



COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

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QUICK LINKS

**Click & Connect -
31/8/22**

**Share & Connect
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**Lets Connect
5/9/22**



News - Emma's Project

Have you heard about the Emma Project? Emma approached the Australian Childhood Foundation four years ago offering her knowledge and wisdom to develop a survivor informed community education program. As a survivor of abuse, Emma's lived experience offers unique insight into what can stop abuse and how to stop abuse after it was discovered. Find out more about this project [here](#).

News - Parenting Tools

Do you ever wish you didn't have to be so bossy?

That you had a tool to do the reminding and the telling?

This week we learnt about Dawn Clocks - an LED display on screen that alerts in completing daily tasks like getting dressed, making the bed or eating breakfast. Helping in creating an independent life.

Find out more about the Dawn Clock [here](#).

We also learnt about Superflex and the cast of characters that help your young person with self regulation. Superflex practices self regulation skills and boosts their superflex powers as they go. A great aid for learning. Find out more [here](#).

What other tools do you use to help you get through your day?

Let us know so we can share with other parents and carers!



"Improving the lived experience of young people"

News - Carer Assistance Program

The Carer Assistance program is available to PCA Families parents and carers thanks to DFFH funding. The CAP program offers therapeutic support by an experienced counsellor, aimed at supporting and improving the mental health and wellbeing of parents and carers (including adoption). Up to 3 sessions will be available for matters on which you may require support. Some of the issues you might need additional support for include loss and grief following a family matter or breakdown, anxiety and depression, compassion or caring fatigue, blocked care, system 'trauma' following an incident, complexities in contact or similar. To access the counselling service, simply fill out the self-referral form available [here](#) or contact our helpline and we will direct you to counsellor Nic (available Tuesdays and Fridays).

Events - Aggression Webinar

The Parental Stress Centre are offering a webinar for parents, carers and educators on regulating emotions especially when they come out in aggressive behaviours. While directed at parents of autistic children, there are often parallels with children from trauma. Understand what is happening and what the real world strategies are tonight at 8.30pm. Register [here](#).



Events - Click & Connect



TOPIC: CHILDHOOD TRAUMA AND THERAPEUTIC PARENTING - LINDA COOKE

DATE: Wednesday 31 August at midday with hosts Virginia & Sonia

TOPIC: In this meeting we will review and discuss the Youtube Recording by Linda Cooke on Therapeutic Parenting. Therapeutic parenting is parenting that is loving and kind, where you are present with your child while they work through their emotions and challenges. Its parenting that builds the brain as you help your child understand what they are experiencing. It is healing and aids attachment so is perfect for parenting children from complex backgrounds (adoption, permanent care and kinship care). Linda Cooke, adoptive parent, shares how safety, nurture and structure must be present. Lets discuss how we might apply this learning in our everyday. Please join us for this discussion.

HOMEWORK: Please consider listening to or reading the transcript from the Youtube Recording by Linda Cooke titled "How does baking help parents to parent therapeutically with safety, structure and nurture?" Access the recordings and transcripts [here](#).

REGISTER: [here](#) via Zoom Link

News - Angry Teenagers

The road less travelled by Scott Peck inspired millions of us in the 80s. Now in the 2020's we are still managing the challenges of the road less travelled, where tricky behaviours are common and anger can be one of those tricky behaviours. Allison Davis Maxon, Executive Director of the National Centre on Adoption and Permanency, reminds us that children may have experienced varying degrees of trauma, neglect, and multiple attachment disruptions or placements which means they have experienced overwhelming amounts of internal emotional distress at an age when they were ill-equipped to manage their emotional states or distress. The end result is that children in care often have lots of BIG and INTENSE emotions with little ability to articulate and express what they are feeling and why they are feeling it. ANGER is a common by product, that is easy to "catch" but also easy to misunderstand. So what can you do when they are shaped for defensive purposes, stuck in survival brain and are using defensive, attacking, avoidant or provoking strategies? Allison suggests these tips:

- remember the emotional demands are intense, complex and unlike any other relationship
- the most critical ingredient is the emotional communication. The child learns how to get his/her needs met through human connectedness. The parent or carer needs to lead the emotional dance by modelling for the child how to manage intense, and at times, overwhelming emotions. Healthy ways to express and manage distress, anger and frustration might involve acknowledging and identifying hurt feelings, and having an action plan to digest hurt feelings.. An upset parent or carer might say, 'I'm really frustrated and angry right now, I'm going to take a few minutes to calm down and think about what just happened'.
- punishing children with histories of trauma, neglect and attachment disruptions is ineffective as it does not actively teach anything. In fact, it reinforces negative behaviours. What the child most needs to learn is how to regulate or manage their internal emotional states. They need to develop the skill of returning to a state of calm after a stressful experience. Increasing the child's emotional awareness and emotional management are skills that can be learned. An angry/hurt child needs most to learn self-awareness and self-expression. They need reassurance that their anger/hurt/distress is understood and they need a response that can comfort, soothe and relieve the pain and suffering. Active listening and empathy sends the message to the child that you are interested in understanding and alleviating their pain and suffering; an angry child is a child in pain.



- develop a bag of tricks to set the emotional tone and alleviate the stress and anger in the home eg. physical activity, exercise, hiking, yoga, joke night, pyjama day, game night, anger practice, role reversal, charades or more. Being creative and playful, will go a long way.

Find out more in Allison's article [here](#).

Events - Share & Connect (Journal Club)



TOPIC: WORDS DRIVE CULTURE

DATE: Thursday 1 September

DETAILS: "Language matters. It's the raw material of story, it changes how we feel about ourselves and others and it's a portal to connection."

from 'Atlas of the Heart' by Brene Brown

From infancy we have been encouraged to use words to communicate our needs, feelings, desires and intentions. Virtually everything related to existence is connected to the power of words. The significance of words can seem paradoxical in an age where we can feel flooded by 'information overload', cynical of the disconnect between the rhetoric and reality within organizations and weary of social media, oft fuelled by many superfluous, hollow words and technology that allows us to publicize reactive words instantly. Words can seem cheap. However words are powerful and they often drive the culture within our homes, communities and global village.

The words we use to describe ourselves and the words we hear spoken in reference to us, can form our personal story, our narrative and can then become our identity. Words matter! Conversations around adoption, permanent care, kinship care and foster care and the words we choose are important. The words and phrases our children hear, especially when we think they are not listening, are intrinsically linked to their sense of self and wellbeing.

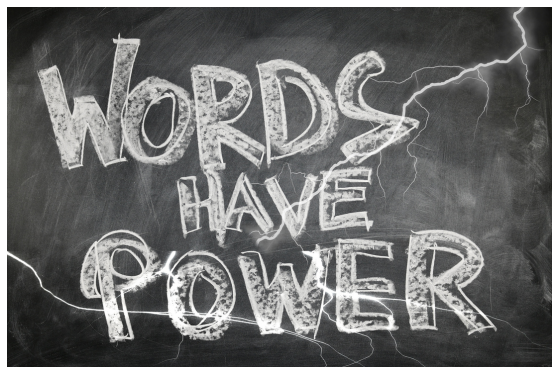
We will explore ways to reframe 'community speak', respond to invasive questions without communicating shame and how to have those more challenging 'word talks' with our precious children.

Jacinta Foster-Raimondo and her husband Mick have four young adult children, born to their family through the process of adoption. Two children were born in the Philippines and two were born in Australia.

Jacinta is a teacher, mental health and addiction clinician and now works as an Education and Trauma Consultant

HOMEWORK: Read this [article](#) "Words at Work" and this Amnesty International [Guide](#) "Inclusive Language and Events"

REGISTER: [here](#) via Zoom Link



"Delivering trauma informed services that empower"



Board - Nominations

PCA Families is currently looking for up to three new Board directors to serve a minimum of 3 years, up to a maximum of 9 years, on a Board made up of 7 to 9 directors, 5 with a close personal or family connection to adoption or permanent care and 2 without. More information about the skill set and requirements or how to nominate are available [here](#).

Nominations are due by 18 September 2022.



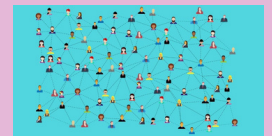
Events - Let's Connect

EVENT: BENDIGO LET'S CONNECT

LOCATION: BENDIGO LIBRARY Activity Room 2

DATE: Monday 5 September 10am - 2pm with hosts Trish & Liz

TOPIC: At our Let's Connect events its all about getting together to connect with others with lived experience face to face to share tips and advice and/or seek out some specialist advice from one of our PCA Families Advisors and the group. A PCA Families Advisor will be available for members to meet with individually and will run the group session. We will be open and flexible to discuss whatever you wish on the day or you can contact us ahead of time to let us know what you would like to know more about. Meeting requirements will be advised closer to the event but will include minimum vaccination requirements other than where an exception applies. Find out more [here](#).



DFFH Flexible Funding

If your child or young person is on a Permanent Care Order or you receive the DFFH Care Allowance and they have a Family Court Order or Adoption Order, they are entitled to DFFH Flexible Funding to meet the costs of goods and services they need not covered by the care allowance, or another funding source (eg Medicare, NDIS). Flexible funds can be used for therapeutic, educational or medical services, build skills interest or attachments, support birth family contact and cultural identity, respite, medication, vehicle modifications. For more details on what the funds can be used for see [here](#). Claims should be more than \$100 per invoice and generally paid by PCA Families directly to the supplier. To ensure funds are distributed fairly and equitably and are appropriate and safe for your child, we ask for supporting documentation that services are trauma informed and that both goods and services are recommended by a professional who knows your child or young person. Apply early as the need for supporting documentation can mean it takes 21 days to finalise your application.

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