



**Message from Brenda
Welcome to PCA Families
Thrive Winter edition**

Adoption

Hi everyone, In the past the *Adoption Act* was always jointly administered by the Attorney General and the then Minister for Children and Families. The decision to transfer the Act was made at a senior ministerial level. The exact reason for why this occurred is unknown however it may be due to a range of reasons including views about modifying the Adoption Act as well as the Victorian Government’s position on adoption.

As part of the Machinery of Government change, DHHS are working closely with the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DoJCS) to ensure continuity of service and transfer of policies and corporate knowledge.

Adoption sits under the Director of Adoption, James Lawson, who is also the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages. Matthew Reader is the Deputy Director of Adoption Services. In practical terms this means there will hopefully be a streamlining of adoption decisions, with less red tape and greater efficiency.

Local adoption, intercountry adoption, adoption records, and agency contracts will sit under the DoJCS.

Check their consumer affairs website and the Department of Social Security (DSS) websites after 1 July for additional information and Fact Sheets. For those interested in intercountry adoption, the following countries have agreements with Australia: Amen, South Africa, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Bulgaria, Taiwan, Thailand, China, Hong Kong, Columbia, and Sri Lanka. Both the Philippines and India are on hold.

DSS had been funding Lifeworks and International Social Services (ISS) to provide post adoption support, counselling, and family reunification services to families and adoptees. We were greatly disappointed to hear about the loss of funding to ISS to provide case management support to our members from intercountry adoption. Lifeworks have absorbed this funding due to higher demands on their counselling services.



We thank ISS for their wonderful work with our families who have reported excellent support and outcomes for their children. If you would like to know more, read the report prepared for DSS on their website - ‘Evaluation of Intercountry Adoption Australia’. <https://www.dss.gov.au/families-and-children/programs-services/intercountry-adoption/research/evaluation-of-the-intercountry-adoption-australia-service>

Regards,
Brenda Carmen, CEO

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Journal Club

Journal Club – Special Guest, Kelly Bowey– Mental Health Royal Commission

Date: Thursday June 6th, 2019

Time: 7.30 - 9:30pm (early start)

Guest speaker: **Kelly Bowey, Centre for Excellence**

Topic: **The Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System**

Location: Collingwood Library, 11 Stanton Street, Abbotsford

Phone: 03 9020 1833

RSVP: deborah@pcafamilies.org.au

The Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System is an important opportunity for our members to voice concerns about their experiences with Victoria's mental health system.

You can read more about the Royal Commission at <https://rcvmhs.vic.gov.au/about-commission> and if you would like to send in a submission, please do so prior to July 5, <https://rcvmhs.vic.gov.au/submissions>

The closing date for submissions to the Royal Commission is 5 July 2019.

What's on

Thursday June 6
8.00pm – 9.30pm
Journal Club – Collingwood
TOPIC: Royal Commission into Mental Health

Friday June 7
11.30am – 1.00pm
Peer support – Ballarat

Tuesday June 18
5.20pm – 6.15pm
Mindfulness in Motion

Tuesday June 25
5.20pm – 6.15pm
Mindfulness in Motion

Thursday July 4
12.30pm – 2.00pm
Peer support – Morwell

Thursday July 4
8.00pm – 9.30pm
Journal Club – Collingwood
TOPIC: eSafety with special guest from Office eSafety Commissioner

Wednesday July 24
12.30pm – 2.00pm
Peer support – Geelong

Thursday July 25
1.00pm – 2.30pm
Peer support – Bendigo

Thursday August 1
8.00pm – 9.30pm
Journal Club – Collingwood

Tuesday August 6
5.20pm – 6.15pm
Mindfulness in Motion

Tuesday August 13
5.20pm – 6.15pm
Mindfulness in Motion

Friday August 16
10.30pm – 12.30pm
Peer support – Portland

Tuesday August 20
11.30am – 1.30pm
Peer support – Warrnambool

Tuesday August 20
5.20pm – 6.15pm
Mindfulness in Motion

Tuesday August 27
1.00am – 2.30pm
Peer support – Ballarat

Parenting tip

Helping kids, help themselves

Doing housework or "chores" with young people helps them connect with you and learn how to do the task.



Message from Hon Luke Donnellan MP

Budget update 2019–20

Hon Luke Donnellan MP
Minister for Child Protection
Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers



In the last few months, I have learned a great deal about all the work that's underway to support people touched by the Child Protection, Disability, Ageing and Carers portfolios.

And the release of the Victorian Budget 2019/20 today gives us another opportunity to pause and take stock.

But not for too long. Because we also need to get on with improving the way we support our most vulnerable Victorians. We must strive to do better.

Over the next four years, the Victorian Government will be investing \$476.8 million to support residential aged care, carers and child and family services – in addition to our support for Victorians with a disability as we transition to the NDIS.

In Child Protection, we continue to shift our focus from crisis response to early intervention and prevention under the Roadmap for Reform agenda. But I acknowledge there is still more work to do.

This year we have committed \$116 million to continue to deliver a new model of kinship care that will identify carers earlier, strengthen community connections for Aboriginal children in care and deliver better, more flexible support for our carers.

We continue to prioritise placing children who need alternative care with a loving family member where possible, and funding practitioners to help identify carers and undertake comprehensive needs assessments is a key part of that.

I'm also proud to say we have committed \$36.6 million over two years to keep trialling innovative models of care, boosting early pathways support and helping young people to transition to independent living through our Better Futures program.

This funding includes \$13.6 million to progress culturally safe supports for Aboriginal children in care through our transitioning children to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) program. This money will help Aboriginal children remain connected with their community and country while in care, and support reunification of Aboriginal children with their families wherever possible.

This work recognises that the needs of Aboriginal children and young people are best met by ACCOs and it enables them to provide support to these children and their families to meet their cultural needs, whether they are in care or at home.

It is essential that we continue to improve the outcomes for Victoria's most vulnerable children and families and that is why we've also committed \$30 million over four years to boost the child protection workforce to respond to more reports and keep children safe.

A further investment of \$33.2 million will support children with complex disabilities who require residential care or a facility-based shared care placement, which is not currently provided under the NDIS.

I look forward to working with you over the coming months as we deliver a budget that helps to make Victoria stronger and fairer for everyone.



Outreach and peer support



We have many forms of support and play groups scattered around Melbourne and regional Victoria, including; Collingwood, Bendigo, Ballarat, Shepparton, Horsham, Morwell, Portland and Geelong. People gather for shared learning and talk about some of the challenges of raising children. Learning and support occurs around parenting our children and the opportunity to build relationships

Our support groups are friendly and welcoming and are open to all parents; adoptive, permanent care and kinship care. You can also arrange a one-on-one appointment by calling the office on 9020 1833.

Outreach and peer support in your area

We will be in your area on the dates below. If you would like an individual appointment, please contact PCA Families on 9020 1833.



Alannah

TOPIC: General catch up

Ballarat - Liz

Date: Friday June 7
Time: 11.30am – 1.00pm
Venue: Ballarat Library, 178 Doveton Street North

Morwell - Alannah

Date: Thursday 4 July
Time: 12.30pm – 2.00pm
Venue: Morwell Library, 63-65 Elgin Street

Geelong - Brenda and Danielle

Date: Wednesday 24 July
Time: 12.30pm – 2.00pm
Venue: Geelong Performing Arts Centre cafe

Bendigo - Alannah

Date: Thursday 25 July
Time: 1.00am – 2.30pm
Venue: Bendigo Library, 259 Hargreaves St

Portland - Brenda

Date: Friday 16 August
Time: 10.30am – 12.30pm
Venue: Portland Library, 32 Bentinck St, Portland

Warrnambool - Brenda

Date: Tuesday 20 August
Time: 11.30am – 1.30pm
Venue: RSL, Corner Merri and Liebig Streets, Warrnambool

One on one appointments available from 2.00–4.00pm

Ballarat - Liz

Date: Tuesday August 27
Time: 1.00am – 2.30pm
Venue: Ballarat Library, 178 Doveton Street North

Special Session of Journal Club – eSafety

Special Session of Journal Club—eSafety

The Office of the eSafety Commissioner was established in 2015 to coordinate and lead online safety efforts across government, industry and the not-for profit community.

Resources for parents



The Office aims to empower Australians to enjoy the positive benefits of the online world while helping them confidently manage and mitigate the risks.

Subject to numbers, the Office of eSafety Commissioner will provide a guest speaker for our July session of Journal Club. The guest speaker may address a number of topics including the following:

- Reducing accidental exposure to inappropriate content
- Initiating conversations about online stranger danger
- Identifying age appropriate apps and websites
- Dealing with online stranger contact
- Having a conversation about online issues including cyberbullying
- Managing apps and privacy settings
- Supporting your child using online safety resources
- Reporting serious cyberbullying and image based abuse
- Managing screen time and excessive use
- Having a conversation with your child about their online brand

PCA Families will confirm the guest speaker on 1 July 2019.

DATE: Thursday 4 July 2019

TIME: 7.30-9.30pm

LOCATION: Collingwood Library, 11 Stanton Street, Abbotsford

RSVP: email Deborah@pcfamilies.org.au before 26 June 2019 *please note in your reply the topic of most interest to you*

(minimum of 30 attendees required)

Youth Programs

TERM 3 dates

Tuesdays 5.20—6.15pm

Aug 6, 13, 20, 27

Sept 3 and 10

mindfulness
in motion



The *Mindfulness in Motion Kids Program* is designed specifically to assist young peoples' personal growth. Classes blend skill development, personal observation and experiential learning in an environment that is fun, supportive and engaging for young people.

Classes focus on acquiring:

- Resilience
- Focus
- Teamwork
- Assertiveness
- Emotional regulation
- Self-reflection
- Body awareness

We are continuing the Mindfulness in Motion program in term 3 in 2019. Flexi funding can cover the cost if your child is on a permanent care order and ICAV will cover the cost if you child is intercountry adopted. Children not in either of these categories are asked to pay \$100 towards the cost of the program.

The classes run **Tuesday** evenings on the dates listed below.

Age limit 5 - 12 years old

Time: 5.20 – 6.15pm

Dates: **TERM 3**
August 6, 13, 20, 27
September 3, 10

Address: Mindfulness in Motion, 6 Oakover Road, Preston

Cost: **free of charge to permanent care and intercountry adopted children**
\$100.00 per child otherwise. <https://www.trybooking.com/ZUMO>

To register: contact Deborah on Deborah@pcafamilies.org.au or call 9020 1839

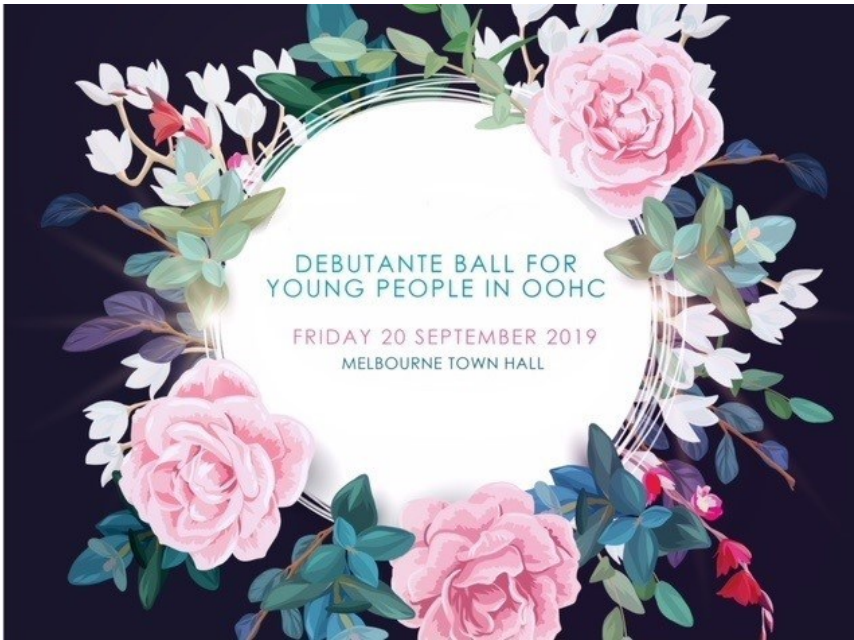
Your Instructors:

Guy Rhynsburger is the senior instructor at Mindfulness in Motions, with over 20 year's martial arts experience. Guy has been working with young people from a variety of backgrounds teaching life skills for well over 15 years.

All instructors have a current Working with Children Check and police check.



Debutante Ball – Friday 20 September



Have you always wanted to participate in a Debutante Ball but have never had the opportunity?

Well now you can!

Are you aged 16- 25 years?

For young people who have or do live in Kinship, Foster or Permanent Care?

This Deb Ball is open to any young person across Victoria, including those who live in country or rural areas, aged 16-25 years who live or have lived in out-of-home care (Adoption, Foster, Kinship or Permanent Care)

What to expect

- 10 weeks of dance lessons.
- An opportunity to invite your family, friends or workers to this special event.
- To have fun!!!

This is a fun filled event designed to celebrate the growth, aspirations and spirit of young people and the chance to celebrate a significant milestone.

Applications close on Friday 14 June

For more information and application forms contact Erin at erin@cfecfw.asn.au or 0403 261 222



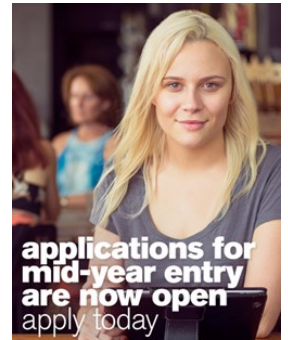
Education

Now is the time to think about mid-year applications to study

Raising Expectations is supporting more young people with a care background to study at TAFE and university.

Federation, La Trobe and Swinburne Universities offer financial, academic and personal supports and services for care leaver students. For more information, visit:

- **Federation Uni** or contact Pearl Goodwin-Burns, Care Leaver Coordinator on p.goodwin-burns@federation.edu.au.
- **La Trobe Uni** or call the Support Coordinator, Transition and Success on 03 9479 5547 or transitioncoordinator@latrobe.edu.au
- **Swinburne University of Technology** - contact Stefanie Hansen at shansen@swinburne.edu.au or call 03 9214 8500. For more information, go to <https://www.swinburne.edu.au/current-students/student-services-support/care-leaver/>



Skills First Youth Access Initiative

For young people (up to age 22) who have been/or are on a Child Protection Order, Family Court Order or a Youth Justice Order, the Skills First Youth Access Initiative can help them study at TAFE with no tuition fees. For more information, visit the website or call 131 823.

Education Guide for Carers of Children Living in Out-of-Home Care in Victoria

Fostering a love of learning and having high educational expectations and aspirations for all children and young people is vital. Check out the Centre's Education Guide at <https://www.cfecfw.asn.au/education-guide-for-carers-of-children-living-in-out-of-home-care-in-victoria/>

For more information on any of the above, contact Joanna.Humphries@cfecfw.asn.au

National Disability Insurance Scheme

Getting the most out of the NDIS

The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare has put together a comprehensive list of resources to assist people to navigate and understand the NDIS. The Centre has collected the most clearly written, practical and immediately helpful material, and put it all in one place so you can quickly put these resources to work for you. Visit <https://www.cfecfw.asn.au/ndisresources/>

DHHS has funded the Centre to deliver half day NDIS workshops offering practical tools and knowledge to better support families with disability. Check out workshop dates and book on line at <https://www.cfecfw.asn.au/working-with-the-ndis-to-support-families-at-risk-training-opportunities/?preview=true> If the workshop is full, or if you need assistance, contact Mark.Ryan@cfecfw.asn.au

Learning & Development Guide

JUNE

Nikara's Journey

Egglemont—6 and 7 June: 2 Days

Aboriginal Cultural Day

Royal Botanic Gardens —11 June: Day

Work Effectively in Trauma Informed Care

Melbourne CBD —14 June: Day

Recovery and the Child's World

Mt Helen—17 June : Day

Craigieburn —26 June: Day

Tuning into Kids; Emotional Intelligence and the importance of emotion coaching for kids in care

Noble Park —18 June: Day

Yarraville —18 June: Evening

Traralgon—21 June: Day

Why do they do that? Understanding and responding to behaviour in young children 0-8 years of age

Werribee —19 and 20 June : 2 Days

Thinking Mind, Reptilian Brain

Mildura—21 June: Day

Therapeutic Parenting

Sale —22 and 23 June: 2 Days

Clayton —29 and 30 June: 2 Days

Why do they do that? Understanding and responding to behaviour in young children 9—18 years of age

Shepparton —25 and 26 June : 2 Days

Geelong—26 and 27 June: 2 Days

Life after Loss

Mildura —25 June: Day

Child Sexual Abuse & Sexualised behaviour and Trauma

Sale —25 June: Day

JULY

Richard Rose—Therapeutic Parenting with the Challenging Child

Preston —4 July: Day

Regulating Aggressive and Violent Emotions

Noble Park—15 and 16 July: Day

Family Violence—The real Impact on Children

Mooroolbark— 16 July: Day

Child Sexual Abuse & Sexualised behaviour and Trauma

Bendigo —16 July: Day

Wodonga —30 July: Day

Understanding Risk Taking in Adolescence

Dandenong—17 July: Evening

Caring for Young People who Self harm

Geelong—22 July: Day

Frankston—23 July: Day

Sale—25 July: Day

Carers Building Solutions

Mildura—25 July: Day

Thinking Mind, Reptilian Brain

Horsham—25 July: Day

From Diagnosis to Support—the NDIS, Medicare and other support Service

Mildura—26 July: Day

AUGUST

Family Violence—The real Impact on Children

Warrnambool— 1 August: Day

Child Sexual Abuse & Sexualised behaviour and Trauma

Ballarat —5 August: Day

Dandenong—20 August: Day

Nikara's Journey

Preston—6 and 7 August: 2 Days

Fostering Resilience

Wangaratta—8 August: Day

From Diagnosis to Support—the NDIS, Medicare and other support Service

Frankston—8 August: Day

Divided Loyalties

Sunshine —12 August: Day

Tuning into Kids; Emotional Intelligence and the importance of emotion coaching for kids in care

Mildura—12 August: Day

Geelong—22 August: Day

Love of Learning

Werribee—16 August: Day

Thinking Mind, Reptilian Brain

Egglemont—24 August: Day

Nikara's Journey

Ballarat—21 and 22 August: 2 Days

Why do they do that? Understanding and responding to behaviour in young children 0-8 years of age

Heywood —27 and 28 August : 2 Days

For more detail on the training, please click <https://www.carerkafe.org.au/training/calendar-view>

Flexible Funding

PCA Families



Permanent Care and Adoptive Families (PCA Families) Helpline can assist with a variety of queries in relation to permanent care and adoption.

We have professionals available Monday to Friday 9am-5pm with an understanding of legal, financial, educational and psychological issues.

Our staff have professional and lived experience of the reality of caring for children who come from out of home care and can support you to access appropriate trauma informed services, either from our database or by researching your area. Where needed, our staff can support you to educate your child's school in trauma sensitive schooling, and advocate on your behalf to build a community of trauma sensitive understanding and support around your child.

We endeavour to respond to your call within 48 hours.

We also have **flexible funding** which you can apply for by calling our office during business hours

9.00am—5.00pm Monday to Friday. T: 03 9020 1833 or E: flexifunding@pcfamilies.org.au

✓ medical ✓ education ✓ therapies ✓ respite ✓ transport ✓ cultural connection.

Resources for schools and education professional

Children growing up in permanent care, kinship care, adoption or foster care have often experienced trauma to an extent which can mean their ability to learn is compromised.

Repeated exposure to traumatic situations and stressful events can lead to 'toxic stress', or the constant flooding of cortisol and adrenaline to the brain.

Toxic stress during the early years of life changes a child's brain development, making them sensitive to further stress, and impacting their activity levels, their memory, their ability to concentrate and ultimately to learn.

TRAUMA AWARENESS RESOURCE FOR SCHOOLS

SAFE SPACES.
SAFE FACES.
SAFE PLACES.



There are two resources available to assist you as parents and share with your school. They can be found on this website <https://www.adoptchange.org.au/page/93/trauma-resources>

The first booklet (on left) is a smaller resource suited to parents and the larger resource is ideal for you to share with your school to help them better understand the effects of trauma.



TRAUMA AWARENESS RESOURCE FOR SCHOOLS

SAFE SPACES.
SAFE FACES.
SAFE PLACES.



PCA Families has zero tolerance of child abuse and we are committed to establishing and maintaining child safe environments

