

Blacktown Alcohol and other Drugs Family Services Inc. (BADFS)

BADFS is a community based, innovative, progressive non-government organisation that works with individuals, families, groups, communities and organisations to address alcohol and other drug (AOD) issues in Blacktown Local Government Area.

What do we offer and what is our approach?

We provide information, referral, counselling and community development activities for individuals, couples, families, groups and communities in the Blacktown Local Government Area (LGA) who have issues related to AOD use/misuse. Our approach in all areas of our work involves recognising the family and social context of AOD use/misuse.

Our approach also recognises the importance of collaboration and the strengthening of relationships and building social capital in addressing AOD issues. Given that social capital involves the development of trusting, cooperative, mutual relationships we seek to recognise power imbalances in all relationships. We address these imbalances whenever possible.

BADFS Statement of Purpose.

BADFS works with communities, families and individuals to reduce isolation and build on strengths, to support people in making lifestyle and relationship choices, and in managing conflict whilst reducing the harm associated with AOD usage.

BADFS strongly believe that solutions or strategies for addressing conflict and drug issues are best addressed in an environment that enhances relationships. The development of trusting relationships at all levels of our community is vital to address drug and other related issues.

BADFS believes in:

- the right of people to make choices in their own lives;
- the right of people to dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality;
- the right of people to be valued as individuals;
- the right of people to access services on a non-discriminatory basis;
- the right of the community to accountable and responsive services.

Objectives

Service Delivery

- To provide a specialised Alcohol and Other drug (AOD) Counselling Service to people in the Blacktown Local Government Area (Blacktown LGA).
- To offer education and therapy through group work.
- To provide and disseminate an appropriate range of resource materials.
- To facilitate increased access to and/or use of support systems and services.
- To assess the needs of individuals and families in the local community.

Education

- To promote healthier lifestyle choices
- To promote community awareness of AOD and family issues.
- To provide education and information on individual, family and community issues related to substance use.

Policy/Advocacy

- To advocate for the provision of comprehensive, high quality, family focused AOD services.
- To advocate and influence public policy development in regards to the issues surrounding AOD usage with respect to the family and the wider community.
- To develop networks in Blacktown LGA to assist families experiencing problems associated with AOD usage.

Resource Management

- To develop and maintain a flexible, innovative, dynamic organisation which is efficient and effective, and which values the people involved in it.
- To ensure appropriate support and professional development for staff, volunteers, and management committee members.
- To broaden the networks that support the organisation and its mission.

Our counselling services

We recognise alcohol and other drug misuse can be a problem in itself as well as a symptom of other issues. We therefore work with our clients to identify the many issues that they believe relate to their AOD use/misuse. These could include domestic violence, child protection, housing, mental health, isolation, family conflict, peer pressure, employment and poverty.

We provide counselling to the individual user, family member or the whole family as needed. The issues clients present are very complex. We therefore work with a number of agencies to support our clients to address AOD, domestic violence, child protection, housing, mental health and other issues. This work includes advocating for their needs to be met. We have an eclectic approach and use a range of modalities when working with clients. We provide groups for individual users and family members. We aim to provide more collaborative services with other organisations and design and develop clinical services that may be centre-based as well as at other locations in Blacktown Local Government Area.

Our Community development activities

We work collaboratively with many other organizations on projects. BADFS also advocates to influence policy around family, relationship and AOD issues.

BADFS is coordinating the Bridges Strategy which aims to strengthen the ability and capacity of Blacktown LGA to address relationship and AOD issues. The strategy seeks to address AOD issues through processes of empowerment that involve building a community and interagency team and supporting the skills development of community members and agency representatives. Participants engage in activities that promote a philosophy of cooperation and recognition of the context of drug use. Groups and communities are facilitated to further engage in additional activities that address AOD issues within this philosophy. The Bridges Strategy is a large-scale, ambitious, and organic project.

BADFS also led the establishment of "Voice for SONG" (Small Organisations Non-Government), a network of small community organisations. Voice for SONG promotes the recognition of the value of small organisations and strategies to support their survival and development. The group began in Blacktown in 1999 and now has become statewide with the secretariat being provided by the Council of Social Services of NSW (NCOSS).

BADFS promotes itself as a small community organisation that develops and maintains cooperative relationships, and addresses our own goals at the same time as common goals for the community and network of organisations. Our activities will also be demonstrating how small community organisations can facilitate innovative and large-scale activities through strengthening relationships and working collaboratively with communities, other small community organisations, large non-government organisations, government and business.

The organisation and the staff

BADFS is an incorporated community based organization that has been in existence since 1978 and is governed by a voluntary Management Committee. BADFS receives ongoing funding from NSW Department of Health and NSW Department of Community Services. Additional Funding for other projects comes through other sources. Current positions include

- * BADFS Manager/Bridges Project Coordinator
- * Operations Coordinator
- * Bridges Community Development Workers
- * Administration Workers
- * Clinical Coordinator
- * Counsellors

We also regularly have volunteers and students working with us.