



**PROTECT ALL CHILDREN TODAY INC.
PACT**

ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2005

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- The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
- Department of Justice and Attorney General
- Kay McGrath
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- Logan City Council
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- Zonta Club of Brisbane, South

We also express our sincere appreciation to the many others, without whose generosity we could not undertake the support of children required to give evidence in the criminal courts.

**Protect All Children Today Inc
is financially supported by**



Department of Child Safety

INTRODUCTION

Abuse and neglect of children has been present as an element of human behaviour throughout recorded history. The last half century has been marked by a dramatic increase in society's recognition of the presence of child abuse and neglect within the community. Retrospective studies of adults, and prospective studies of children, have shown that the abuse and neglect of children occurs in all societies, in all countries, and across all economic and religious groups.

Studies of adolescent and adult behaviours have revealed that childhood abuse and neglect is disproportionately represented in the personal histories of adults with problems related to violence, substance abuse, sexual assault, suicidal ideation, and a range of other antisocial behaviours. Such behaviours ultimately carry a high cost (both financial and social) to the individuals, their families, and the community as a whole. Furthermore, victims of childhood abuse and neglect are themselves at greater risk (as a population) of becoming abusive and neglectful to the generation of children that follows them.

Society today can no longer adequately meet children's long-term needs from within the limited framework of traditional social work, medical or legal practice working in isolation, but rather, must understand the broader relationship between health, family, crime and the broader community.

Children are not readily able to advocate for themselves, and sadly the child victims of abuse and neglect cannot always rely on parents and family to advocate on their behalf. Abused and neglected children are heavily dependent upon professional advocacy by organisations such as **PROTECT ALL CHILDREN TODAY INC (PACT)** to acquire resources and services on their behalf.

PACT is an incorporated association governed by a Constitution and has the following objectives:

- to seek to represent to the State and Federal Governments and other Agencies, the needs of children and their families who have been victims and survivors of child abuse;
- to endeavour to assist in community education in relation to child abuse and actively discouraging exploitation of children;
- to co-ordinate and provide support and therapeutic services to assist victims and survivors of abuse in their cycle of healing;
- to seek changes to legislation and the Justice Process to ensure adequate protection for victims and survivors of childhood abuse;
- to operate as a team which seeks input from the community and professionals in the planning and delivery of high quality services.

PACT is recognised by government, non-government and the community as a key organisation advocating for the needs of children. The specific work done by PACT and its *Child/Young Person Witness Support Program (CYPWSP)* is the largest within Australia and is duplicated in only a few centres world-wide.

IT IS THE BELIEF OF PACT THAT THE UBIQUITOUS NATURE OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT AND THE SEVERE, LONG-TERM OUTCOMES BOTH FOR THE VICTIMS THEMSELVES, AND FOR SOCIETY AT LARGE, MAKE INVESTMENT INTO THIS AREA OF CRITICAL CONCERN AND OF SIGNIFICANT MORAL WORTH.

Following the Siggins' Miller Review the Management Committee agreed to the following Mission, Values, Key Result Areas, Objectives and Strategies:

PACT MISSION:

To enhance child protection by reducing the trauma experienced by children and young people (3-17 years) who are required to give evidence within the criminal justice system as victims or witnesses.

PACT VALUES

In implementing this mission we are committed to:

- Promoting a child's right to protection (UN Charter).
- A child centered approach.
- Excellence in governance.
- Provision of quality services.
- Pursuing equity of access to our services across the State.
- Open and transparent communication with internal and external stakeholders.
- Evidence based approaches.

PACT KEY RESULT AREAS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

KRA 1: To promote the child's right to protection we intend to:

- Participate in Child Protection Forums and other awareness raising activities.
- Provide feedback on the experience of children and young people in the court process to key stakeholders.
- Identify and communicate barriers to successfully protecting children in the court system.
- Participate in key policy and research development forums relevant to child protection.
- Sponsor and promote community and governmental debate and discussion in relation to child protection in the court system.

KRA 2: To provide high quality services we intend to:

- Provide timely, accessible and equitable service delivery within budgetary constraints.
- Provide support, training and development for our paid and unpaid staff and Board members.
- Develop and maintain performance management systems.
- Meet all financial and performance reporting and accountability requirements.
- Meet the appropriate third party accreditation standards.
- Support and develop a child centered approach.
- Continually monitor and evaluate the outcomes and impacts of the organization and its services.
- Consult with children and young people about their experience and needs to inform future service developments.

KRA 3: To develop and maintain partnerships and collaborations we intend to:

- Effectively liaise with all key stakeholders involved in child protection.
- Provide informed input to relevant policy and research developments affecting children and young people in the court system.
- Maintain and improve our current working relationships with all levels of government and national and international child protection agencies.
- Develop and implement a communication plan.
- Engage with children and young people through their peak advocacy bodies.
- Create synergies of effort by providing advice and information to others in contact with our target group.

KRA 4: To manage and expand our resource base for sustainability we intend to:

- Negotiate our contracts with government in line with our stated mission and commitments.
- Develop and implement a practical fundraising strategy targeting the general population.
- Seek partnerships with key Indigenous peak bodies to scope the extent and nature of unmet need for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the court system and assess PACT's capacity to respond.
- Meet best practice standards in relation to fiduciary responsibilities.
- Continuously scan the funding environment for new opportunities.
- Commission one off projects that support our quality and sustainability goals.
- Identify and enter into strategic or business alliances with other agencies whos' work complements and supports PACT goals.
- Enter into consortium arrangements to extend the reach and quality of our services and our influence on policy, resource allocation and practice.

KRA 5: To further develop our workforce we intend to:

- Develop and make known the processes and mechanisms for communication between Management Committee, paid staff and volunteers.
- Clarify and document the respective roles and relationships of the Management Committee, Executive Manager, and other paid and unpaid staff.
- Formalise support processes for paid staff and CSW volunteers Statewide.
- Refine the PACT volunteer recruitment and retention strategy.

CHILD/YOUNG PERSON WITNESS SUPPORT PROGRAM (CYPWSP)

BACKGROUND

The court system remains an intimidating and ominous institution for all who enter its precincts. Any adult who has testified in the Criminal Court can recount the degree of personal stress experienced when called upon to give testimony, and subsequently defend that testimony under hostile cross-examination.

For children and young people required to testify in the Criminal Court, the prospect of appearing as a witness can be a daunting prospect. The court experience can be re-traumatising for child victims of abuse who are called upon to relive the experience of that abuse or neglect when they give evidence.

Concern in regard to potential negative effects on a child and young person that stem from involvement with the court system is commonly cited as a reason for non-disclosure, or retraction. However, the impact of the *Evidence (Protection of Child) Amendment Act 2004* has travelled some distance to address the re-traumatisation of child and youth witnesses giving testimony with the advent of the affected child status. An affected child is a child aged under 18 who is a witness in a matter involving abuse or violence.

The significance of the new Legislation is that affected children:

- should not be required to testify more than once;
- have a right to a court approved support person; and
- are entitled to CCTV/pre-recording of testimony where facilities are available.

The support and therapy program provided by PACT to the child victims of abuse and neglect called upon to testify within the court system has been formalised over a period of years into a discrete clinical program: the *Child/Young Person Witness Support Program (CYPWSP)*.

The CYPWSP provides support for abused and neglected children by the use of carefully selected and trained volunteers: the *Child Witness Support Volunteers (CWSV)*. The goal of the CYPWSP is to allow child/young person witnesses the best opportunity to provide their evidence to the court by removing, as far as is possible, the uncertainties and anxieties associated with the court process.

PACT'S CHILD/YOUNG PERSON WITNESS SUPPORT PROGRAM IS:

- **HIGHLY COST EFFECTIVE**
- **NOT DIRECTLY FUNDED BY JUSTICE OR POLICE**
- **CHILD/YOUNG PERSON FOCUSED**
- **HIGHLY VALUED BY FAMILIES**
- **THE ACHIEVEMENT OF "BEST EVIDENCE" NOT PROSECUTION**

CHILD/YOUNG PERSON WITNESS SUPPORT PROGRAM - GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

The CYPWSP offers preventative and supportive strategies to protect the child/young person victims from re-victimisation as a result of the court process itself. The program offers therapeutic services to child/young people victims and their non-offending family.

To achieve these goals the CYPWSP provides the child/young person with an accessible community-based program utilising strategies to:

- enhance competence of the child/young person witness;
- provide practical support to the child/young person witness and non-offending family;
- empower the child/young person witness; and
- provide skilled resources for therapeutic follow-up to the child/young person witness and family.

The therapy issues identified are:

- an increased number of child victims of abuse and neglect are required as witnesses within the court system;
- recognition that the criminal justice process itself has a significant potential for trauma to the children/young person victims called upon to testify within the Criminal Courts;
- identification that there are few treatment and support services willing to take child/young person victims of abuse and neglect into their therapy programs if the child/young person is to be a witness within the justice system; and
- realisation that therapeutic support for the child/young person victim of abuse and neglect must involve those other persons important in the day-to-day life of the child/young person. In the majority of cases, these “significant others” are non-offending family members.

PACT has a clinical experience in this specialised field, which has established it as the non-government organisation best equipped to therapeutically support child/young people victims and their families to work through the issues associated with the severe cases of child abuse and neglect which find their way to the court system.

The CYPWSP’s goal is to address the complex and stressful situations that regularly confront the child victim of abuse and neglect, such as the:

- impact of the abuse itself;
- impact of the disclosure of the abuse on the child/young person and the family;
- potential re-traumatisation caused by the complexity of the court system; and
- long-term consequences of the abuse upon the child/young person as an individual in society.

Child/young people victims and their non-offending families need early, pro-active therapeutic support to prevent (or at least to reduce in severity) the adverse outcomes commonly seen if they are allowed to progress through the court system unsupported.

The consequences of delaying support to these children/young people and their families until new problems present themselves, are costly for the individual child victim, their families and the community at large.

CHILD/YOUNG PERSON WITNESS SUPPORT PROGRAM - LOCATIONS

The CYPWSP historically operated in the Metropolitan Brisbane, Ipswich, Logan City, Gold and Sunshine Coast geographical areas. Funding increases since 1998 have enabled the extension of the program to Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton and Toowoomba.

**IN THE PERIOD JULY 2004-JUNE 2005, THE CYPWSP ENROLLED
791 INDIVIDUAL CHILD/YOUNG PERSONS
(589 FEMALES; 202 MALES).
THE MAJORITY OF CHARGES WERE RELATED TO OFFENCES OF A
SEXUAL NATURE PERPETRATED AGAINST CHILDREN/YOUNG
PERSONS.**

CHILD/YOUNG PERSON WITNESS SUPPORT PROGRAM - REFERRAL SYSTEM

Referral to the *Child/Young Person Witness Support Program* (CYPWSP) is most commonly made by officers of the:

- Queensland Police Service (QPS): Juvenile Aid Bureau (JAB) and Sexual Crimes Investigation Unit (previously known as Child Abuse Investigation Unit);
- Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP).

On occasions, professionals from within the health and welfare system, or professionals working in private practice will refer a child to PACT. There is no impediment to self-referral by the non-offending parent/guardian, or by the individual child/young person.

Recognition of the fact that child/young person victims of abuse and neglect called upon to be witnesses within the court system will be known to Police Officers, led to the development of a referral relationship between PACT and the Queensland Police Service.

The client child's case is allocated to the most appropriate CYPWSP Volunteer. This Volunteer will then make contact with the child and the non-offending family members, with the goal of providing support to them throughout the court process from the time of referral until the child has recorded their evidence. There may be times when the Volunteer has been required to continue to liaise with the family until the completion of the entire court process.

The CYPWSP Volunteers teach children/young people required to testify within the court system about the logistics of the court process and its expectations of them. Strategies utilised include court visits, information kits, home visits, and most importantly accompanying children/young people while they give their evidence.

The CYPWSP Volunteers are unpaid, however they receive a partial out-of-pocket financial contribution towards expenses for each case they support. They provide their service at sites as required by the child's individual circumstance: either at the court house, at the child's home, at the child's school, or elsewhere dependent upon client need.

In addition, the child/young person and their non-offending family are offered therapy at PACT. This service is available at Logan Central and may be accessed at any time from referral to the CYPWSP until 12 months after the completion of the court process. Therapy focuses on the effects of abuse and does not include discussion of the child/young person's evidence while they are involved in the court process.

In recent years, this therapy service has been extended to PACT clients in Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Sunshine Coast, Caboolture/Redcliffe, Toowoomba and the Gold Coast. PACT has entered into formal Memorandums of Understanding with counselling organisations (Centrecare, Lifeline and Anglicare) throughout these locations, who provide therapy using the PACT model.

PACT OVERVIEW

PACT is a community-based, non-government organisation (NGO) which has a broad role as an advocate for the victims of child abuse and neglect.

PACT is both a service provider (support and therapy) and an advocate for abused and neglected children/young people and their family members.

PACT was established in 1985 and is managed by an unpaid, elected Management Committee which comprises professionals working within the field of child protection and other committed community members.

PACT's Management Committee supervises the paid professional staff and *Child Witness Support Volunteers* who undertake service provision to abused children and their non-offending family members.

PACT is recognised as one of the peak non-government organisations working in the field of treatment and prevention of child abuse and neglect within Queensland.

PACT recognised that there was a unfilled need to provide support and therapy to children/young people (and their non-offending family members) who had experienced the trauma of child abuse and neglect, and who subsequently faced the ordeal and stress of becoming witnesses within the Criminal Justice System.

PACT responded to this need by the establishment of the *Child/Young Person Witness Support Program* (CYPWSP). In its present form, the CYPWSP is unique within Australia, and to PACT's knowledge, similar programs are running in only a handful of sites internationally.

PACT was responsible for the inception of the highly successful *Child Protection Week*: an event which has now grown to national importance. PACT continues to provide the financial infra-structure for the ongoing activities of *Child Protection Week* within Queensland.

**PACT, UNDER ITS CONSTITUTION, HAS A BROAD ROLE AS AN
ADVOCATE FOR VICTIMS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT;
ACROSS ALL AREAS OF GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY.**

CHILD WITNESS SUPPORT VOLUNTEERS

PACT acknowledges the support and dedication
of the following Volunteers throughout
2004 - 2005

*Jenny Askey-Doran
Dennis Barnes
Ayla Blair
Fay Bottomer
Jenny Brice
Janet Burman
Mary Camilleri
Peggie Carnegie
Joanne Chapman
Irene Conway
Hanny Cullen
Lyn Daff
Clare Dallimore
Maureen Danbury
Kathryn Doolan-Roche
Michelle Dyck
Darren Goleby
Judith Goscombe
Robyn Granger
Leanne Harvey
Colleen Hughes
Tess Hutchison
Marie Iwers
Margaret James
Hazel Jeremy
Heather Jones
Liz Kelley
Nancy Kenway
Jo King
Teresa Knapp*

*Judy Krynen
Kate Le Grady
Tess Lindop
Gail Mackay
Della MacLeod-Jenkins
Carol Miles
Kim Mourney
Cheryl Nancarrow
Donna Nicol
Annette Pollard
Susan Ralph
Anita Raphael
Patricia Romano
Neal Sellars
Mary Skene
Desley Smith
Neil Smith
Donna Thomassen
Merle Thomasson
Bev Threlfo
Cathie Wakelin
Beryl Walker
Kerry-Anne Watson
Jill Wesche
Kaye Williams
Fay Williams-Burton
Helen Wilson
Kate Wilson
Barbara Wood*

PACT COMMITTEE REPORTS

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This past year has been a very important year for PACT. We have celebrated our 21st year of operation and seen the implementation of the significant changes in legislation, regulation, policy and practice across the government and non-government sectors in relation to child protection. Child Protection has continued to be given wide coverage in the media and the needs of child witnesses and their particular disadvantage within the criminal justice system has continued to be a major area of PACT's activities.

I am indebted to the Management Committee members and staff who have worked very hard during the past year to ensure that the financial, clinical and organisational foundations of PACT are ready to take the organisation into the new millennium as a dynamic and vibrant advocate for abused and neglected children and young people.

PACT has continued to receive significant support from elected officers of government, government departments, non-government organisations, the media and the community at large and we are most appreciative of that support. This reflects the dedication and professionalism of each of the members who make up the organisation of PACT.

This report provides the membership with a summary of the significant issues arising from the preceding 12 months, details of which may be explored in more depth in the various reports within the AGM document.

SIGGINS MILLER STRATEGIC REVIEW

The organization has benefited from receipt of the report from the review conducted by Siggins Miller and moved to give detailed consideration to the recommendations made. All recommendations were accepted and a detailed action plan has been developed to give effect to the actions necessary to implement these recommendations. Strategic and Business Plans are in the process of being developed in consultation with stakeholders with assistance from students from the University of Queensland's (UQ) Centre for Organizational Psychology and Faculty of Business, Economics and Law.

COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT

At the same time as the strategic review was being undertaken a communications audit of the organization was undertaken by students from UQ. The results of this audit were considered by the M.C. and a detailed report was also provided to volunteers some of whom had been involved in the audit process. This audit provided a useful mechanism to assist in identifying potential problem areas and provided a basis for developing strategies to assist in addressing and enhancing communication in a variety of areas within the organization.

DEVELOPMENT OF MOU WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

A significant outcome from both the Siggins Miller Review and the Communication Audit was the development and signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between PACT and the University of Queensland, Centre for Organizational Psychology. This MOU has resulted in 4 students being involved in working with PACT in a range of areas including:

- Developing of the organization's Strategic Plan
- Development of a Business Plan
- Conducting a work analysis in relation to the Role of Volunteers
- Review and Development of a revised Recruitment, Selection and Training Program for the Child/Young Person Witness Support Program (CYPWSP)
- Conducting a literature review in relation to resources currently in use to assist children as witnesses.

PACT CONFERENCE

A very successful PACT Conference was held in May attended by 42 volunteers from throughout the State. The Conference was addressed by senior members of the judiciary, the Director of Public Prosecutions, Queensland Police Service and Legal Aid. It was most pleasing to hear these senior members publicly commend the excellent work being undertaken by PACT volunteers in their support for child witnesses. I would like to commend Mrs Marj Evans and the committee who organized the conference in collaboration with the Volunteer co-ordinator Ms Pauline McElwain. The Conference has made a significant contribution to the knowledge and commitment of volunteers and will provide a good model on which the organization can model its future bi-annual conferences.

REVIEW OF PACT CONSTITUTION

Following the issues identified at last years AGM the incoming MC determined to review PACT's constitution. A Committee was established chaired by Ms Tricia Velthuizen and comprising a number of committed volunteers. This Committee conducted a very detailed review of the existing constitution, made a comparison with the Model Rules issued by the Office of Fair trading and consulted widely on proposed changes. Reaction was sought from members on proposed changes and very detailed changes were proposed with reasons outlining why the change was being suggested. A Special Meeting was held on the 27th of July and the proposed changes were approved by members. These changes have now been submitted to the Office of Fair Trading and we await advice from the Registrar on their ratification.

APPOINTMENT OF EXECUTIVE MANAGER

Following consideration of the Siggins Miller Review the MC determined to proceed with the appointment of an Executive Manager to be responsible for the day-to day management of PACT. Mrs Jo Bryant who had been appointed temporarily to the position whilst awaiting the outcome of the Review has been appointed to this new position. She has made a very significant contribution to the organization as it has moved to implement the results of the Strategic Review and to review, update and institute policies, procedures and protocols governing various important areas of PACT's activities. I would like to thank Mrs Bryant who has also played an important role in ensuring that accurate and timely communication occurs between all parts of the organization.

LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

The Evidence (Protection of Children) Act

The comprehensive reforms to limit the stress and trauma for children appearing before Queensland Courts have been implemented. The *Evidence (Protection of Children) Act 2003* continues to change the environment for children in the Queensland criminal justice system particularly as more Courts are equipped with the facilities to fully implement all options made available through this legislation.

PACT congratulates the government and the Minister for Justice and Attorney General for the implementation of these innovations. This outcome is the welcome culmination of years of advocating by PACT to make our courts more sensitive when dealing with children who are victims or witnesses to ensure the legal process doesn't add to their stress or suffering. PACT believes that, limiting the trauma and distress for a child appearing in court has the potential to improve the reliability of evidence.

PACT has been involved in working with the Justice and Attorney General's Department staff in conducting some preliminary research on the implementation of these legislative changes. Data collected by volunteers as they support child witnesses has been invaluable in gaining a snapshot of the present situation as implementation takes place. PACT data has also been used to provide data as a basis for comparing present and past practice.

We look forward to the completion of this important research and the publication of the results.

The new legislative measures relating to the giving of evidence by children include:

- Pre-recording all evidence at a preliminary hearing unless the court orders otherwise (because of extraordinary circumstances).
- Mandatory use of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) or screens (where pre-recording has not occurred).
- Entitlement to have a support person in court seated nearby and within sight.
- Mandatory exclusion of all but certain persons from the court when the child is giving evidence about a sexual offence.
- Restrictions on the right to call a child as a witness at committal hearings.
- Restrictions on the type of questioning that can be conducted if a child is a witness at a committal hearing.
- Removal of the 'recent complaint rule' which required judges to direct juries to question the credibility of a complainant who did not immediately report abuse.
- Removal of the right of a husband/wife to refuse to give evidence against their spouse.
- Enshrining for the first time in statute the obligations of the prosecution to disclose their case to the defence.
- Amending the Criminal Code to include an irrebuttable presumption that a child under age 12 does not have capacity to consent to sexual acts.

I take this opportunity to thank all those volunteers who have provided detailed written feedback in relation to their individual cases of support to child witnesses, this data has been shown to be invaluable and unique and has been used in preparing a range of important submissions by PACT as it advocates for child witnesses .

Crime and Misconduct Commission Report (2003)

- The Queensland Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC) released its report *“Protecting Children: An Inquiry Into Abuse of Children in Foster Care”* in Queensland in late 2003.
- This report precipitated a major review of child protection services in Queensland - and subsequent dramatic changes to legislation, regulation, policy and practice within the state which are ongoing.
- PACT and its officers have made a submission to the CMC as it conducted its review of implementation of the reports recommendations.
- PACT continues to have a formal role as one of a number of ‘key’ non-government agencies with expertise in child protection issues approached to provide advice to government.

STRUCTURE / ORGANIZATION

Hawthorne property:

- The private rental of this property covers the expenses associated with rental of the Logan Central offices.
- The Management Committee regularly reviews the leasing arrangement and monitors the asset.
- This property continues to appreciate in value as an asset.

Logan Central Offices (“PACT House”):

- These offices rented from the Logan City Council continue to provide both an appropriate professional face and a client-friendly environment.
- These offices are easily accessible by train, bus and car.
- They provide a safe and professional work environment for staff.

Information Management:

- As part of an ongoing process, a review of PACT’s website and its contents has occurred. Changes recommended by the Committee formed to examine this area are in the process of being implemented.
- **PACT Webpage** remains: PACT.org.au. Action is being taken to have this Web page regularly updated and staff are being provided with special training to undertake this task.
- The data, record and communication security has been reviewed and changes implemented.
- Staff training / development in computer literacy continues.
- The 1800 access number to support regional Volunteers has functioned well.

Staff:

- As part of the Strategic Review of the organization conducted by Siggins Miller recommendations were made in respect to the staffing of the organization. These recommendations were accepted and are in the process of being implemented.
- Mrs Jo Bryant, as previously mentioned, has been appointed Executive Manager responsible for day-to-day management.
- Ms Pauline McElwain continued in the position of Volunteer Coordinator for the Child Witness Support Program - 3 days per week. However the position has now been approved as (one person) full time position in line with the recommendation of the Siggins Miller Review. Unfortunately, Ms McElwain went on long term sick leave in late August. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Pauline’s contribution for the past two years in the role of Volunteer Coordinator.

- Mr Peter Marrington has performed the role as Volunteer Coordinator for the Court Witness Support Program for the other 2 days per week. Peter has continued in his role as therapist for other 3 days. The therapist position will continue as a 3 day position in line with the Siggins Miller recommendation.
- Ms Justine Devine continues to provide PACT with administrative support. Efforts are currently being made to explore options to provide additional administrative support for the organization and its volunteers within the organization's budgetary constraints.
- Performance reviews continue as a mechanism to ensure mutual accountability between staff and management.

I would like to record both my personal thanks and that of members of the Management Committee to our staff for their commitment and dedication. This has contributed greatly to the achievements of the organization to date and allowed us to continue providing services to vulnerable children and their families.

SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Child/Young Person Witness Support Program (CYPWSP):

- As a result of the new legislation, referrals to PACT decreased slightly over the past year from 818 to 791.
- The recruitment and training cycle of CYPWSP continues and PACT currently has 57 active CYPWS Volunteers across Queensland.
- PACT has continued to provide high quality services for clients in the geographical areas across Queensland as contracted with the Department of Child Safety.
- PACT continues without exception to provide services as required to all clients referred.
- PACT's commitment to improve and strengthen the program continues.

Therapy Program:

- PACT continues to provide therapeutic support to those client children/young persons and their families as requested.
- Provision of PACT Therapy program to those areas where the CYPWSP is offered continues.
- The Therapy Program expansion has been achieved by training and supporting volunteers in these geographically diverse sites - subsequent to signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with their individual employers.

RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- PACT continues to work in close partnership with the University of Queensland in the evaluation of programs for the treatment of child/young person victims of sexual abuse (see www.psychiatry.uq.edu.au/csa) and in promoting implementation of the results of its initial research study. A further proposal building on the results of the joint research findings has been submitted to government and we are currently awaiting advice regarding its acceptance for funding.
- PACT continues a program of training, education and community development for other providers of services to children across Queensland.
- PACT continues to establish formal arrangements with Centacare, Lifeline and Anglicare to train their workers to support our clients in regional areas.

- PACT has been able to provide educative opportunities to various officers within the Justice system, the Queensland Police Service and the Department of Communities over the past 12 months – a relationship PACT hopes to continue and enhance.

AWARDS

- Ms Fay Bottomer is the recipient of the *PACT Volunteer of the Year Award 2005*.
- Dr Richard Roylance and Ms Kirsten Dyer were awarded life membership of PACT for their significant contributions to the organization at the PACT Conference Dinner. I am pleased to announce that the Committee has approved the awarding of Life membership to Detective Senior Sergeant Cheryl Scanlon and Mrs Jenny Brice at this year's AGM in recognition of their significant contribution to the work of PACT over a number of years.

FINANCE

- This Committee leaves PACT in excellent financial shape to face the challenges of the future. The financial situation of the organisation has continued to improve - despite a very significant increase in activity.
- A Service Agreement for recurrent funding through the Department of Child Safety, (with mutually agreed outcome measures) was signed in January 2005 for the four year period, 1 January 2005 to 31 December 2008.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

- PACT will continue to advise government in the roll-out of the substantial changes arising from the CMC report, both as an independent agency and as an appointed member of the Advocacy Advisory Committee.
- PACT will continue to forge meaningful relationships with the government and judicial agencies with specific reference to child sexual abuse and the role of vulnerable child witnesses within the criminal justice system.
- PACT has been invited to be an active partner in the development of a vulnerable witness policy - including non-legislative measures such as court design, witness support, guidelines for interviewing child witnesses and counselling protocols.
- PACT will continue to be actively involved in an advisory capacity in the development by the judiciary of Judicial Guidelines for the use of new technology (such as CCTV and pre-recorded videotapes) and other special measures to be adopted by the courts when taking evidence of children.
- PACT has an ongoing commitment to the collection of information in relation to child/young persons presenting within the courts - to better assess questions of process and outcome for this vulnerable group.
- PACT continues to work within a cooperative partnership between PACT, the Commission for Children and Young People, Government Departments (especially staff of the Department of Child Safety, Department of Communities, the Queensland Police Service, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Department of Justice and the Attorney General) and Officers of the various Queensland Courts.

PERSONAL THANKS

- PACT had a well balanced and highly committed Management Committee in 2004-05, and those nominated for the 2005-06 period have my full support.
- I have had the honour of serving as President of PACT during the last year. It has been a period of substantial change, a number of challenges, and much satisfaction. I thank the members of the Management Committee, staff and most especially the CYPWSP Volunteers for their assistance as PACT has sought to achieve our goal to improve the outcomes for vulnerable children and young people.
- In 2005, PACT has grown to a staff of four, with substantial financial reserves, over 57 CYPWSP Volunteers – providing a service to over 790 children and young people across Queensland.
- In this, PACT's 21th year – it is timely that we reflect upon the outstanding work undertaken by hundreds by people associated with the organisation over that time and the major positive influence that PACT has had on the lives of children and young people with which it has had contact.
- There is much more to do, and I have every confidence that PACT with a committed staff and a large number of very committed volunteers will continue to change and grow to meet the changing needs of children.

David R Jefferies APM OAM FAIM
President

SECRETARY'S REPORT

I have pleasure in presenting my report as Secretary of the PACT Management Committee.

The 2004/2005 period has been extremely productive for PACT on a number of fronts, many of which have been outlined in reports of the President and Executive Manager and Administrator. I am pleased to report that the outgoing Management Committee has achieved many of the goals set for the period and has made significant progress in terms of ongoing projects which will enable PACT to continue to achieve positive outcomes for children and families in the coming year.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE:

I can report that the Management Committee conducted formal meetings on a monthly basis on nine occasions throughout the year in addition to business conducted outside of meetings.

POSITION	NAME	NUMBER ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND	NUMBER ATTENDED
President	David Jefferies	9	8
Vice President	Kirsten Dyer (resigned February 2005)	9	1
Secretary	Megan Caffery	9	7
Treasurer	Jennifer Pouwer	9	7
Member	Bernice Rasmussen / Tricia Velthuisen (proxy)	9	8
Member	Marj Evans	9	9
Volunteer Representative	Cheryl Nancarrow	8	5

Management Committee meetings were also attended by Ms Cheryl Nancarrow, who took over from Ms Bev Threlfo as Volunteer Representative in January 2005. I thank Ms Nancarrow for her contribution and assistance in facilitating communication with Child Witness Support Volunteers. The role undertaken by the Volunteer Representatives provided a constant reminder of the work undertaken by Court Support Workers on a daily basis, without whom PACT's operations as we know it would cease.

I also take this opportunity to express my appreciation for members of the Management Committee who have demonstrated a very high level of commitment during 2004 - 2005. In thanking the Committee, it would be remiss to overlook the excellent work undertaken by the Executive Manager, Mrs Jo Bryant. Without Mrs Bryant the Management Committee would not be able to function at the level at which it has over the past year and we are most grateful for her diligence and efficiency. These sentiments also apply to the other PACT staff, Mr Peter Marrington, Miss Justine Devine and Ms Pauline McElwain for their continued assistance and commitment.

The Management Committee was also assisted by a number of Sub-Committees during the past year. These include the Constitution Sub-committee, Chaired by Ms Tricia Velthuisen, the Clinical Sub-committee, Chaired by Dr Richard Roylance, the Fundraising Sub-Committee, Chaired by Ms Bev Threlfo and the Conference Sub-Committee, Chaired by Mrs Marj Evans. I thank the members of these Sub-Committees for their achievements and hard work.

As reported by the President, a Constitutional Review was undertaken with the assistance of the Constitution Sub-Committee, culminating in a Special General Meeting in July 2005, where the amendments were endorsed by members. I am pleased to report that the amendments to the Constitution were approved by the Office of Fair Trading on 30 August 2005 and took effect from that date. Again, sincere thanks go to Ms Tricia Velthuisen and members of the Sub-Committee for undertaking this sizeable task so efficiently and professionally.

The 2004 – 2005 period was both dynamic and demanding. I thank the members of the Management Committee, staff and Volunteers for once again rising to the challenges and undertaking the invaluable work that enables PACT to protect vulnerable children and young people throughout the court system.

Megan Caffery
Secretary

TREASURER'S REPORT

The financial statements for the year ended 30th June 2005 present fairly the financial position of Protect All Children Today Incorporated (PACT). The accounts have been audited in accordance with the *Associations Incorporation Act*, applicable Accounting Standards and the Constitution of PACT.

We acknowledge the funding of the Department of Child Safety and the contributions of our other sponsors.

There was an operating surplus of \$15,743.00 in the Department of Child Safety Court Witness Support Program, a surplus of \$942.00 in PACT's Funding & Investment Accounts and a surplus of \$23,161.00 in the Child Protection Week Account.

The Child/Young Person Witness Support Program was administered within the budget estimates. Expenditure on wages was less than budget due to reorganisation of roles within the organisation, which also impacted on the level of regional support and travel expenses. The court processes were also streamlined which impacted upon the level of contributions paid to offset volunteer expenses. Consequently these payments were also below budget.

The PACT Funding and Investment Accounts have income primarily from Fundraising and Rental of the Hawthorne House. Expenses are mainly asset maintenance and expenses associated with the Hawthorne property. The Hawthorne property remains a stable investment being positioned in a high capital growth area.

The Child Protection Week Account had funding from the Department of Child Safety and Sponsorship from Kentucky Fried Chicken. A media publicity consultant was engaged again this year to co-ordinate the Child Protection Week activities which included grants paid to other community organizations to conduct activities raising awareness.

Jennifer Pouwer *BOcc.Thy GAICD*
Treasurer

STAFF REPORTS

EXECUTIVE MANAGER AND OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mrs Jo Bryant commenced as the Acting Executive Officer in August 2004 and became the permanent, part-time (25 hours per week) Executive Manager on 1 June 2005.

PACT staff have dedicated much of their time to reviewing and updating PACT's policy and procedure documents. New Protocol documents have been prepared for a range of PACT activities and processes such as; Management Committee, Paid Staff, Unpaid Staff (Volunteers), Administrative Processes, Annual General Meeting, Child Protection Week Administration.

Following the Siggins Miller Review the Management Committee agreed upon a new Mission, Values, Key Result Areas, Objectives and Strategies.

The Management Committee processes have been streamlined since the last Annual General Meeting to enable better consideration of matters prior to the monthly meetings. Communication has also been enhanced where Volunteers are provided with regular advice from the monthly Management Committee meetings.

The Executive Manager was a member of the Constitution Review Sub-Committee, which was a timely and labour intensive process, resulting in amendments that will improve the operation of PACT for future years. Sincere thanks goes to Ms Tricia Velthuizen for her extraordinary efforts as Chair of the Sub-Committee.

Work has commenced on the update of PACT's Website with the expert assistance of Mr Mark Warren, for which we are extremely grateful.

PACT entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Queensland and has worked collaboratively with several students in progressing the work of PACT. These student placements benefit both parties by providing students with skills and experience needed for future employment opportunities, whilst providing PACT with access to Masters students with expertise in the fields of Psychology, Business Management and Community Welfare. We would like to express our sincere appreciation to Ms Andrea Quinn, Centre for Organisational Psychology and Mr Phillip Bamber, University of Queensland Business School, for their efforts in providing us with excellent students.

Once again the PACT was involved in Child Protection Week with the ongoing task of maintaining accurate financial records.

The Executive Manager would like to express her sincere gratitude to the Staff and Volunteers of PACT who work tirelessly and generously to support the victims and witnesses of crime or abuse. We have an excellent team at PACT, who are an absolute pleasure to work with. Sadly, Pauline McElwain went on long term sick leave at the end of August. We wish Pauline all the best for a speedy recovery.

We would like to thank Roger Veal for his valuable assistance in preparing the Business Activity Statement, overseeing of the Periodic Funding Return to the Department of Communities and PACT's financial records. Roger's professional knowledge and understanding of PACT has been invaluable. We appreciate his availability and willingness to assist whenever necessary.

Lastly, a special thank you is expressed to the President and members of the Management Committee who give generously of their time and expert knowledge in managing the organisation. Their ongoing accessibility, willingness and support for staff is greatly appreciated.

Jo Bryant
Executive Manager

Justine Devine
Office Administrator

VOLUNTEER CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

For many years, there has been widespread agreement that child witnesses are disadvantaged in the Criminal Justice System (CJS). In a very real sense there is truth in this. The children and young people referred to PACT do not stand accused by the Crown however, are called as witnesses, be they complainants or otherwise. As an agency providing witness support, we ask not that the child or young person be given preferential treatment by the justice system, however that they merely be recognised and enabled to give their testimony in a manner that facilitates equal treatment for all before the law. The *Evidence (Protection of Children) Amendment Act 2003* proclaimed on 5 January 2004 was one step further in the journey to achieving that equality. Child witnesses (in the majority of cases) are now no longer required to attend committal hearings and according to anecdotal information from PACT Child Witness Support Volunteers, this contributes significantly to the minimisation of re-traumatisation of child witnesses as does the pre recording of evidence via closed circuit television.

Presently throughout the State, there are 57 trained witness support Volunteers who so generously donate their time and energy to PACT children and families. Given the nature of the work, this number is always in flux. A total of 23 volunteers were recruited and trained during 2004/2005 for volunteer court support work in Brisbane, North Coast, Gold Coast and Cairns. PACT volunteers are dedicated and committed people who provide support to children, young people and their families in a time of crisis and I acknowledge and thank them all for the valuable work they do.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank the PACT Team Leaders without whom the role of Volunteer Coordinator would be considerably more difficult – Fay Bottomer (Cairns), Bob Moon/Michelle Dyck (Townsville), Kate Wilson (Rockhampton), Debbie Griffiths (Mackay) Jo King (Maryborough), Kaye Williams (Bundaberg), Sally McCreath (Toowoomba) and in Brisbane – Judy Krynen, Jenny Brice, Jill Wesche and Kate Le Grady. The combined experience and leadership skills of these volunteers remains a crucial factor in providing a Statewide volunteer program that offers effective training and ongoing support for the volunteers.

The demands made of our volunteers continues to produce a remarkable group of people. Among these is Fay Bottomer, the 2004/2005 Volunteer of the Year. I would like to acknowledge and thank Fay for her support and professionalism in the way she has carried out her duties as a volunteer, team leader and trainer. I would also like to thank Fay for her support to me in the role of Volunteer Coordinator.

In May this year a Statewide Conference was held for PACT volunteers. Speakers included Dr Robin Sullivan, Director General, Department of Child Safety; Her Honour Judge Helen O'Sullivan, District Court Judge; Anna Maxwell, Social Worker; Mr William Foster, Psychologist; Tricia Velthuisen, Churchill Scholar; Mark Pathe, Department of Justice and Attorney General; Leanne Clare, Director of the Department of Public Prosecutions; Warren Strange, Legal Aid Queensland; Dr Maria Hanger, Psychiatrist and Detective Peter Ahloy, Task Force Argos. There were presentations on a range topics relevant to the role of the PACT Child Witness Support Worker, in particular, the practical implementation of The *Evidence (Protection of Children) Amendment Act 2003* and resultant changes in the CJS.

The Conference was also an opportunity for PACT to value the work of the Child Witness Support Volunteers and for the regional and Brisbane Volunteers to meet each other, the Management Committee and PACT staff.

The client evaluation of the program continues to offer PACT an indication of client satisfaction. Questionnaires are completed for those matters where there has been significant interaction across committal and trial. Parents continue to appreciate the support and information they are offered via the service, with the majority of the responses in the first or second highest rating on a seven point scale.

I would like to acknowledge the Department of Child Safety for their ongoing financial commitment to PACT, also the Judiciary, the Victim Liaison Officers and Crown Prosecutors of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Queensland Police Service for their willingness to continue to work towards the best interests of child witnesses in the court system. We all work towards the day when children and young people required to give evidence, believe that Queensland courts are about justice for all, as a result of their personal experience.

In conclusion, I would like to thank Mrs Jo Bryant for her leadership and Miss Justine Devine and Mr Peter Marrington for their ongoing collegial support.

Pauline McElwain *B Soc Sc*
Volunteer Co-ordinator

CHILD AND FAMILY THERAPIST'S REPORT

PACT has continued during the past year to provide therapy services to our clients in Brisbane and in regional centres throughout Queensland. PACT's Therapy Program is designed to meet the unique needs of our client group. Therapy focuses on the effects of abuse and does not include discussion of evidence while the child or young person is involved in the court process. PACT currently has formal arrangements with the following organisations through individual Memorandums of Understanding to provide therapy services at no cost to our clients, utilising this specialised model:

Location	Organisation
Cairns	Centacare and Lifeline
Townsville	Centacare
Mackay	Centacare and Lifeline
Rockhampton	Anglicare
Gladstone	Anglicare
Sunshine Coast	Centacare
Caboolture/Redcliffe	Lifeline
Gold Coast	Centacare
Toowoomba	Centacare

PACT continues its research and treatment collaboration with the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Queensland (UQ). Based on outcomes of the joint *Queensland Child Sexual Abuse Treatment Study (Q-CSATS)*, Principal Investigator, Emeritus Professor Barry Nurcombe, last year proposed a new therapeutic program for sexually abused children. During the year this proposal has been developed and refined, and a joint submission for funding to establish a central team to design and implement the program has been submitted to The Department of Child Safety by UQ, PACT and Kids In Mind – Mater Child and Youth Mental Health Service. The proposal combines the effective components of Q-SCATS, and provides greater emphasis on preparing and motivating families for treatment, and on attending to maternal psychological problems, especially depression. The program is structured with modules that can be selected and implemented in accordance with the needs of the individual family. In a manner similar to Q-CSATS, therapy would be delivered by therapists from existing government and non-government services throughout Queensland. We have not yet received a response to this submission.

PACT maintains a strong commitment to the development of expertise and clinical peer review in relation to the treatment and prevention of child abuse and neglect. Training and consultancy in the PACT model of therapy was conducted during the year in Cairns, Townsville, Caboolture, the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast. In addition, 98 professional counsellors attended seminars addressing therapeutic strategies conducted by PACT in Brisbane, Cairns, Townsville and Nambour.

In summary, it has been a year of consolidation. I sincerely thank the many individuals and agencies who have contributed to improving the accessibility and effectiveness of our service.

Peter Marrington *B Ec B Soc Admin*
Senior Therapist