



COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

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QUICK LINKS

[Click & Connect -
Wed 5/10/22](#)

[Share & Connect
Thu 6/10/22](#)

[Lets Connect Fri
14/10/22](#)



News - Welcome to our new CEO Wendy



PCA Families Board welcomes Wendy Mason to the position of CEO, commencing Monday 12 September. Wendy has a diverse background in senior executive roles with experience in early childhood, mediation and counselling, health and mental health reform. Wendy has worked as a practitioner, project manager and as a senior manager/CEO in a diverse range of services in both metropolitan and rural settings including: peak bodies, community health, women's health, aged care, disability, mental health, not for profit agencies, hospital networks, general practice and local government. She is well versed in service and project management, partnership development, stakeholder engagement, strategic and area based planning, and conceptual modelling.

Wendy has also co-edited a book on Climate Change Adaptation for Health and Social Services which explores the impacts of climate change on human health and which population groups are most vulnerable to changes in climate.

Wendy's most recent role has been working as the Project Manager of Mental Health Reform at Austin Hospital.

Welcome Wendy. We look forward to the new chapter at PCA Families with you at the helm!

Thanks - Goodbye to Kris



While we welcome Wendy we also extend our thanks to Kris Peach for stepping into the CEO role for an extended period of time, and acknowledge her guidance and support for staff, the Board and members over the past 9 months.

While Kris steps down from the CEO role, we will not lose her knowledge and insight altogether. Kris will continue to represent PCA Families on the Board! Thanks Kris.

News - Children's Week 22/10-30/10

The Children's Week National Theme for 2022 is based on UNCRC Article 27 - **All Children have the right to a standard of living that supports their wellbeing and healthy development.** During children's week, 22/10-30/10 there are many tips, activities or ways to get involved. Find out more [here](#). In the interests of helping parents, carers and young children with children's wellbeing, we wanted to highlight the Emerging Minds Podcasts with topics such as support your child's social connections, give your child the opportunity to make decisions and focus on the positive future and look at things through your child's eyes. Access the podcast [here](#). Let us know if you have some other suggestions that we can share!



A Big Person's Guide to Celebrating!

Children's Week is an annual event celebrated across Australia around the 4th Wednesday in October every year! Children's Week celebrates the right of every child to enjoy childhood and focuses attention on children, their rights and achievements. Everyone can get involved, parents, aunts, uncles, neighbours, teachers, friends...

So here are 10 THINGS to do in Children's Week to CELEBRATE the special kids in your life!

- 1. PACK A PICNIC** and go find a grassy place in the shade and enjoy a picnic lunch. You can post a photo of your picnic on our Facebook page!
- 2. PLAN A TREASURE HUNT** Think about the clues you can give and the treats that will be included.
- 3. ORGANISE A MOVIE AFTERNOON** Use the film recordings of the World people in your life, or share the art recordings of the big people when they were little! Don't forget to make popcorn, serve ice cream and turn the lights!
- 4. DECORATE YOUR HOUSE OR FRONT GATE** with balloons and signs. You can make your own bunting to hang - there are lots of templates on the internet.
- 5. PLAN A FULL WEEK OF BEDTIME STORIES** about children or a full week of your favourite stories from childhood. Visit your local library for ideas and to borrow.
- 6. COLLECT CHILDHOOD PHOTOS OF ADULTS** that your children know and play a game of 'Guess Who?' Match the child to the adult. If playing all together, get each adult as they are matched correctly with their photo to share a favourite memory game or bring many from their childhood.
- 7. GET OUT SOME FAVOURITE BOARD GAMES** and plan an evening in to play them. Better still, find your favourite board game from your childhood and play it with your favourite adult!
- 8. BAKE CUPCAKES TO SHARE** for your child's class or friends. You could even insert a little Children's Week Flag in each of them.
- 9. MAKE OR BUY A CARD & POST** to special children in your life. Children may want to make and send cards to friends, or think card making sessions for adults and children then go for a walk to post them. Don't forget to buy some stamps beforehand!
- 10. WRITE A LETTER TO A CHILD YOU KNOW** telling them what is so special about them. Remember to think of qualities about their personality and skills rather than physical attributes. Share your favourite memory of them and your wish for their future. If you like drawing or fancy yourself as a poet you can add more!

How will YOU celebrate Children's Week?

#ChildrensWeek
#Celebratechildhood

An initiative of NSW Children's Week Council.
Children's Week is sponsored by

Australian Government
Department of Education, Skills and Employment
Written by Roddy Morris Miller
Designed by Michelle Buckland - michelle@goodandpretty.com.au

Events - Click & Connect

TOPIC: DEVELOPMENTAL TRAUMA

DATE: Wednesday at midday with hosts Liz & Sonia

TOPIC: In this meeting we will review and discuss the Youtube Recording by Liz Powell on Developmental Trauma. Children experiencing developmental trauma can often be labelled as over controlling, naughty, a problem child or even autistic or diagnosed with ADHD. Yet these responses can hold the child back from progressing. Understanding their behaviour from a trauma informed perspective can help. Developmental trauma can repair within relationships with the right interventions at the right time over a long period of time. Liz shares some tips and ideas on how you can repair developmental trauma for your children. 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 Liz Powell titled "What do kangaroos have to do with developmental trauma and control, shame, hoarding and overeating?" Access the recordings and transcripts [here](#).

REGISTER: [here](#) via Zoom Link

"Improving the lived experience of young people"

News - Mentoring for TAFE or Uni Students

Raising Expectations have trained, care-experienced student mentors ready to be matched with mentees. Meeting fortnightly to chat and unpack challenges with study, life, work, socialising and beyond. This is a free opportunity for any care experienced TAFE or Uni Students. Contact Ursula by email at ursula.cliff@cfecfw.asn.au



News - The Year in Review

The year ended 30 June 2022 has been an important year for PCA Families – just a sample of what our 9 full time equivalent employees have delivered:

– 2 new programs:

- DFFH funded Better Futures - we linked 136 of the 688 eligible young people to Better Futures providers
- DFFH funded Carer Assistance Program set up for 1 July 2023 (up to 3 counselling sessions in conjunction with Foster Care Association of Victoria)

- distribution in full of the DFFH ongoing Flexible Funding of \$2.7 million

- distribution in full of the DFFH additional Covid specific Flexible Funding of \$370,000

- 18,606 calls in and out (helpline 2,507, flexi funding 8,542)

- of the 58 survey respondents 82% had their issue resolved on the first call. 53% were satisfied or very satisfied with the service and the remainder did not answer.

- expansion of Carer Kafe to permanent carers

- 11 Share and Connect (formerly Journal Club) sessions

- 18 Click and Connect peer support sessions

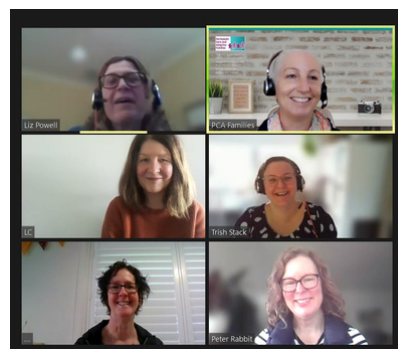
- 1 face to face Lets Connect session in regional Victoria

- inaugural Edmund Rice trauma informed camp week for families

- inaugural permanent carer retreat weekend

- second adoptive parents retreat weekend

- 23 Youtube Recordings of lived experience or informed practice.



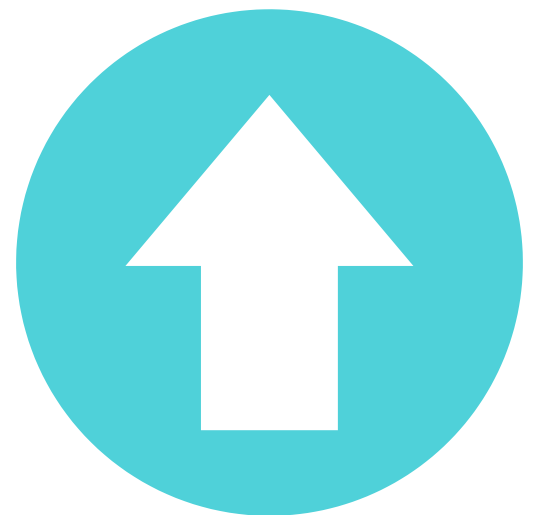
News - The Year in Review Continued

Flexible funding

For those of you wondering why it is taking some time to get your Flexible Funding applications processed, there has been a 24% increase in the total invoices paid from 1,739 to 2,152. The average processing time for applications paid in the year declined from 29 days to 42 days. The decline results from the significant increase in applications, and increased complexity of applications taking longer to process (more invoices per application and higher value items being requested requiring more supporting materials from relevant professionals). We are investigating ways to improve the processing time.

Helpline

Child behaviour, childhood trauma and financial hardship remain the most reported reasons for calling the helpline. The main services provided by PCA Families continue to be providing personal support and helping identify specific services needed.



Surveys

The flexible funding satisfaction survey was completed by 104 clients for the 2021/2022 financial year. Overall members found the application easy or very easy to complete, although some have found the new website form difficult. 65% of families said the funding was important or essential to keeping the placement going, important evidence to help keep the program funded.

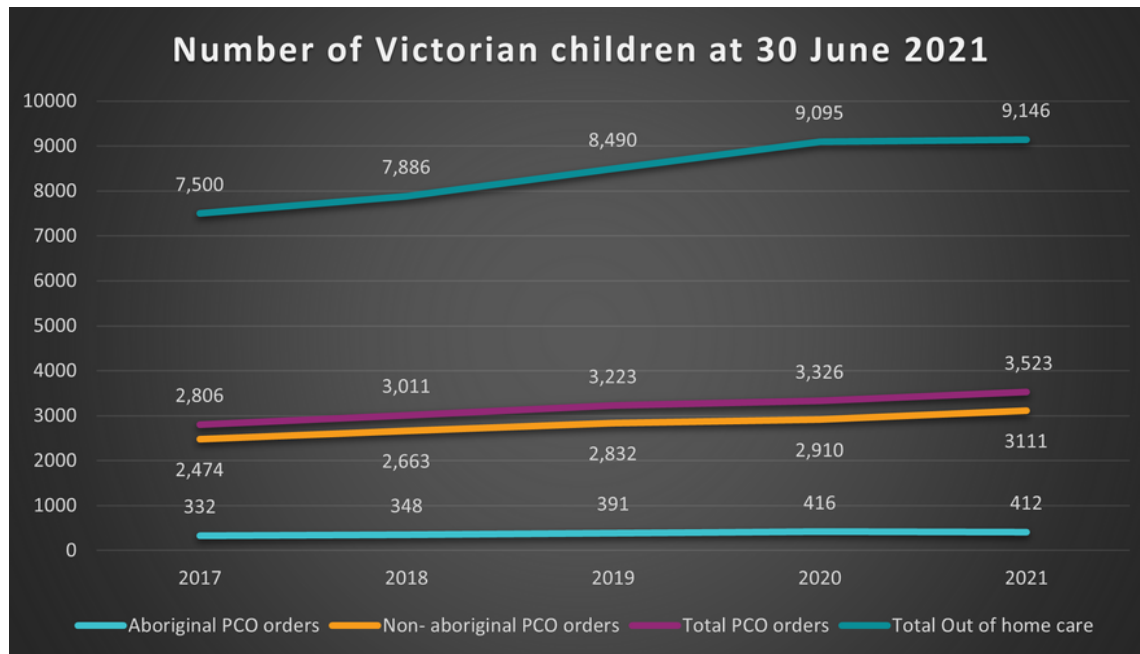


News - The Year in Review Continued

What is happening in Victoria for our permanent care and adoptive families?

There has been a 6% (2020: 3%) increase in the number of children under Permanent Care Orders (PCOs)[1] in Victoria based on the latest Australian Institute of Health and Welfare data at 30 June 2021 to 3,523 (2020: 3,326). The 13% of Aboriginal children on PCOs has remained constant (2020: 13%). The number of children in Out Of Home Care (excluding PCOs) has increased from 7,500 in 2017 to 9,146 at 30 June 2021. PCO's as a percentage of all care and protection orders at 30 June 2021 has remained consistent at 24% (2020:22%).

Based on the Carer Census Report at 23 November 2020 there were 2,199 Victorian permanent carers, a 15% increase from the 1,917 reported in the 2018 Stronger Carers Stronger Children Strategy (page 12). Permanent carer numbers for Victoria are not routinely provided publicly.



New PCOs and Adoptions in Victoria for the Year Ending 30 June 2021

The number of new Victorian PCOs issued in 21/22 increased from 364 to 487, with the number of Victorian adoptions remaining consistently low at 18 (2020: 21). The Victorian number of PCOs issued is significantly lower than NSW, which recorded 579 (2020:615) new third party parental responsibility orders, the equivalent of Victorian PCOs.

The 264 adoptions finalised in 2020-21 nationally was the lowest on record, with 55% in NSW (146), compared to Victoria's 7% (18). The 18 Victorian adoptions comprised 14 local adoptions. The Victorian number of known adoptions was 1, compared to NSW's 122. The data suggests a distinctly different approach to adoption between the states, which may reflect the significantly higher number of children in Out of Home Care (OOHC) in NSW.

The themes from our 2021 Research Report: Permanency and Stability. "The missing ingredients for Victoria's most vulnerable children[KP1]" continue to be relevant, and PCA Families will continue to advocate for more and better resources for our families. See the report [here](#).

Events - Share & Connect (Journal Club)



TOPIC: BODY KINDNESS: OVER 1M AUSTRALIANS HAVE AN EATING DISORDER AND LESS THAN 25% RECEIVE SUPPORT

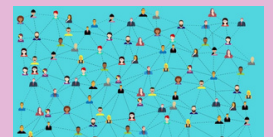
DATE: Thursday 6 October

TOPIC: Body Kind Families is an initiative of the Butterfly Foundation designed to help families access and share information around body image and eating disorders. Access their website [here](#). People who suffer from an eating disorder may display symptoms or they may not show any signs or symptoms at all. They may also make significant efforts to conceal their behaviour or they may not even recognise that there is anything wrong or that their eating habits are 'disordered'. For a parent or carer, this can make the warning signs difficult to identify. What can you do to help?

REGISTER: [here](#) via Zoom Link

HOMEWORK: On Monday 12 September at 7pm, the Butterfly Foundation are hosting a 1.25 hour seminar on Body Confident Children and Teens. Register [here](#). We will discuss the tips and learn from each other in our Share & Connect meeting on 6 October.

Events - Let's Connect - Pakenham



LOCATION: Pakenham

DATE: Friday 14th October 11am - 2pm with hosts Liz and Ray

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.

Please register your interest in attending via trybooking [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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