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MEDIA RELEASE

Big Sister Foundation Supports Women's Mental Health and Wellbeing

Grants of \$138,000 Awarded to Six Shire Community Organisations

August 14, 2013 - The Big Sister Foundation today announced \$138,000 of grants to be shared by six non-profit community organisations that include Amelie House, Kookaburra Kids Foundation, Bears of Hope, Southern Community Welfare, Sutherland Early Support Service and Sutherland Shire Family Services.

At a morning tea hosted by the Big Sister Foundation, Chairperson Kim Brown acknowledged the grant recipients contribution to the local community and the frontline support they provide to women and their families in times of need.

"Big Sister is committed to helping community organisations who are supporting women's mental health," said Ms. Brown.

"Providing gap funding for both frontline support programs and longer term education and intervention strategies we aim to support women of all ages and their families in the Shire."

"Statistics tell us that one in four people will experience mental health difficulties at some stage in their life," said Ms. Brown. "We now see mental health concerns touching many of our lives. Issues like domestic violence, relationship breakdowns and carer commitments further impact women's wellbeing."

The 2013 Community Grants were awarded for the following programs

Amelie House Women and Childrens Refuge - \$25,000 for a social educator to support women and children who are escaping domestic violence and homelessness.

Australian Kookaburra Kids Foundation - \$24,000 for the Young Women's Leadership Program to support and empower young women aged between 13 -18 years caring for a parent with a mental illness.

Bears of Hope Pregnancy and Infant Loss Inc received \$5,000 to form a support group and therapy sessions for parents who have lost an infant in Sutherland and St George areas

Southern Community Welfare funding of \$35,000 for ongoing case management services to support clients with complex social and mental health needs

Sutherland Early Support Service received \$25,000 for their Sister to Sister Project, assisting mothers of newborn babies who are at high risk of post natal depression

Sutherland Shire Family Services funding of \$24,000 for the Love Bites Respectful Relationships Program for high-school student education programs promoting awareness and understanding of domestic violence and sexual assault and offering strategies to avoid unhealthy relationships.

About Big Sister Foundation

Founded in 1928, the Big Sister Foundation has a long history of providing a helping hand to those in need. Based in Gympie, the Foundation assists non-profit community organisations in the Sutherland Shire and surrounding areas by bridging funding gaps and providing financial support for programs that support women and families.

Since 2005 the Foundation has made donations of \$2.5m, assisting over 27 local community organisations including Sylvanvale Foundation, Sutherland Early Support Service and Kookaburra Kids Foundation to achieve their goals.

For more information www.bigsisterfoundation.org.au

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