

IFAS midterm Evaluation

Dr Chris Maylea

Sherie Thomas

Lucy Bashfield

A/Prof Bawa Kuyini

Prof Susie Costello

Meena Singh

What's next...





Independent Family Advocacy and Support

IFAS is a pilot service that provides non-legal advocacy and support to parents and primary carers who are involved in the early stages of the child protection system.

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What's next...



Target group

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families

Families where one or both of the parents has an intellectual disability

Greater Bendigo and Darebin/Moreland

Pre-court (investigations stage)



IFAS is:

IFAS Manager

IFAS Team Leader

2x Advocates

Lived Experience Advisor

Shared Experience and Support
(SEAS)



Mixed Methods Methodology

A review of IFAS documentation

Annotated bibliography and legislative review

Case bank review

Interviews with people who have used or are eligible for IFAS

Professional stakeholder interviews and focus groups

Quantitative data



Data collection – 1st stage

Interviewed 11 eligible service users

Only 1 person identified as Aboriginal and 1 as having an intellectual disability

24 professional stakeholders, 13 interviews and 11 via three focus groups

IFAS, VLA and publicly available data

The child protection experience

I did feel like I was just sort of being pushed around in the dark because no one was really telling me anything. ... it was scary and really disappointing. Like, I honestly, I truly believe that they were there to help families and sadly through the way the government's structured at the moment, it's not the case. (SU8)



The IFAS experience

People love IFAS:

It's been really good to have that support ... to be honest, I don't think I would have really got through this process as well as what I have without having that advice and support. (SU1)



What is IFAS doing?

Representational, rights-based advocacy

Information

Coaching

Systemic advocacy

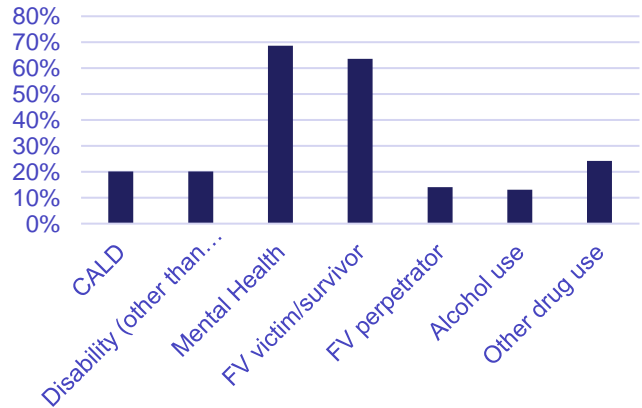
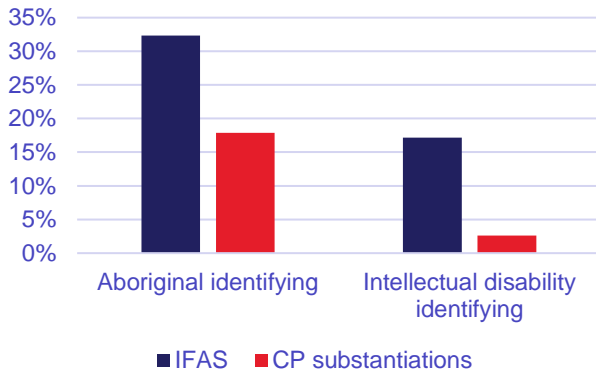
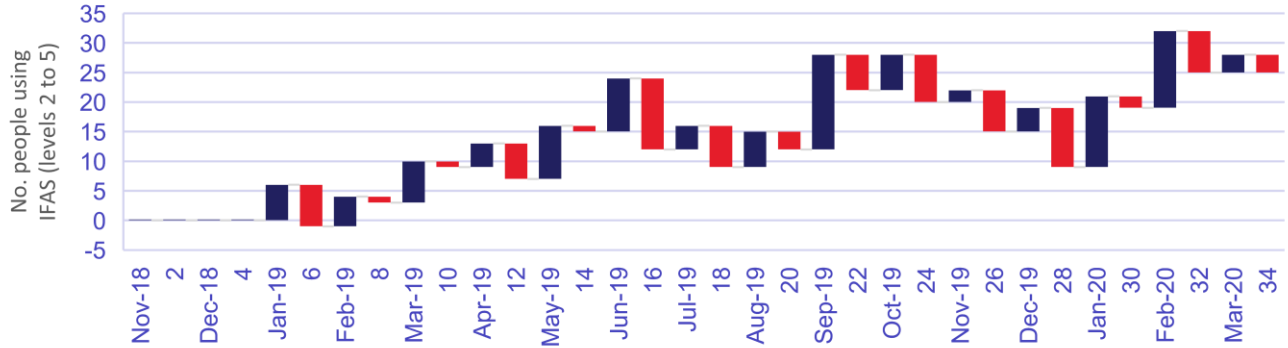
Support beyond advocacy

Court diversion

Mediation and facilitation



Program measures





Cost benefits

Each child diverted from court: \$66,616

4% diversion = costs savings

IFAS estimated diversion rate \cong 10%



Areas for development

Service promotion

Data collection

M&E framework development

Training and support opportunities

Further integrate lived experience



**What difference
would it have made?**



Questions

chris.maylea@rmit.edu.au

@chrismaylea

Contact the IFAS manager directly at
Helen.Makregiorgos@vla.vic.gov.au