

MEDIA RELEASE

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Developers help raise more than \$30,000 in the fight against domestic violence

Three dominant industry players have joined forces with Sutherland Shire Family Services to raise more than \$30,000 – with more pledges still to come in - to help tackle the devastating impacts of domestic violence.

Capital Bluestone, Charter Hall and PAYCE – three of the largest property owners and developers operating in the Sutherland Shire and surrounding area – have united to help secure the much-needed funding for Sutherland Shire Family Services (SSFS) programs.

Capital Bluestone, along with its joint venture partner Cronulla Sharks, hosted the 2016 Leaders' Luncheon on Friday, March 11 where businesses helped ensure children and families impacted by domestic violence in our community will get the help they need.

Special guests at the luncheon included White Ribbon Ambassador and TV personality Andrew O'Keefe, Sutherland Shire Council Mayor Cr Carmelo Pesce, Miranda Police Local Area Commander Superintendent Michael O'Toole, Cronulla state MP Mark Speakman and Miranda state MP Eleni Petinos representing NSW Premier Mike Baird.

Capital Bluestone, Charter Hall and PAYCE opened their contact books and encouraged business leaders from across Sydney to be facilitators of change by committing funds over three years, allowing SSFS to provide ongoing services that lead to safety and wellbeing for families in the Sutherland Shire and St George region.

SSFS chief executive officer Di Manns said the demand for services continued to exceed their supply due to resourcing shortages and these donations would go a long way to helping families to feel safe and move forward in their lives.

"Many of our programs and groups for children, young people and families help eliminate isolation and help people begin to heal from the trauma many have experienced," she said.

"It was also an honour to launch the second video in our Pull Ya Head In domestic violence awareness campaign to continue our call to action for men to stand up against a mate, colleague neighbour or anyone being abusive to their partner."

What the developers and sponsors say:

Capital Bluestone managing director Ben Fairfax said it was easy to put aside commercial competitiveness to assist Sutherland Shire Family Services.

"This luncheon has allowed us to make real social change in the local community by providing protection, support and care for families who are dealing with the trauma of domestic violence," he said.

"We are delighted business and community leaders have given so generously to make sure the invaluable work by SSFS can continue to make a difference."

PAYCE chairman and managing director Brian Boyd said the Sutherland Shire Family Services was to be commended for its outstanding work in addressing the serious issue of domestic violence in the community.

"The corporate sector can play an important supporting role by making contributions and I encourage even more businesses to give as generously as the ones at the inaugural Leaders' Luncheon. Every contribution helps the SSFS bring its services to more women and local families in need," Mr Boyd said.

"PAYCE applauds the outstanding work of SSFS and is proud to be associated with the organisation and the 'Pull Ya Head In Campaign' that not only highlights this problem but also sends a strong message to the wider community about how they can help their friends and their families," Mr Boyd said.

Charter Hall managing director and Group chief executive officer David Harrison explained that domestic violence was an issue that needed to be addressed by the community, by businesses and as individuals.

"Domestic violence doesn't stop at the front door; people carry the impact with them into their daily lives. Within our workplaces we want to create an environment where people feel safe to bring their whole self to work. We can all play an active role in creating a tolerant and inclusive culture where people feel safe to speak up and where we care enough to ask our fellow colleagues "Are you ok?".

"We are please to make this commitment to help support a social issue that we are taking very seriously."

Cronulla Sharks Group chief executive officer Lyall Gorman said the values and commitment of SSFS in terms of making a real difference and contribution to their community were at the forefront of everything the Sharks do as a Club.

If through partnering in initiatives such as today's event we can have a positive influence on the lives and well-being of even one family we can hopefully continue a snowball effect across our community that will see business and the community at large rise in opposition to this major issue."

For more detail on the work of SSFS – or to make a donation – visit www.ssfs.org.au or call 9528 2933.

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