



KAREN RENKEMA-LANG & TEAM

INDEPENDENT YOU'RE IN S.A.F.E. HANDS

S.A.F.E. KIAMA POLICY - MENTAL HEALTH

KIAMA • MINNAMURRA • GAINSBOROUGH • KIAMA DOWNS • JAMBEROO • GERRINGONG • GERROA • SEPT 2021

OUR RESPONSE TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH

S.A.F.E Kiama's overarching concern is the profound impact of events related to mental health matters within our community. This has deeply affected people, their families and their friends within the Kiama community and beyond. We understand that it takes a whole community to raise a family, and to make the changes necessary so that those who need support feel confident that the community is there for them.

While research identifies many variables that may be attributed to this phenomena, it's hard for many in our community to comprehend that there could be such an issue here. Kiama is one of the wealthiest local government areas in Australia (one of the wealthiest countries in the world), our kids are raised by amazing families, have access to a quality education, and our community is strong and caring.

For the layperson it seems logical that broader events, like the bushfires, floods and the pandemic would have a compounding impact on the variables that are related to undiagnosed or escalating mental health problems - such as social media and gaming addiction, lack of hope for a better future, unemployment, financial distress, intergenerational trauma, family breakdown, substance abuse, gambling and other addictions.

S.A.F.E. Kiama's first response to this predicament is to listen.

To listen to the youth, the families, and experts in the field. To investigate current best practice models and to see what local government initiatives are working well and what is not working and what new approaches need to be adopted.

We want a more structured and targeted response by Council, so that the community can easily and quickly access the right support and the right services at the right time, depending on the situation.

We will promote and support the partnering of Kiama Council with organisations (eg Makuta and Headspace), community groups (eg The Elephant Crew), local professionals (eg school councillors) to identify the role Council can play in establishing and supporting services aimed at primary prevention, early intervention, crisis response, and family and community support after a crisis.

Once we better understand how Kiama Council can support the local community with this challenge, facilities and resources can be made available to organisations, community groups and professionals who can be the most effective. Examples could include, assisting Headspace in setting up a local Headspace centre in Kiama; offering local community groups better use of

community halls or spaces when working on community mental health; liaising with local mental health professionals and discussing whether Kiama Council can assist them in setting up youth, parent and local sporting group coaches, and mental health awareness forums run by these local health professionals.

Finally, sports clubs and sporting facilities are part of the fabric of healthy families and healthy communities. **S.A.F.E. Kiama** will ensure people of all ages and abilities, especially our youth, have the opportunity to regularly participate in sport and active recreation.

S.A.F.E. KIAMA PRIORITIES

S.A.F.E. Kiama priorities that underpin our policy for improving mental health to deliver a more promising future are:

1. Ensure Council's financial position is known and understood by all ratepayers, and that Council staff have the skills necessary to develop, monitor and enact a 10 year plan to strengthen Councils economic base.
2. Provide opportunities for diversification of local businesses so that our economic base is resilient and able to provide interesting, well paid and secure job opportunities.
3. Introduce greater transparency and accountability in the way Council conducts its business.
4. Tighten planning and development controls to stop unrestricted urban creep, over development and inappropriate development.
5. Develop and enact a plan to manage our natural environment more responsibly.

MEET THE S.A.F.E. KIAMA CANDIDATES



KAREN RENKEMA-LANG & TEAM



SARAH MARLAN



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OUR MAIN POLICY IS AVAILABLE HERE

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PRE-POLL 22 NOV-3 DEC, ELECTION DAY 4 DEC 2021

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