

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

WWW.PCAFAMILIES.ORG.AU



QUICK LINKS

Click & Connect
Wed 8/2/23

Share & Connect
Thurs 2/2/23



News - Year in Review

A big thank you to parents and carers who not only continued to support their families through some very challenging times over the past year but also found time to provide us with feedback through participation in online surveys, focus groups, Youtube recordings and peer support initiatives.



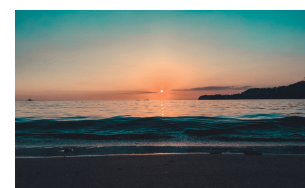
Thank you also to our agency partners and colleagues in government for collaborating with us to achieve systems change and improvements based on the priorities and experiences of our members.



Many thanks to the PCA Families Board, Kris Peach (Interim CEO), the PCA Families Team and Volunteers for your outstanding contributions this year.

In 2021-2022 we:

- distributed all \$3 million Flexible Funds available
- dealt with 18,606 calls in and out
- connected 136 young people to Better Futures and Homestretch programs
- organised 2 parent/carers retreats and the inaugural Edmund Rice trauma informed family camp
- provided 30 peer support sessions, with a mix of virtual and face to face
- created 23 YouTube Recordings of lived experience or informed practice.

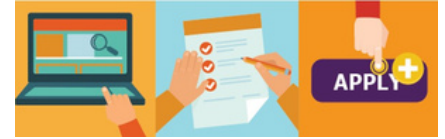


"Improving the lived experience of young people"

News - 2022 Highlights

January

- New Flexible Funding Portal and Forms communicated
- PCA Families farewells Board Member Roslyn Rule



February

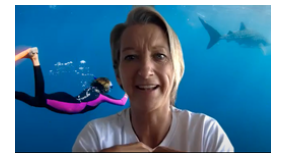
- Distribution of Rapid Antigen Tests Kits
- New YouTube recordings on Equine Therapy and Oral health related to behaviour
- Click and Connect discusses transition to Kinder and Schools
- Share & Connect discusses Play Therapy
- PCA Families farewells Board Member Lesley Annear



Oral health may be causing behavioural or attachment issues in out of home care: check it regularly!
Watch the video and access the transcript and resources

March

- Click and Connect discusses Challenging behaviours
- New Feedback Forms available on the PCA Families website
- Click and Connect features Layne Beachley, the documentary "Found" and Chrissie Davies presents on Emotional Literacy with Parallel Learning and Sensory Play
- Dani Lucas, Adoptive Parent and Trauma Informed Therapist discusses finding the right therapist
- PCA Families farewells CEO Lisa Milani
- Vanessa Rendina (Department Families, Fairness and Housing), provides insights into Better Futures and Homestretch Programs
- Gianna Mazzone talks about the Challenging Aspects of Caregiving.



April

- The Federal budget includes several measures for children & families
- Face to face events recommence coming out of COVID-19
- 3-year-old kinder made available for all Victorians



May

- YouTube recording, Dr Jenny Conrick, Melbourne University, on Adoptees as Parents
- Chrissie Davies on "Say Yes More: Parenting with Connection"
- Online enquiry form added to the PCA Families Website
- PCA Families advocates for budget increases in the Carers Allowance
- PCA Families farewells Board Member Sarah Witty

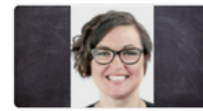


June

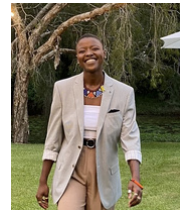
- Adoption retreat in Daylesford
- Click and Connect discussed Yvette Knights Movement Therapy Youtube
- Let's Connect hear about Joel De Carteret, Adoptee/Film-maker's journey
- Click and Connect discuss the Chris Storm Sensorimotor & Somatic YouTube
- New booking system for the Better Futures Program
- Odelya Gertel Kraybill PhD offers insights into Trauma and Sensory Integration

July

- \$490,000 Flexible Funds distributed in one month
- New Victorian Child Safety Standards come into effect
- Let's Connect goes to Bendigo
- Click and Connect discuss Maria Marshall on Eye Movement and Desensitisation
- Lifestory Work with Linda Cooke from a therapeutic lens
- Edmund Rice family holiday camp hosted our families
- Carer Assistance Program (partnership with Foster Care Association Victoria) expands to include Permanent Carers. PCA Families welcomes Nic Masuku



EMDR and why pie face, snap and asking when are the times I don't love you are important
Watch the video and access the transcript and resources



August

- PCA Families team members attend the Childhood Trauma Conference and are inspired by Bobbi Hendry who spoke about the care journey
- Melissa Christian, early childhood educator and intercountry adoptive parent on YouTube
- PCA Families thanks Chris Cook for her work on Journal Club

September

- Kris Peach's time as as Interim CEO ceases and her Board Member role continues
- New CEO, Wendy Mason commences
- The Butterfly Foundation Body Kindness/Eating Disorders discussed at Share & Connect
- Liz Powell, PCA Team Leader talks at Click and Connect on Developmental Trauma
- Always Playgroup meets outdoors in Heidelberg
- 28 attend the Carers Retreat in Torquay



October

- 51 members respond to the members online survey
- Let's Connect visits Geelong and Pakenham
- Bobbi Cook, Kinship Carer and Behaviour Specialist talks about the NDIS
- Child Safe Reporting Processes Updated
- Cultural Awareness training completed by team members
- Facilitator training for Peer Support leaders completed

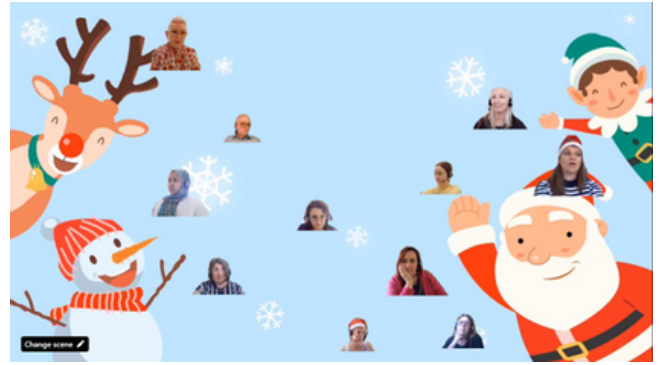


November

- Permanent Carer, Adoption Families and Kinship Carers participated in 4 focus groups
- PCA staff participated in a staff planning day
- PCA Families AGM: welcoming new Directors – David Arndt, Patricia Vaz and Kellie Burns
- Congratulations to the elected Board Office Bearers: Naomi Colville (Chair), Chris Lockwood (Deputy Chair), Kris Peach (Secretary). Congratulations also to Judy Gouldbourn elected as Chair of the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee
- New membership welcome pamphlet developed
- Presentations on Online Technology and Anger Management at Click & Connect

December

- Families enjoy the Playgroup/s Christmas parties and a visit from Santa
- Gregory Nicolau visits Share and Connect to talk about Lying and Curiosity
- PCA Families signs agreement to 8 National Permanency Conference recommendations
- PCA Families Team celebrates at the end of year lunch and thanks Andrea Campbell and Maria Camerotto for their contributions to the organisation and the membership.



PCA FAMILIES
 CLOSED
 24/12/22-
 03/01/23

Youtube - A Grateful Carer



Peter is a permanent carer to his grandson. After 71 court cases and almost 5 years of court appearances Peter knows how onerous the process of caring for a child can be. So what was his biggest learning during that process and how has PCA Families helped?

Peter shares with us how funding for education and extra curricular activities have been the game changer in his grandsons life in setting him up with the right mindset so that he might become a champion. And his grandson has been very successful in sports and speech making already! Listen in to the recording or read the transcript [here](#).

Permanent Care and Adoptive Families

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

PCA Families Board and Staff would like to wish you all a very happy and safe festive season.

Thankyou sincerely for all the support you have given to us and our families this year.

We look forward to working with you again in 2023.





It has been wonderful to see our families reuniting as a sense of normality returned this year following the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

We see the efforts of the families and the support services that wrap around them. We see the joy the pain, the efforts, the exhaustion and the amazing leaps forward as the years progress. We thankyou all for every ounce of energy you place in filling up the cups of the children and families that we support so that they may thrive.

The importance of permanent carers, kinship carers and adoptive parents in providing stability and support for children and young people has been fundamental in 2022 and will continue to be so in 2023.

Wishing you a season filled with amazing moments and memories and a well deserved break. Warmest thoughts, wishing happiness and peace for you all.

Every child who cannot live permanently with their birth parents deserves to thrive in a strong, stable, and permanent family.

News - Care Support Help Desk

The Carer Support Helpdesk is now available to Victorian kinship carers for a variety of needs from applying for vital documents like Medicare and birth certificates to accessing the Child Subsidy or other allowances. Find out more [here](#).

Contact details for the Care Support Helpdesk

Dedicated teams are located in divisions across the state.

North Division
Phone: 1800 319 507
Email: NorthCareSupportHelpdesk@dfmh.vic.gov.au

East Division
Phone: 1800 931 757
Email: EastCareSupportHelpdesk@dfmh.vic.gov.au

South Division
Phone: 1800 319 503
Email: SouthCareSupportHelpdesk@dfmh.vic.gov.au

West Division
Phone: 1800 319 510
Email: WestCareSupportHelpdesk@dfmh.vic.gov.au

News - Flexible Funding

As a result of increased demand relating to service needs and delays from COVID, at the start of September 2022 PCA Families had already released \$1.1million of the \$2.7 million received to distribute in 2022-2023.

In 2021/2022 the program distributed \$3.068 million for the year ended 30 June 2022. This included \$2.7 million annual funds and the "one-off" COVID-19 specific funds. During this time, we were fortunate to be able to support additional families during the peak of COVID 19 pandemic with the additional funds.

The PCA Families Flexible Funding team continues to work to ensure that all Flexible Funding requests are considered and that funds are distributed to best meet these additional needs of children, young people, and families within the pool of funds that we have.

As we work towards fair and equitable distribution of these funds, it is important to keep in mind that the Flexible funding guidelines state that flexible funds can only be considered when all other funding options have been exhausted, and no other source of funding exists.

To find out more about the flexible funding guidelines see [here](#).



"Delivering trauma informed services that empower"

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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