



COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

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Permanent Care and Adoptive Families



EVENTS

Click & Connect
Wed 8/2/23

Share & Connect
Thurs 2/2/23

Flexi-Funding

ADDITIONAL COSTS OF CARE

Better Futures

INDEPENDENCE, EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT

Helpine

REFERRALS, ADVOCACY

CAP

CARER ASSISTANCE



News - Permanent Carers Therapeutic Group Sessions

Join other like minded permanent carers in these online group sessions in February discussing your children's behaviours and feel validated in how you feel about that.

Specifically designed therapeutic group sessions for permanent carers!

By sharing stories of challenge, strategies for navigating challenging behaviours can be explored, while validation of feelings and hope for the future can be explored too.

The sessions are run online on Tuesdays for four weeks in February (attendance at all sessions is required) and places are limited (under 12 persons).

Please join us by registering at Carer KaFE [here](#).



JOURNEY TO SUCCESS

Therapeutic Group Sessions for Permanent Carers

This Therapeutic Group is for Permanent Carers only and will run over four weekly sessions.

12pm to 1.30pm:

- Tuesday 7th February
- Tuesday 14th February
- Tuesday 21st February
- Tuesday 28th February

These 1.5 hr sessions are held ONLINE via Zoom and will run over 4 consecutive weeks. It is encouraged that you attend all four sessions.

The FCAV and PCA Families Carer Assistance Program (CAP) Therapeutic Group, will focus on children's challenging behaviours, and is a forum to normalise and validate issues for Permanent Carers. Often Permanent Carers can feel isolated and alone, and these sessions will encourage shared stories to provide significant learning, as well as skills to manage carer wellbeing.

Carers will learn about Parental styles and strategies for coping, navigating challenging behaviours, as well as exploring hopefulness.

Register online: www.carerkafe.org.au/training

0477 989 828

@carerkafe

info@carerkafe.org.au

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live, and recognise their continuing connection to the land, water and community. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

Hosted by:

Foster Care Association of Victoria (FCAV) & Permanent Care & Adoptive Families (PCAF)



Babysitting support available to help carers attend!

CONTACT CARER KAFÉ PRIOR TO SESSION

"Delivering trauma informed services that empower"

News - Flood Funding Support

Funding for women affected by the devastating floods across Victoria has been announced with investment in four key women's health services (Multicultural Centre for Women's Health, GenWest, Women's Health Loddon Mallee and Women's Health Goulburn North East).

Evidence shows women take more of the emotional and psychological burden during and after a disaster and are more likely to prioritise the care of others at the risk of their own physical health, social and mental wellbeing.

The funding will allow these women's health services to provide tailored and targeted support programs. Research will also be conducted on the needs of migrant and refugee women affected by disasters. Evidence-based resources to support disaster response and recovery in areas with migrant and refugee communities will also be developed, along with training workshops to bilingual health educators and health promotion workers on providing mental health support after a disaster.

Find out more [here](#).



News - Voluntary or Involuntary School Fees?

Many families are asked to make voluntary payments to schools to support a variety of educational needs from smaller class sizes to extra class support and additional programs. As more families struggle with the rising costs of living, schools are bracing for a dip in funding and that may mean additional pressure on parents and carers. It is important to understand that no child can be disadvantaged or refused instruction if voluntary contributions are not made. Funding relief can also be sought through the schools State School Relief Fund. Read more [here](#).



"Improving the lived experience of young people"

Events - Click & Connect



TOPIC: WELCOME, HOLIDAY DEBRIEF AND BACK TO SCHOOL

DATE: Wednesday 8 February 12:00 midday until 1:00pm with hosts Liz & Sonia

TOPIC: In this meeting we will debrief on the holidays and look towards how to best support your child in transitioning back to school. What really makes a difference to you and your family? With the collective wisdom in the room lets support each other and reflect on what we can learn!

HOMEWORK: If you like to read, consider this article from the Australian Childhood Foundation on how to prepare children after things go wrong in the holidays - see here.

REGISTER: [here](#) via Zoom Link

FORMAT: Click and Connect provides a supportive social space that allows natural conversations to flow to ensure you are honoured as experts of your families and lives, while having the expertise of a PCA Adviser on hand for additional professional support. Meetings begin with a brief overview of the topic by a PCA Families Adviser before opening up to the group to share experiences, thoughts and ideas. You are welcome to attend as often as you like, whether that's just once or regularly. Pre-registration is required via our Zoom link.

Services - Carer Assistance Program

The CAP (Carer Assistance Program) offers therapeutic support by an experienced counsellor, aimed at supporting and improving the mental health and wellbeing of parents and carers (including adoption). A range of issues can impact physical and psychological health and can be overwhelming. This service offers a self referral mechanism for support. To access the counselling service, simply fill out the form available [here](#).

Events - Share & Connect (JC)

TOPIC: TIPS TO PREPARE FOR THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR

DATE: Thursday 2 February at 8.00pm

LOCATION: Zoom online

TOPIC: For most the school year has already begun. For some children that have experienced trauma, the brain may be impacted and the wiring related to learning and control of emotions and behaviour can make learning, making friends and establishing relationships with new teachers challenging. Share & Connect offers members an opportunity to connect with other parents and carers in a safe space and to share the unique and common experiences of parenting children through permanent care, kinship care and adoption.

BACKGROUND: Consider reading this article on 7 Tips to Prepare Youth Child for the new school year from Empowering Parents available [here](#)

REGISTER: [here](#)

FORMAT: Share & Connect is facilitated by skilled volunteers with lived experience in raising children through permanent care, kinship care and adoption. Confidentiality is an important part of these meetings. Typically a brief article is circulated each month prior to the meeting or a guest speaker with expertise in a particular topic joins. Questions are invited from the group and members offer up their unique experiences/advice.



News - Revised VCE

Students entering year 11 this year will be offered a reformed VCE with a greater emphasis on vocational learning. The new VCE vocational major is hoped to slow the need to choose to do an unscored VCE. The old VCAL certificate will be phased out at the end of 2023 to make way for the new certificate which was created to keep up with changing employment trends. This allows some of the stigma surround VCAL to fade away too.

Read more [here](#).



News - Drowning Risk

With children months behind on swimming lessons and adults overestimating their water skills after three years of bushfires, floods and the pandemic, Peak Bodies warn the risks for children are at a generational high. Time to get back to water safety and swimming lessons. Find out more [here](#).



Better Futures and Home Stretch

The Victorian Government has provided funding to support young people on a permanent care order who turn 15 years and 9 months to get the support they need as they get older. Better Futures also offers Home Stretch, which supports young people to remain living with you after 18 or to move to other housing, like private rental. This support is available until 21 years of age via payment of an allowance. The purpose of Better Futures is to help your young person transition to independence. What that looks like will differ for each young person. We know that some of young peoples past experiences may make them reluctant to engage with the Better Futures providers. We encourage you to talk through with them the benefits of at least engaging to find out what the program is and what it might offer them, so they can make an informed decision. To access these programs, or find out more, either you or your young person can contact PCA Families on 03 9020 1833 (option 3). PCA Families assesses eligibility for the program and connect the young people with a Better Futures provider.

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.

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