all day, every day. I gave up. Now, I’m getting up. You’ve made me care about me. I like myself again.” Mum in Distress

Over the next 12 months we will be diversifying our services to include developing and delivering workshops and resources for parents across a range of appropriate topics including family law access, peer support for families as well as a range of other topics pertinent to our client base.

Funding and Fundraising

Sustainable funding options remain a key concern for our organisation as we have experienced a significant reduction in public donations since the start of the pandemic. A key element of our risk management strategy is to ensure that our funding base continues to grow to support the increasing need for parental support.

In addition to the existing Partnership with the South Western Sydney PHN, we are already in advanced negotiations with The Hunter New England Central Coast PHN. This is for the establishment of a pilot project of Dads in Distress groups for the Central Coast and the Hunter Region, beginning in 2022, with the long-term view to expand this service further across the PHN into the future.

We have begun engagement with various Philanthropic Trusts, Local Councils for Community Grants, and several larger national Government Funded Grant Programs to extend our physical Peer Support across all States and Territories, into Rural Australia, as well as to obtain funding for the expanded 24/7 helpline. We have identified the need to develop a major annual fundraiser which will have the two-fold benefit of raising public awareness as well as public donations. We expect to roll this out in 2022.

Leadership

Our Patron

Julian Leeser, MP

In November this year Julian Leeser, Federal MP for Berowra, accepted our offer to become the first official Patron of Parents Beyond Breakup. With his own Lived Experience of the suicide of his father whilst he was very young, Julian has been a staunch advocate of suicide prevention, using his political platform to successfully raise the issue of suicide at the highest levels of government. PBB is proud to be associated with Julian and we look forward to his future association with our organisation as we all work to reduce suicide amongst our most at-risk demographics.



Our Board

Brendan Blomeley	Chairman	TAS
Ross Arriola	Deputy Chair	NSW
Campbell Lennox	Treasurer	NSW
Glen Poole	Director	QLD
Josie Sinnamon	Director	QLD
Robin DeLucia	Director	NSW

Our Team

Gillian Hunt	Chief Executive Officer	NSW
Pete Nicholls	Regional Manager	NSW
Phil Lamport	Operations Manager, South	VIC
Glenn Hodgson	Operations Manager, North	QLD
Candece Baker	EA and Team Administrator	NSW
Tim Kay	Helpline Operator	NSW
Alan Valja	Helpline Operator	NSW
JD Knight	Helpline Operator	QLD
Bernie Liversidge	Helpline Operator Part time	VIC

Volunteers

Twenty-two years ago, Dads in Distress began a tradition of Lived Experience peers supporting peers, bringing men into the circles of trust and support, and that continues proudly to this day, whether in face-to-face Peer Support Groups, or in our newly formed online Groups, for mums, dads and most recently grandparents.

We currently have 40 active and dedicated volunteer Peer Facilitators, separated mums, dads, grandparents, and just great humans who want to make a positive difference to those most in need and most at risk.

Our volunteers make up more than 83% of our organisation and are the lifeline without whom we would not be able to deliver the support to the dads, mums and grandparents who come to us in such need.

As Lived Experience Peers they provide an authentic, non-clinical but lifechanging support. Their efforts are tireless, week after week holding a safe space for our clients, at sometimes considerable emotional impact upon themselves personally.

We salute all our volunteers!



All Peer Support Groups are held in a circle, following naturally the ancient traditions of Healing Circles from cultures around the globe.

Whoever holds the Sacred Object – in PBB it is a rock or a stone – is the one allowed to speak. All other participants must give their full attention. The holder of the stone must speak their personal truth.

PBB honours Volunteers who have facilitated groups for several years with personalised rocks for use in the Group circle in acknowledgement of their stewardship in keeping and creating a safe space for our clients week after week, for years.

“DIDS got me, understood me and what I was going through, because they were dads who’d walked it themselves, and survived.” - Dad in Distress

Our Funders

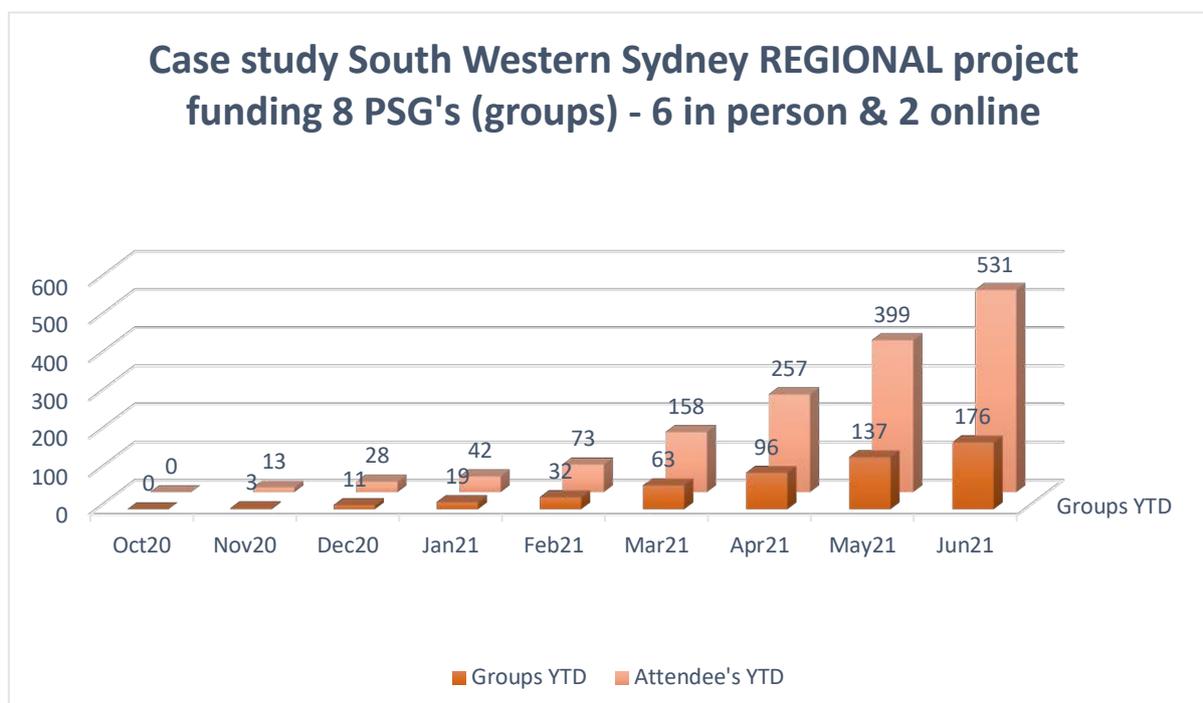
Commonwealth Department of Social Services

Our primary funder, the Commonwealth Department of Social Services, has renewed PBBs funding for a further two years, with effect from 1 July 2021 - 30 June 2023. This provides much needed certainty for the delivery of our services across the country. We continue to work closely with DSS in the development and finalisation of our Program Logic as well as in the new acquittal and reporting requirements which provide outcomes data based on feedback from clients utilising our services. We are proud to be associated with DSS.

South Western Sydney PHN

During the year we were engaged by South Western Sydney PHN in a 12 month project along with four other men's mental health providers to establish men's suicide prevention support services across various local government areas in SW Sydney. During the start of the Covid lockdowns we established six (6) in-person Peer Support Groups as well as two (2) online groups in this region.

Branded as Dads in Distress, with its own website, the project saw a slow burn initially but has since had exponential growth and support from men in the area, including engagement with CALD and First Nations Dads.



These new services and partners are a key part of our expansion of our face-to-face peer support groups post-Covid-19 lockdowns into new areas of engagement – reaching Dads we hadn't previously had direct contact with. Our partnership with SWSPHN is most valued.

“ I don't know what I would have done if I hadn't come across this group. I only wish I had found it 5 years ago. I have been through a journey, and mostly alone.” - **SWSPHN Dad in Distress**

Corporate Donations

We were delighted to have been the recipient of a donation from The John Holland Group as well as the Commbank Staff Foundation. The funds from both donations will be used to support Peer Support Groups directly. We appreciate the support – thank you!

We continue to have advanced discussions with a variety of other companies whose employees are in our high-risk demographic with a view to partner with them over the next 12 months.

“ The raw support I get from these Zoom calls helps me more than words could ever express! I have found a place where I'm safe to be honest with how I'm feeling. I'm so very grateful for this group. Thank you, thank you, thank you. It has helped me through some of the darkest times of my life.” - **Mum in Distress**

The Future

Societal, economic, and environmental stressors are increasing for all Australians, and now, more than ever, our services play a lifesaving and much needed role in crisis prevention for families. We will continue to work to prevent parents reaching crisis, and to providing that support in the longer term.

Aligning our goals and practices with the National Suicide Prevention Strategy is critical, as well as forging new partnerships with like-minded and parallel community organisations to increase the delivery of our services to the furthest corners of our country, remote and regional communities, those affected by natural disasters, and areas where local on-the-ground support is lacking.

Covid Recovery

Like many organisations across Australia, having a strong Covid-19 recovery road map is vital to getting back in the saddle. We have been able to pivot our organisation into the online Peer Support Groups, and our Helpline has been needed as never before, however the loss of the face-to-face groups for almost 20 months across the country has had a negative impact in that we have lost contact with several volunteers as well as regular clients.

Re-opening Face to Face Peer Support Groups and establishing new groups in areas where there have previously been none continues as Covid restrictions lift and vaccination rates rise.

Re-establishing connections with communities that have been lost due to nearly 2 years with the doors being closed is critical for us as well as for them. We will continue to provide Online services that have expanded our support into areas previously beyond our reach.

Ongoing identification and training of suitable volunteer facilitators will continue to expand the ranks of our support.

Removing Barriers to Entry

Ensuring that our services are easy to access, non-threatening, non-judgemental, and inclusive for all families represented across Australia is a basic tenet of our organisation. No matter gender, family composition, ethnicity, OR reason for needing our support, our raison d'être remains being open, free, non-judgemental and a safe, confidential space for any parent needing support.

Understanding that many of our clients come to us through situational distress rather than through mental health issues is a factor that greatly assists many clients to ring us up in the first instance.

Going forward we will continue to focus on increasing the promotion of our services to reach more parents in need, and to increase the awareness of the immediate support that is available.

We will continue to partner with like-minded community organisations in delivering comprehensive services across Australia, as well as remaining connected with our key partners.

Diversification of our services to include providing relevant workshops to share our knowledge base of family breakdown to all parents, including connecting with Family Law networks, suicide prevention training, will all contribute to building awareness of the service we offer and open the door for parents to join our weekly support groups.

Increased promotion of our services across various referral pathways, community groups and into remote and rural communities where services are thin on the ground is becoming more critical to provide our support to parents in rural and remote areas of Australia.

Stakeholder Engagement

Multi-level stakeholder engagement across Federal, State and Local Government has secured awareness, multiple media engagements, and discussions with key politicians regarding our key concerns for male suicide.

Whilst we acknowledge family breakdown as a major factor in all suicides, we will continue a strong focus on advocating for male suicide prevention funding as current statistics continue to demonstrate that men are the most at-risk demographic across Australia with more than 75% of suicides being male.

“ My situation has changed from disaster to my daughter speaking to me, so all is pretty good, and my life feels okay. No Suicidal thoughts for a while now.”
- Dad in Distress



Our Supporters

 <p>Australian Government Department of Social Services</p>	 <p>phn SOUTH WESTERN SYDNEY An Australian Government Initiative</p>	 <p>phn HUNTER NEW ENGLAND AND CENTRAL COAST An Australian Government Initiative</p>
 <p>Suicide Prevention Australia</p>	 <p>AMHF AUSTRALIAN MEN'S HEALTH FORUM</p>	 <p>ETU THE CENTRE FOR</p>
 <p>CommBank Staff Foundation</p>	 <p>ASE AUSTRALIAN STOCKBROKERS FOUNDATION</p>	 <p>JOHN HOLLAND</p>
 <p>BOWRAL BOWLING CLUB</p>	 <p>wings over illawarra</p>	 <p>revesby workers' club</p>
 <p>clubliverpool <i>The fun in life</i></p>	 <p>Glen Park Community Centre</p>	 <p>ProQuest Consulting</p>
 <p>ZINC.</p>	 <p>ConnectGroups helping support groups & individuals</p>	 <p>GLENQUARIE HOTEL</p>

Contacts

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National Helpline

For support, call Mon to Sat 8:30 am - 5pm AEDT

1300 853 437

Email: helpline@parentsbeyondbreakup.com

www.parentsbeyondbreakup.com

www.facebook.com/pbbcharity

www.linkedin.com/company/pbbcharity

Our Audited Financial Statements are publicly available and published on the ACNC Website.





ParentsBeyondBreakup

Empowering families – Creating futures



Your support is most appreciated. Scan to support our lifesaving work.