

**Rotary Club of Modbury Golden Grove is partnering with
Fanconi Anaemia Support Australasia (FASA) to raise funds to bring local FA families
together for the life-altering Family Meeting.**

“Attending the 2023 family meeting was kind of mind-blowing. To meet others who know what you’ve gone through... and understand what you might be facing... after being so freaked out – it was totally uplifting.” - Amelia (31) Adult living with FA.

Fanconi Anaemia (FA) is an inherited DNA repair disease. It can affect all systems of the body. FA often leads to bone marrow failure in small children, whose lives can only be saved with a bone marrow transplant. If they live to adulthood, people with FA have a vastly increased risk of developing various cancers, particularly of the head and neck. Treatment options are very limited – standard chemotherapy and radiation therapies are toxic to people with FA. Early detection of cancer is therefore critical. A lifetime of regular specialist appointments – and frequent invasive procedures - ensues.

Currently, life expectancy is about 37 years. Improvements in bone marrow transplant techniques have saved the lives of many kids with FA in recent times. It is hoped research into novel treatments for cancer will give FA adults a better chance of a longer life.

Everyone goes along for the ride: parents of kids with FA, their siblings and wider family, friends and loved ones. The impacts of dealing with a rare and largely untreatable condition run deep and never stop. It can be a lonely and difficult path. People learn to live in hope, but also must cope with the occasional 3am attack of dread.

Fanconi Anaemia Support Australasia (FASA) is a volunteer-run charity founded in 2019 to bring together kids and adults living with FA, and their families, across Australia and New Zealand.

The annual **Family Meeting** is one of the main platforms where kids, parents and families connect. Sharing experiences and swapping tips for coping with day-to-day challenges and even medical emergencies helps. Kids with FA get to meet other kids who share their problems and worries. Kids with their mums and dads meet adults with FA who have careers, relationships, hobbies. Everyone learns about recent developments in FA medical research. Friendships develop across the community. Knowledge grows. Resilience builds.

Our next Family Meeting is on **October 11th- 13th, 2024** at Woodhouse Adventure Park in the Adelaide Hills. The emphasis will be on breaking the ice, then building friendships. Kids and adults will have fun and families will have time to catch up, see how everyone is traveling, and charge the batteries for another year on the FA roller-coaster.

FASA has already raised the core funding to make this weekend Family Meeting available at minimal cost to our FA families, so that all are able to attend, whatever their means. Now we are looking for funds to assist our members with the cost of travel to South Australia. We plan to make it as easy for families in Darwin, Brisbane and Auckland to fly to Adelaide as it is for Perth and Melbourne families.

The impact of the Family Meeting, in friendships cemented, experience shared, and resilience made, rises exponentially with the number of families in attendance. Your donation will help ensure the success of the 2024 FASA Family Meeting and help us all build for the future.

Any donations can be made directly to FASA (for a tax-deduction) at www.fasa.org.au/donate/ or via the **Rotary Club of Modbury Golden Grove** (BSB 105-126, Account 471219540, Description: FASA Family Meeting)

Further information contact:

Alan Howard-Jones, 0431522253, alan@onlineavenue.com.au
President – Rotary Club of Modbury Golden Grove