

Friends of Brain Injured Children

Friends of Brain Injured Children ACT (Inc)

Annual Report 2017



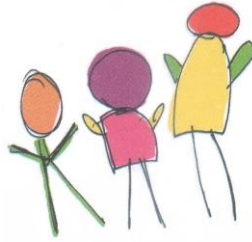
Friends of Brain Injured Children

FRIENDS OF BRAIN INJURED CHILDREN (ACT) INC – PROFILE

Friends of Brain Injured Children is a not-for-profit organisation, which has operated in the ACT and local region for over thirty years and has been incorporated since 1988. The organisation currently provides support to fifty families who have a child with a brain injury. The families are thus able to provide an early, intensive therapy program for their children at levels far beyond that available through the general system. To this end we seek financial sponsorships for the children and engage in fund-raising to help pay for this important therapy. Friends of Brain Injured Children also offers information about a wide range of useful therapies and offers parents support and encouragement in a number of ways. The organisation strongly promotes its philosophy of providing early, intensive therapy for babies and young children who have suffered a brain injury, in order to reduce future physical disability.

COMMITTEE

President	Sean McCandless
Vice President	Libby Steeper
Treasurer	Sonya Walter
Secretary	Maureen Bamsey
Public Officer	Mandy Hudson
Members	Vaughan Duncan
	Paul Dowden
	Jill Stenhouse



Friends of Brain Injured Children

President's Report



Once again Friends of Brain Injured Children ACT (Inc.) has had a difficult year. Fears of losing sponsorship and our inability to move to a “Social Enterprise” model took much of the committee’s time and energy. Vacancies on the committee did not help either. With expected loss of funding the committee moved away from the direct support model of funding children’s therapy and concentrated on putting together networking opportunities and workshops.

Generally, support for the regular parties has waned and attendance has been limited. The Christmas Party magician was well received even though the numbers were down on the previous years.

The Easter party was held in Weston Park in an effort to provide a new venue. The weather was unkind that day and subsequently numbers were down. The Turbos group provided a great sausage sizzle for those of us who braved the wind and intermittent rain and the coffee and tea at the café was welcomed respite from the wintery weather.

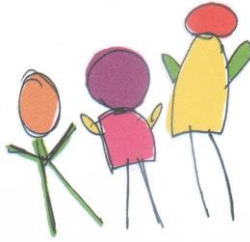
One of the hallmarks of FBIC has been the sharing of information between the families much of this has been achieved by attending the social events and workshops. Once again, the committee has noticed a decline in the numbers attending the workshops as more

people seek alternative solutions online rather than relying on word of mouth.

Our “Ignite the spark” project had limited participants and the Anat Baniel workshop came to us via a non-member. This did provide a few families with alternative solutions but once again it would have been nice to see greater attendance.

I believe the general perception in the community and certainly from a government perspective is that the NDIS can handle disability. Sadly, this has not been the case for some. Outcomes have not matched the rhetoric and many families find themselves tied up in red tape and review processes that take an inordinate time to complete. The committee’s application for funding via the NDIS in the previous year was rejected and we were unsuccessful with our submission of an ILC grant this year.

Despite this FBIC maintained a modest financial state thanks to the previous support of the community. Efforts to increase our funding base were met with resistance and the committee could not agree or come up with an alternative plan on how to become a more sustainable. The uncertainty about future funding contributed to the winding back of funding therapy and caused the committee to once again look into the mission and goals of the organisation. Many felt the organisation had too many children to allocate funds to and if the funds were dispersed equally this too would be ineffective with no child getting enough funding for the therapy they required. Alternatively, to limit the funding to a few was also seen to be contradictory to the organisation’s goals and thus the decision to cut funding was made.



Friends of Brain Injured Children

Due to the combination of poor attendances and inability of the committee to come up with a sustainable option the committee have decided to wind up FBIC and have called a Special General Meeting to do so. Please make sure you attend both the SGM and the AGM that will follow immediately after.

Once again, we need to acknowledge the support from:

- The Snow Foundation
- Hands Across Canberra
- John James Memorial Hospital
- Westpac
- Ionian Club

Activities we funded included:

- Christmas and Easter parties
- Assessment and therapy for a new child
- The Anat Baniel Workshop
- Ignite the Spark

Finally, it has been an honour and a privilege serving as President but sadly my intentions are to leave Canberra.

Sean McCandless
President
Friends of Brain Injured Children ACT (Inc)