

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

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Flexi-Funding

ADDITIONAL COSTS OF CARE

Better Futures

INDEPENDENCE, EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT

Helpine

REFERRALS, ADVOCACY

CAP

CARER ASSISTANCE

Permanent
Care and
Adoptive
Families



EVENTS

Click & Connect
Wed 22/3/23

Share & Connect
Thurs 4/5/23



LIVED
EXPERIENCE
PARENTING
CHANNEL

ADDITIONAL COSTS OF CARE AND
BETTER FUTURES VIDEO CHANNEL



News - Meet Paula & Our Flexi Funding Team

Paula Westhead joins us from Emerge Women and Children's Support Network and heads up our Flexible Funding team.

During her time at Emerge, Paula worked with DFFH (Department of Families, Fairness and Housing) overseeing the completion of the new core and cluster refuge, and completed two research projects with two universities to look at the effect of family violence on children and the use of robots in therapeutic groupwork for children.

Paula completed the Diploma of Governance in 2021, is an accredited Family Law mediator and supervisor, a qualified Family Therapist, has a Certificate in Training and Assessment and has completed several leadership courses. Paula has four adult children, one grandchild and enjoys walking along the beach and socialising with friends. Paula looks forward to meeting and assisting carers and families.



Flexible Funding - Ray Carroll, Merle Shap, Virginia Papadopoulos (not pictured -see website) are our Advocacy and Support Advisors and Zahra Shire our Senior Client Services Officer for Flexible Funding. The team look to support parents and carers by funding goods and services that are not covered by the care allowance, or another funding source. To find out more about Paula or our Flexible Funding team members, see our "Meet The Team" page [here](#).



News - Lunch

The Annual Adoptive and Permanent Care Mothers Day lunch hosted by the Victorian Adoption and Permanent Care Parents Support Group is on again this year. Join Shae and Chrissie and other parents and carers on the 13th May at Fonda Windsor.

Tickets are \$60 per head and this covers lunch, dessert and a small gift. Drinks can be purchased on the day at the bar. Please book tickets [here](#).



News - Carers Australia Survey

The Carer Wellbeing Survey that will shape National Policy for carer support services, including Carer Gateway, is currently open. Find the survey [here](#). If that doesn't interest you, perhaps the SANE Forums to share lived experiences online or some of their other programs may be of interest. Find the SANE Forums [here](#).



News - VANISH

VANISH, the Victorian Adoption Network for Information and Self Help, offers services to people affected by adoption (domestic and intercountry) and offer some creative ways to explore and learn from others experiences. In March they will be offering a one woman theatre show "Don't Wait!" premiering at the Castlemaine Fringe Festival during National Apology week. "Don't Wait!" explores the impact of adoption, secrecy, and broken attachments. If online is more your thing, the film "You should be grateful" will be presented by the Monash Public Library Service for online viewing. Register for free [here](#) to receive a link to access the recording between 13/3-26/3. Find out more about VANISH [here](#).



"Delivering trauma informed services that empower"

Events - Share & Connect (JC)

TOPIC: DR VICKI RUSSELL - FASD ADVOCATE

DATE: Thursday 4 May at 8.00pm

LOCATION: Zoom online

TOPIC: Dr Vicki Russell PhD is a Churchill Fellow (2001). Vicki worked for 30 years in non-government sector management in the delivery of trauma counselling; alcohol and other drug prevention; and neurodevelopmental disability (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder). She trained in narrative practice and has a Certificate of Mastery in the Fetal Alcohol-Neurobehavioural approach (USA).

Vicki has developed and delivered education and training programs on trauma and FASD to professional and non-professional groups across all levels of prevention. Vicki is currently in private practice as a consultant and is a current Board member and volunteer with RFFADA (Russell Family Fetal Alcohol Disorders Association).

Vicki will introduce Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and explore the diagnosis and the outcomes for the individual across the lifespan, including strategies for management.

Vicki will also look at and open up for discussion the impact for those who care for individuals living with FASD.

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.



Events - Click & Connect

TOPIC: DISENFRANCHISED GRIEF AND AMBIGUOUS LOSS
- SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD

DATE: Wednesday 22 March 12.00 to 1.00pm with hosts Liz and Sonia

TOPIC: Disenfranchised loss or grief reflects a loss that is not socially acknowledged by society or is not mourned or supported. Ambiguous loss is a loss without closure and without significant likelihood of reaching emotional closure or a clear understanding. This kind of loss leaves a person searching for answers, and complicates and delays the process of grieving, often resulting in unresolved grief. Perhaps the loss is considered too small or distant. Perhaps society just can't see the loss justifies the grieving. It can include things like infertility, loss of one's home or country or loss of sense of safety. So how do you help to process disenfranchised grief and ambiguous loss? What can help you and what can help your child? Let's use the collective wisdom in the room to learn from and share with each other.

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 Advocacy and Support 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.

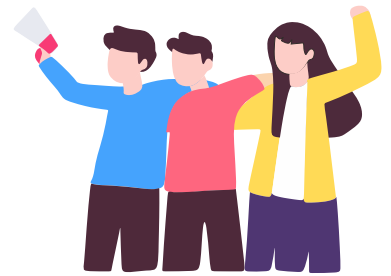


News - Invisible Disability

The needs for those with an "invisible" disability is often misunderstood or can be overlooked. For those with autism for example, having access to a sensory space when in the face of overwhelming stimulus, such as at a shopping centre or music concert, can help with regulation and calming oneself. In a truly inclusive society, how someone looks should not determine their level of need. Find out more in this article [here](#) about the importance of sensory spaces to those who may be less visibly disabled.

News - Leaving Care Research Forum

What makes a good life to care leavers? You may want to join the open forum with Dr Claire Baker on 23 March where over 20,000 responses from young people in and leaving care identify what makes life worth living for them. Research knowledge can be invaluable for learning about what really matters to young people. Find out more [here](#).



News - Dental Benefits

Did you know that up to \$1,052 may be available to cover basic dental services under the Child Dental Services Benefit for checkups, xrays, fillings and extractions. If you receive a Centrelink parenting payment you may be eligible. Find out more [here](#). See the variety of other grants and funds available [here](#).



Carer Assistance Program - Therapeutic Support

Self referral available [here](#).

Helpline - Information, support and referrals

Further information available [here](#).

DFFH Flexible Funding - Funding Additional Needs

Further information available [here](#).

Better Futures and Home Stretch - Support to 21

Find out more [here](#).

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