

## **ADOLESCENT AND FAMILY COUNSELLORS ASSOCIATION**

### **FLAG STATEMENT**

The Adolescent and Family Counsellors Association was formed in 1990 and has an average annual membership (including associates) of 35. Adolescent Family Counsellors are funded through state or federal government, and employed by community based organisations, in the state of New South Wales.

Adolescent Family Counsellors come from a diverse range of therapeutic disciplines and backgrounds. Their primary role is to offer counselling and family therapy to young people aged 12 – 18 years and/or their families who present with issues of family breakdown. The goal of intervention is to effect reconciliation between young persons and their families leading to restoration where this is acceptable and appropriate for both parties, or to some other acceptable and appropriate alternative. Adolescent Family Counsellors are not generalist youth workers but are specialists to be called in as an extra resource to deal with matters that cannot be handled by generalist workers. Not all situations of reconciliation/restoration will require the level of expertise offered by Adolescent Family Counsellors.

The role of Adolescent Family Counsellors is that of:

- (a) assessing the appropriateness of an intervention in the family system.
- (b) assessing the operation of the family system and planning goals for any intervention within it.
- (c) developing an appropriate programme intervention, drawing on a range of family therapy models.
- (d) Implementing the intervention through formal sessions with the young person and the family.
- (e) effecting termination of the case either via reconciliation/restoration where that is possible and appropriate or some other more appropriate course of action.
- (f) follow-up work with the young person and/or the family to the extent that it is possible and appropriate, or arranging for more appropriate follow-up.
- (g) liaising with other agencies for purposes of consultation and referral as appropriate
- (h) close liaison with field staff of the Department of Community Services e.g. joint case-planning, monitoring and review.

The Adolescent and Family Counsellors Association provides training, further skills development, support and networking opportunities through it's regional monthly meetings, quarterly newsletter, ad-hoc training workshops and its annual conference.