



**Message from President
and Interim CEO**

Meredith Carter

**Welcome to PCA Families
Thrive Autumn edition**

It's such a pleasure to give this update on behalf of the board of Permanent Care and Adoptive Families. I'd especially like to very warmly welcome all the new members who have joined our community recently. We really appreciate your support.

We know many of you have joined up following the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) mail out to all permanent carers spreading the word about our services. You can obtain advice and support through our Helpline from 9.00am—5.00pm Monday to Friday. Flexible funding packages are available to assist you with the things you need to help your child and support the placement.

There is currently high demand in the wake of the Department's efforts to lift the profile of these services. It has been a bit overwhelming, demonstrating the high level of need. We ask for your patience; our staff are working through your requests as speedily and efficiently as they can.

I'm also delighted to let you know we have a new CEO. Lisa Milani is joining us later this month. Lisa is well regarded by many in the family and children's services' sector. She's been a Senior Leader with Uniting Vic Tas and as General Manager of Aspergers Victoria. You'll no doubt hear more from Lisa in later newsletters. We really appreciated the help from both the Department and Davidson Recruiters in the process to find Lisa.

I also want to publicly thank Alannah Andrews for the dedication she showed PCA Families over the last few months. Alannah stepped up with little notice as General Manager and was fantastic. We wish her every success in her new role.

There's lots more to read about in this newsletter. I especially hope to see many of you at the great Journal Club meetings planned for you coming up.

Best wishes

Meredith Carter, President and Interim CEO

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Tandem – services for Victorian mental health carers



Tandem representing Victorian Mental Health Carers:

Tandem is the Victorian peak body representing family and friends supporting people living with mental health issues.

Tandem's members include family and friends (carers and former carers), regional carer networks and support groups, organisations with a significant mental health focus, and those working in the sector.

Tandem advocates for family and friend involvement in planning and care, participation in system change and support.

Tandem administers the Carer Support Fund which provides financial assistance to carers of people registered with Area Mental Health Services in Victoria.

Tandem informs and empowers family and friends to access the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Tandem provides information, education, and training to family and friends supporting people with mental health issues.

Tandem supports and advocates for the diverse needs of family, friends and other supporters of people living with mental health issues.

Tandem raises community awareness about the important role of family and friends in mental health recovery.

Tandem Member Meetings are a great way to discuss and engage in Tandem's advocacy work for friends and family of someone with mental health issues.

Meetings are from 10am – 12pm on the second Thursday of the month, every second months and take place at the Multicultural Hub, 506 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne (opposite Victoria Market)

Visit their website <https://www.tandemcarers.org.au/ndis-supports.php> to find out about other support groups across the state.

Contact tandem

T: 03 8803 5555

Carer Support Fund 03 8803 5504

Carer Advocate 03 8803 5501


E: info@tandemcarers.org.au

Come and meet Diane McCarthy from Tandem at Journal Club - Richmond Library, 415 Church St, Richmond on March 5 at 7.30pm.

Diane brings a rich professional background in supporting families and carers of children with disabilities to access services.

What's on


Tuesday March 3
5.20pm – 6.15pm
Mindfulness in Motion

Thursday March 5
7.30pm – 9.30pm
Journal Club – Richmond Library 
with special guest **Diane McCarthy, NDIS Engagement Consultant - tandem**

Friday March 6
12.30pm – 2.00pm
Level 5, 50 Market St, Melbourne
Consultation with Intercountry Adoption Family Support Service (ICAFSS)

Tuesday March 17
5.20pm – 6.15pm
Mindfulness in Motion

Tuesday March 24
5.20pm – 6.15pm
Mindfulness in Motion

Thursday April 2
8.00pm – 9.30pm
Journal Club – Richmond Library 

Tuesday May 5
5.20pm – 6.15pm
Mindfulness in Motion

Thursday May 7
7.30pm – 9.30pm
Journal Club – Richmond or Collingwood library (TBC)
with special guest **Adelle Rist, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Consultants Australia**

Tuesday May 12
5.20pm – 6.15pm
Mindfulness in Motion

Tuesday May 19
5.20pm – 6.15pm
Mindfulness in Motion

Tuesday May 26
5.20pm – 6.15pm
Mindfulness in Motion

Flexible Funding applications

Due to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) mail out, we are experiencing a high demand for our service. If you have sent in a flexi funding application we will contact you regarding your application in the coming weeks. Rest assured we are endeavouring to process your application but it may take longer than usual so please be patient.

How to apply for flexible funding

1. You will need to complete the **Flexible Funding Carer Application Form** which can be found in both [word](#) and [pdf](#) version on our [website](#).
2. If you are applying for the first time, you will need a copy of the Statutory Permanent Care order with court reference number in the top right hand corner and a copy of your DHHS remittance slip. Please see sample [document](#).
3. Please arrange a quote for the service you wish to utilise and either email the documents to flexifunding@pcafamilies.org.au or post to P O Box 201, Collingwood 3066.
4. Your application will be allocated to a Case Worker who will contact you to discuss the application. There are periods of high demand so please allow as much time as possible for your application to be considered.
5. Applications of a high cost/expense are presented to the CEO and/or alliance members for approval/rejection or part payment.

If you require urgent financial support please contact your local providers:

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/crisis-payment>

<https://www.bsl.org.au/services/money-matters/>

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.au/need-help/financial-assistance/>

<https://ssr.net.au/>

<https://goodshepherdmicrofinance.org.au/mediacoverage/discount-white-goods/>

Message from Alannah (previous interim GM)



The paths of life, the love, the forming of families, the struggles, the learning - come together in such different ways.

And so three years ago I found myself living in Melbourne and then working for PCAF. It has been an honour working with all Members either directly or indirectly.

Children and young people placed on Permanent Care Orders or through Adoption deserve so much from us; as their protectors and champions. They need to be nurtured and valued so highly. Seen clearly for their complexity and simplicity.

And that's where PCAF comes in. Representing the Families that stand together under the bright PCAF umbrella. At times I have felt humbled to be entrusted to carry the umbrella aloft. To tap dance with it (when appropriate) as I do my best Gene Kelly impersonation singing in the rain!

I have finished my tenure at PCA Families - so would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support.

Sincere Regards, Alannah



Training



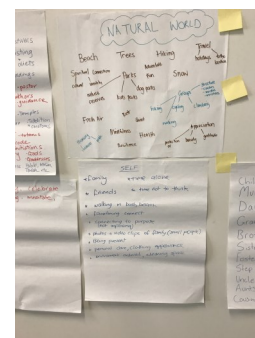
Young People: Learning and the Power of Possibility with Gray Poehnell

Reflecting on last year's events hosted by the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare and the Department of Education and Training; Raising Expectations and the Department of Education and Training held two workshops in October last year. The training worked with professionals who work with young people in care with Canadian careers expert, Gray Poehnell. The workshops focused on young people in Out of Home Care: their learning and the power of possibility

Workshops helped participants identify and apply strategies, tools and approaches to motivate and engage students in their learning and career education. These included working with young people who have or are disconnecting from their learning, by starting with topics of interest and relevance to each individual, identifying their connections to community, culture and other support networks. Shifting the language we use to foster hope, creativity and imagination which is person-centred, and solution and strengths-focused increases the opportunity for meaningful engagement.

Read more about the workshops and access practical resources via the OPEN portal (link below)

Link/s: <https://www.outcomes.org.au/blog/event-reflection-gray-poehnell-canadian-careers-expert/>



Parenting tip



Here are some useful sites to help you navigate the topic of pornography, young people, cyber safety and sexuality and best ways to handle the subject with your child.

<http://www.itstimewetalked.com.au/parents/>

<https://www.mamamia.com.au/talking-to-kids-about-porn/>

<https://www.wheelercentre.com/people/maree-crabbe>

<https://mediasmarts.ca/sites/default/files/pdfs/tipsheet/Are-you-web-aware-checklist-parents.pdf>

<https://mediasmarts.ca/parents>

What's the issue?

If your child has access to a mobile phone, laptop, tablet or any other internet-enabled device – or if they have any friends or siblings that do – then it is very likely that they will see pornography, even if they never seek it out.

They may even make their own pornography – because they'd like to or because they are pressured to do so by a partner or peers. For many young people, it's now harder to avoid pornography than to see it. Find out [more](#)

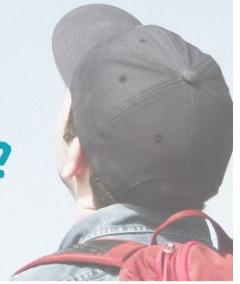
Raising Expectations

YOUTH ACCESS INITIATIVE (SKILLS FIRST)

OR

FREE TAFE FOR PRIORITY COURSES?

Which would work best for you?



Victorian government-funded initiatives are creating pathways to learning, training and employment for people facing barriers to engaging with further study or employment by increasing access to tuition-free (no fee) training and TAFE.

Purpose

To support learners from disadvantaged backgrounds to stay in education and reach their potential.

To reduce financial barriers for eligible individuals wanting to reskill, change careers, improve employment prospects and/or meet the needs of local industry or employers.

Eligibility

Australian citizens, permanent residents, or NZ citizens, who:

- are aged 24 or under
- have been or are currently on a Child Protection Order; or
- are on a Youth Justice Order (but not currently in custody); or
- are a resident of an Education First Youth Foyer.

Australian citizens, permanent residents, or NZ citizens, who:

- are aged under 20 (regardless of any other qualifications they hold), or
- are 20+ and enrolling in a course that is a higher qualification than the highest qualification attained.

Subject to availability of TAFE places and prioritised based on need.

About

Access to **800+** government funded/tuition-free TAFE courses for eligible individuals.

Access to **42** government funded/tuition free TAFE non-apprenticeship and **20** apprenticeship pathway courses for eligible individuals.

Key Features

- Specifically for young people in care, care leavers, those with a Youth Justice history
- Wider range of course offerings
- VCAL/VCE to Advanced Diploma level
- Students can undertake more than one course if they enrol before turning 24, e.g. a Cert IV then a Diploma.

- Broader eligibility - no age limit, including: unemployed, clients of Jobs Vic Employment Network, retrenched workers, automotive supply chain workers, looking to change careers
- Fewer courses offered than the Youth Access Initiative
- One course per person.

Get Started

Submit a referral form at <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/Skills-First-Youth-Access-Initiative.aspx> with a referral agency.

Register your interest at <https://detgems.secure.force.com/FreeTafe/DpcFreeTafeForm> or apply directly to designated providers.

Find out more

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/Skills-First-Youth-Access-Initiative.aspx>

www.vic.gov.au/free-tafe

skillsfirst.enquiry@edumail.vic.gov.au

tafe.counseline@edumail.vic.gov.au

Carer Kafe Learning and Development

MARCH

Why do they do that? Understanding and responding to behaviour in young children 0 - 8 years of age - 2 days

Horsham—March 03, 9:30 am to March 04, 3:00 pm

Wantirna—April 15, 5:00 pm to April 16, 9:00 pm

Wodonga—May 26, 9:30 am to May 27 3:00 pm

Divided Loyalties: Kinship Care -

Need more tools to work effectively with your family for the benefit of the child in your care?

Reservoir—March 06, 9:30 am to 3:00 pm

Dandenong—April 16, 9:30 am to 3:00 pm

Sunshine—April 17, 9:30 am to 3:00 pm

Nikara's Journey - 2 Days

Follow the story of Nikara and her non-Aboriginal foster parents as they learn how to provide the right support, respect her identity, and keep her safe and connected to her family, culture and community.

Sale—March 10, 9:30 am to March 11, 3:30 pm

Egglemont—March 14, 9:30 am to March 15, 3:30 pm

Frankston—May 23, 9:30 am to May 24, 3:30 pm

Healthy Eating, Active Living Matters (HEALing Matters)

Is it hard to create healthy eating and sleeping habits?

Wodonga—March 10, 9:30 am to 3:00 pm

Rippleside—March 12, 9:30 am to 3:00 pm

Mildura—March 20, 9:30 am to 3:00 pm

Carers Building Solutions

Connect with other carers in a supportive space to share the challenges, joys and unique experiences of kinship and foster care

Yarraville—March 11, 9:30 am to 4:00 pm

Warrnambool—May 16, 9:30 am to 4:00 pm

Geelong—May 26, 9:30 am to 4:00 pm

Why do they do that? Understanding and responding to behaviour in young children 9 - 18 years of age - 2 days

Warrnambool—March 12, 9:30 am to March 13, 3:00 pm

Forest Hill—May 13, 5:00 pm to May 14, 9:00 pm

Emotional Intelligence and Emotion Coaching: Anger

Learn how to be an emotion coach to manage anger

Dandenong—March 17, 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Sunshine—May 18, 9:30 am to 1:00 pm

Helping Children and Young People Achieve their Potential: An Introduction to Kinship CARE -

Are you a kinship carer needing extra tools to create care plans and self care plans?

Ballarat—March 23, 9:30 am to 3:30 pm

APRIL

Fostering Resilience

It is easier to build strong children than repair broken men with special guest ~ Frederic Douglas

Bendigo—March 30, 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Traralgon—April 01, 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Egglemont—April 03, 9:30 am to 1:30 pm

From diagnosis to support - the NDIS, Medicare and other services available for children with additional needs

Want to know more about the NDIS, Medicare and support services that are available?

Sale—April 16, 9:30 am to 2:30 pm

Wodonga—April 22, 9:30 am to 2:30 pm

Recovery and the Child's World

Lifestory work? "Traumatised children are not monsters, they have had monstrous things happen to them"

Warrnambool—April 17, 9:45 am to 2:45 pm

Mildura—May 08, 9:45 am to 2:45 pm

Trust-based Relational Intervention Training - 2 days

Geelong—April 29, 9:30 am to April 30, 3:00 pm

Traralgon—May 05, 9:30 am to May 06, 3:00 pm

Looking through the Windows - Understanding children and young people with Autism

Autism Spectrum Disorder is complex - learn more about it here

Egglemont—April 30, 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Working with Young People who Self Harm -

Echuca—May 01, 9:30 am to 3:30 pm

Working with Problem Sexual Behaviour through a Trauma Lens

Frankston—May 12, 9:30 am to 3:00 pm

Meeting the Challenge of Caring

Do you want to learn more about safer care?

Bendigo—May 13, 9:45 am to 2:45 pm

Therapeutic Caring: Yarning about children with challenging behaviours and how to help them heal

Want to learn more about the PACE model when applied to caring for a child who is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

Ballarat—May 20, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

Love of Learning Program - Part 2

Learn how children from care backgrounds learn a bit differently

Reservoir—May 29, 9:30 am to 3:00 pm

For more information, visit:

<https://www.carerkafe.org.au/training/all-training>

Youth Programs

TERM 2 dates

Tuesdays 5.20—6.15pm

May 5, 12, 19, 26

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 2020. Flexi funding can cover the cost if your child is on a permanent care order and ICAV will cover the cost if your child is intercountry adopted. Children not in either of these categories are asked to pay \$120 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 2, 2020**

May 5, 12, 19, 26 and June 2 & 9

Address: Mindfulness in Motion, 6 Oakover Road, Preston

Cost: **free of charge to permanent care and intercountry adopted children**
\$120.00 per child otherwise <https://www.trybooking.com/BAYWC>

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

Your Instructor:

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.



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

