



Queensland
Foster and
Kinship Care



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MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Hello Everyone

As we come to the end of this term of Government, I wanted to say what a privilege it's been over the last three years, to travel the state and meet the wonderful foster and kinship carers of Queensland.

Wherever I've gone, from Cloncurry to Cairns, meeting with carers and hearing first-hand your stories about what motivated you to put your hand up, how you meet the challenges thrown at you but, most importantly, how you unconditionally love and support the children in your care – have always been inspirational.

And throughout this year in particular, with the COVID pandemic upon us, you have risen to the challenge yet again, of dealing with ISO and coming out the other side having learnt new things about the way to deal with disruption.

With so many families under pressure from COVID, and likely to be more - we know there's going to be even further challenge ahead of us, but I am so confident that we can all deal with that.

Everyone involved in looking after our vulnerable children – the Child Safety Officers and other staff of our government and non-government agencies, the parents, the carers, the young people themselves, the Department of Child Safety Youth and Women – are all part of the Child Protection "family".

We all try very hard to do our best and look out for each other. But there are always more ways we can do better.

The only way to make sure that happens is if we are all communicating – sharing the highs and lows and being committed to working together to get the best outcomes.

I am very grateful for the feedback so many carers have given me over my time as Minister, and for being willing to share their experiences. It has been one of the greatest honours for me to see up close, the simply astonishing efforts that you make.

I wish you all the best.

Warm Regards,

Di Farmer MP
Minister for Child Safety



Hi Everyone,

It is hard to believe we are approaching the last school break before the end of the year.

What a year it has been and not in any good way. Unfortunately, this virus has had an impact on us all and life has not been easy for children and young people in our sector with restrictions on education, therapies, out of school activities and of course, family contact.

Hopefully, we are now on the way out of this era and looking forward to a more stable way of life.

The Department of Child Safety recently completed a revised and updated version of the Statement of Commitment that acknowledges the role Foster and Kinship Carers have as volunteers in caring for vulnerable children. This is a positive step forward by the Department showing their commitment to the role of Foster and Kinship Carers.

Looking to the future, QFKC will be asking carers to participate in the bi-annual survey on fostering. We are hoping for up to 1000 people to participate. A survey such as this will give us important data on how to plan for the future in our sector.

Click here to complete the survey or copy and paste the link below:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/WKTY37N

On the staffing front, our head office continues to respond to an exceedingly high level of requests for assistance and advice. Our Fast Representatives contact details are in this Reporter and are always available so do not hesitate to give them a call.

On the conference front, as everyone would now be aware, we have postponed our 2020 Conference to new dates of 29th -31st July 2021.

While this was a very difficult decision to make, we did so with the health and safety of everyone in mind and, for most, this has brought some sense of relief. Come July 2021, we are hopeful we can bring to everyone our conference as we always do with great speakers, great workshops, and a fantastic dinner that everyone enjoys with a minimum of fuss. Just as importantly we will be able to bring the conference to everyone safely even if we still have a few extra guidelines to follow.

Until next time, take care.

Hazel Little
QFKC President



NEWS AND VIEWS:

QFKC welcomes any news or date claimers for inclusion in the Reporter magazine and/or added to our website and Facebook pages. Please email any content to admin@qfkc.com.au. We reach every part of the state and are happy to share your news. We welcome the sharing of upcoming training and event information which helps to promote healthy and child focused change where needed. Please note that personal views and opinions will not be shared in the Reporter, website or any of our social media channels.





Hi Everyone,

Rather than talk about Covid19, which has been depressing for everyone and has affected our everyday lives in such a dramatic way at times, I will discuss something more positive.

QFKC has secured funding for the next 12 months to enable us to undertake assessments for families who wish to return to the Foster Care Community. This position starts in early October and we have already started 5 assessments, which our Case Officers are undertaking at the current time. QFKC manages the Department of Child Safety's recruitment line and it has become more evident that, for some families, the time is right for them to return to caring for children and, as we get the word out, there are more and more families who are making enquiries. These families already know the system, its highs and its challenges and as such, we look forward to their return to caring for children.

On that note, I want to express some of the thoughts of our own adult children. Our family, like many other families who have been involved in fostering is large, blended and drama filled at times, hilarious at other times, and ever expanding. We are so lucky to have grandchildren with number 19 currently on the way that makes for some very interesting gatherings. All of our children see each other as siblings even though many come from very different families or origin. They all have one thing in common in that they have all experienced fostering in one way or another. When they were younger I would ask them whether they would ever consider being Foster Carers when they were older. Not one of our children ever said they would with most stating they would not like to go through what we have been through or, not wanting to look after teenagers like themselves and with the behaviours that go along with that.

Most were in their early twenties then and very much focused on themselves. More recently however, I've had the opportunity to ask many of them again whether they would consider fostering now or in the future given that they are now aged between 38 and 25.

Surprisingly most, of both genders, now say that they would consider fostering once their children got a little older. This was for various reasons, however, the most feedback was about now having solid relationships and children of their own, bringing a very different perspective to life.

When we consider that the majority of Foster Carers are over 40, then this fits and I would be intrigued to see if any would become carers in the future. Without writing a book, I can't give anyone a real insight, but I would say that the majority of our children are very independent, know their history and some with ongoing challenges but with strength to tackle the future. I'd like to think we have helped play a small role in that as Foster and Kinship Carers and as parents who love all our kids.

Over the coming months QFKC will start to undertake some Q&A sessions on Skype/Teams. Foster and Kinship Carers and staff navigating what can be a difficult system at times require lots of support. QFKC has not been able to roll out as much training as we would have hoped and, given that our training is practice based, it is also quite difficult to undertake in the virtual world. During October and November, QFKC will start to bring together virtual events for carers and staff during the day and in the evening where we will provide insight into the questions they have. We will advise everyone well in advance about the subject for each event and will take questions that we can bring answers to through "Teams events" that anyone is welcome to join. Time will also be allowed for questions at the time of the event and if we don't have the answers, we will find them and provide feedback through email, Messenger or Facebook. If these Q&A sessions prove popular we will continue to hold these virtual events into 2021.

See you next time.

Bryan Smith
Executive Director



welcome

New QFKC Members

Wayne Hellyer & Suzanne Hellyer

David & Nicola Leahy

Jacki McGuinness

Therese Matthews

Jeremy Sweeting

Dayna Watts

Meet QFKC's Newest Staff Member - Jo Hudson



My name is Jo Hudson and I recently joined the QFKC team as a Case Officer.

I am a mum to an amazingly cheeky, almost 15 year old girl nicknamed Louie and step-mum to an absolutely hilarious 9 year old boy we call Smiley. I have two fur-babies, who are both rescue Labradors, DJ and Buddy, who keep me on my toes. Outside of my role I enjoy going to brunch with friends, traveling and Netflix (happy to hear any suggestions for new series).

I have worked in the Child Protection sector for over ten years, in Immediate Response Residential's, Foster and Kinship Care Programs as Carer Support and an Intensive Foster Care Program, where I was a Team Leader. All of these experiences have been crucial in my development and understanding of the holistic challenges faced in all alternate care options for Children, Carers and Workers.

In this role at QFKC I hope to ascertain the best outcomes for our most vulnerable children and families, which can be done in so many different ways. I am very interested in the NDIS, I have seen this in its best forms and unfortunately in its room for improvement forms. In this role I hope to influence change and outcomes.

COVID-19 has affected us all in very different ways... Parents became teachers overnight, we navigated zoom and skype like IT geniuses (once we learnt how to mute), we have seen the value in spending quality time with our loved ones and one thing that has really stood out for me is our kids, how resilient they are in taking every day as it comes. I have seen the most creative home visits, where support workers played games through windows and now we have made video calls seem like a normal thing! In a world that has become brand new and crazy, I have seen real stories of compassion, patience and growth. Thank you all for taking everything in your stride, whilst we navigate the unknown. I am very excited to be a part of the QFKC team and look forward to meeting you in the future.

Until next time, Jo



SERVICE SUPPORT MANAGER UPDATE

Spring is in the air and it feels good! There is no better place to be in the world I reckon, than in a Queensland Spring, this is the State to be, especially at this time.

2020 continues to be a year of uncertainty and with this comes an increase in people's anxiety, depressive conditions and other associated mental health conditions. It is a time that we can easily become divided by influences around us, or just by individuals different opinions and actions.

However, it could also be a time that we see the best come out in people through acts of kindness and generosity. As a carer community we must absolutely be of those who lead our children by example. We must create spaces where children and young people see the kindness and generosity, because that in itself will assist to manage the mental health challenges that may be facing those we care about. The very hard part about what we're all facing at the moment is that, unlike most crisis situations we encounter, there is no end in sight to this one. The unpredictability of this can be all consuming and has affected every single person. It is important that we take control of things we can and accept those things we can't control.

Our self-care is one thing we can control and it is vital that we commit to this during these times. Some other ideas as to how we can make ourselves feel better during this time are as follows:-

- Accept that life is different right now;
- Look for activities, new and old that continue to fulfill you;
- Focus on maintaining and strengthening important relationships;
- Build regular practices into your life that promote resilience such as better sleep, good nutrition, exercise, meditation, self compassion and saying 'no'.

It has been another busy period for QFKC with record numbers of carers being supported and for the first time in QFKC's history, for the month of July-August, QFKC's statistics have shown that we provided support to more Kinship Carers than Foster Carers.

These statistics demonstrate the complexity that comes with Kinship Care placements and whilst we don't want to see any carer family struggling, we are pleased that Kin Carers are being told about QFKC's services and have the confidence to reach out for support.

This period has also seen QFKC staff being able to re-engage in the community through training, face-to-face meetings and project work. Further examples of this work will follow in this edition of the Reporter. This includes a workshop facilitated by QFKC at the Southern Downs CSSC for Standards of Care and a meeting between QFKC and the Family Inclusion Network (FIN), to discuss ways in which we could promote the development of safe and appropriate relationships between birth parents and carers.

Some further exciting news for QFKC has been the addition of a new position for a period of 12 - months that will be concentrated on the completion of assessments for carers who have resigned from the system and have made the decision to return. This initiative was one developed by QFKC which has now been endorsed by Child Safety and we are very excited to be the organization that delivers on the program. This program will have one full time position that will join our team here at QFKC – so watch this space for updates.

QFKC staff have goals in the next couple of months to be upskilled in the area of delivery of online training through the platform of Microsoft Teams. Through this pandemic, QFKC has upgraded some of our technology that will now allow us to deliver online training more effectively and, given we are a Statewide organization, we are excited about the impact this will have in our delivery of training to areas right across the State. The training is set down for November and so we look forward to 2021 being one where we can reach many more carers and agency staff across the State in our modules of training. Another area staff will be upskilled is in their understanding and application of the Human Rights Act in advocacy. QFKC is currently engaging with the Human Rights Commission to set down a workshop training session that will be specific to our workforce for later in the year. Staff will be able to use this training in their support and advocacy of carers and children in their care.

Well that's it for me for this month. As I write this, I've am getting ready to go on leave for just over three weeks with our family and driving up to Cairns with our caravan and with many stops there and back – Like I said at the beginning, Queensland is the State to be!

Carissa Inglis

QFKC Service Support Manager





Child Protection Week has come and gone. We hope you were able to participate in the activities held around the State. I was fortunate enough to be able to attend an event held in Innisfail known as a yarning circle in the park with members of the community, carers, agency and departmental staff as well as local Elders. This event was followed with lunch that included things such as eel, turtle, curry and my favourite of course, that is damper!

Departmental and Agency staff along with local FAST Reps in Cairns have been working together to update the Partners in Care Action Plan.

Some of the identified areas include, but are not limited to things such as streamlining Child Related Cost matters, having an allocated CSO in each office to respond to carers should their normal CSO not be available, carer recognition-this would include having coordinated events to allow for opportunities to build relationships between staff and carers.

I will be travelling to Mount Isa to present the following training:-

26th October- Standards of Care Review Process

27th October- Carer Finance 9am - 2pm

Don't forget our amazing FAST Reps are here to provide you with advice and support when needed. It could even be that you just need a listening ear.

Remember they too are carers and understand what it is like to work within the Child Protection System.

Their contact details are available at the end of this Reporter and can also be found on our website www.qfkc.com.au.

That's if for me for this month,

Till next time.

Jodie Baird
Case Officer
QFKC Townsville Office



QUIZ!

By Danny Hemsley

1. 'Floreat Etona' is the motto of which British public school?
2. The Battle of Killiecrankie of 1689 during the Jacobite Rising took place in which country?
3. In Chemistry, which 'P' are long-chained molecules in which a group of atoms are repeated?
4. In 1800, the capital of the USA was transferred to Washington DC from which city?
5. Which country has the longest coastline?
6. Francis Crick and James Watson made which medical discovery in 1953?
7. Which 1985 film directed by Joel Schumacher centres around seven Georgetown graduates?
8. In the phonetic alphabet, what word is used to denote the letter K?
9. The buddy comedy 'Planes, Trains and Automobiles' stars John Candy and which other American comedy actor?
10. Catherine Wheels and Skyrockets are types of what?
11. In music, which 'O' is the interval between two notes?
12. Which Irish actor starred as Thomas Shelby in Peaky Blinders and Jim in 28 Days Later?



1. Eton 2. Scotland 3. Polymers 4. Philadelphia 5. Canada 6. Structure of DNA
7. St.Elmo's Fire 8. Kilo 9. Steve Martin 10. Fireworks 11. Octave 12. Cillian Murphy

Source: <https://pubquizquestionshq.com/quiz/your-ready-made-pub-quiz-53-tough-questions>



Connecting Birth Parents & Carers



QFKC recently had the privilege of meeting with some birth parents through the Family Inclusion Network (FIN). QFKC met with FIN in the hope of sitting down with birth parents to gain some insight into how QFKC's Reunification training could reflect the lived experiences of birth parents.

Each of the birth parents who attended the meeting acknowledged the incredibly vital role of Foster and Kinship Carers and how crucial the development of relationships between birth parents and carers are for so many reasons, but most of all, for the sake of the children.

We often hear about the need for carers to meet the Principles of the Child Protection Act and to meet the Statement of Standards. There are many Principles that refer to children being supported to be connected to family, and the Statement of Standards outline key expectations in this area as well. Furthermore, the Child Protection Act sets out clear obligations for Child Safety to facilitate contact between children and their birth parents and family. Whilst pieces of legislation can sometimes be confusing and at times may not even align with our own value system, we must remember that legislation is a **must** not a **may**, and it is the responsibility of every single care team member to ensure that legislation is adhered to in the best interests of children and young people. We were interested to hear from birth parents as to what this looks like when it is done well and whether they had ideas regarding connecting birth parents and carers.



Following are some of their thoughts and insights:

- Acknowledging that a birth parent will not be in a good space when their child/ren are removed, so offering to develop relationships with carers at that time should never be seen as an indicator of the birth parent/s unwillingness to engage later on. One birth parent suggested that if she was offered the opportunity to meet with the carers 2 months after her children were brought into care in a setting facilitated by Child Safety, she would have absolutely done this. This birth parent spoke of her challenges with mental health and that she was not physically in a position to respond to anyone at the time of the removal, having had an undiagnosed mental health disorder. However, 2 months later, she was very much in a position to meet and would have loved to have met the carers, learnt a bit about them and even shared with them what she felt comfortable sharing about herself.
- The birth parents agreed that it should never be a case of only offering a meeting on one or even a few occasions. This should be something that is
- an ongoing casework goal, because the development of the relationship between the carer and child can lead to successful reunification processes and, an ongoing supportive network in some cases post reunification.
- The birth parents spoke with me about the importance of trying to be non-judgemental – where there can be many pre-conceived ideas about birth parents and why children are in care, but it is important to keep an open mind and understand that this contributes to children coming into care and is not just related to alcohol and drugs (alcohol and drugs were not a contributing factor for any of the carers I met with), rather it could relate to things such as mental health and Family and Domestic Violence. We were given the example of a sole parent caring for their children and doing a good job at this, and through no fault of their own they may lose their employment, resulting in losing housing which has a flow on effect and eventually results in the removal of the children.



- Birth parents also asked that carers considered their loss of control and fear that their children will be harmed in care. Parents raised a point we all know so well, where the examples of children being hurt in care make front and centre page and yet all the examples of the amazing care provided to children is left unsaid. For this reason, they spoke about their own fears that their children would be harmed in care. One parent spoke about meeting with the carer for the first time and instantly having a sense of relief after meeting the carer that their child was going to be okay. This parent spoke about how the carer interacted with them, asked questions about their child and reassured them that she would take care of their child. This parent said that they could then concentrate on doing what they needed to in order to get their child back, which they did.
- The birth parents spoke about the want and need to be a part of things such as medical appointments, not because they wanted control, but rather because their end goal is to have their child back in their care, and in order to have the best chance of providing an environment that is supportive of their needs, they need to be part of appointments that determine diagnosis and treatment options.
- Birth parents spoke about the lasting impact of the trauma the system creates for the whole family on top of the trauma the child has experienced which has resulted in them being in care. Birth parents spoke about the importance of them too receiving training and development to understand trauma based behaviours, which they said they could sometimes recognize in their own behaviours as well. This can sometimes be best explained, not by a parent attending a training session, but rather having the carer role model responses that directly relate to their child.
- The birth parents spoke to me about acknowledging that there is not always going to be a positive relationship between a carer and birth parent and that there will be times where it is not safe for this relationship to be encouraged.
- They spoke about there being times where a carer may really dislike a parent and vice-versa, however, they spoke about everyone needing to come to the table with a clear focus on the child. One birth parent spoke about her feelings relating to her ex-partner, however, regardless of how/ what she thinks of him, her children deserve a relationship with him and it is her role to promote this to occur in the best way possible. The birth parent compared this to how a carer may feel about a birth parent and said that a carer has to make a decision before meeting a parent that regardless of how they feel about the parent, they will put that aside in the interests of the child and recognize the importance of supporting the relationship between them.
- The birth parents spoke about the importance of children being told age appropriately about why they are in care and what is happening, it hurt them to think that the children ever thought they had been removed because they had been 'naughty'. They also spoke about this narrative being age appropriate and that children may have to be told multiple times and across multiple different developmental stages about why they are in care and what is happening. They highlighted that telling a 3 year old that mummy is sick and you can't go home at the moment may be ok when that child is 3, however if that child is still in care at 7, then the narrative needs to reflect what that child is able to understand and what is now occurring.
- Birthparents spoke of the importance of carers speaking positively about them and recognizing that important family events are critical for children to attend to continue to feel connected to their family, that it is more than just the supervised or unsupervised contact that supports family connection. One birth parent spoke about one of her children not being able to attend an important family event that all her other children were present for and that this would always be something now that this child has missed out that can't be fixed.



QFKC and FIN have agreed to commit to ongoing meetings in this space – the importance of developing a working culture within the Child Protection Sector that promotes the safe development and ongoing relationship between birth parents and carers is critical. Children are entering care at an ever increasing number and we simply do not have the number of carers to facilitate this. We need to work with parents to have their children safely returned home wherever possible, we need to be able to say as a whole sector that we invested everything we could into supporting a child to return to their birth parents and we need to keep family based placement options open to children and young people where, for whatever reason, reunification will never be an option.

We don't need a policy, procedure or legislative change to bring about the above practice, we just need to be prepared to engage birth parents (where possible) in a relationship that will promote the safe return of their children to their care.

Carissa Inglis, QFKC Service Support Manager



Partners in Care

UPDATE

Blue Cards-No Card, No Start Law

Blue Cards' No Card, No Start laws commenced on 31 August 2020. These changes are a result of the 2017 Queensland Family and Child Commission's report – *Keeping Queensland's children more than safe: Review of the Blue Card system*. Although the report showed that the Queensland Working with Children Check system is one of the strongest in Australia, there is opportunity to provide a more streamlined and stronger system.

As Blue Cards are an integral part of every carer's approval and for adult members of your household, we have taken the time to outline some of the improvements in our Partners in Care update.

You can now apply and renew your Blue Card online.

For new Foster and Kinship Carers and other adult household members who need a Blue Card, you can now complete all your identity checks and apply for your Blue Card online. For existing Foster and Kinship Carers and other household members who already have a Blue Card, you can also update your details and submit renewal applications online.

To apply for a Blue Card or renew a Blue Card online you need to register for an online account with Blue Card services by visiting <https://my.bluecard.qld.gov.au> and following the prompts.

To complete your registration for an online account you will need a Customer Reference Number (CRN) from Transport and Main Roads (TMR). You can find the CRN on many typical TMR cards, such as:

- a Driver Licence (see photo)
- adult proof of age card
- photo identity card
- industry authority



If you don't have a CRN you will need to visit a TMR service centre. At the counter, explain that you are applying for a Blue Card and ask for a CRN and photo. There is no fee for the CRN or the photo. To access this service or find your closest TMR service centre call 13 23 80.

If you can't use any of these options, you can phone Blue Card Services on (07) 3211 6999 or 1800 113 611 to find out about applying remotely. Of course, these new steps not only streamline previous paper based ID checks but will also ensure the next Blue Card you receive includes a photo of you on the card.

For new Foster and Kinship Carers and other adult household members who need a Blue Card, we will ask for your Blue Card Services' online account number as part of your carer application form or other adult household member form. This will allow Child Safety to link your account with us, and in turn allow you to apply for a new Blue Card at no cost (as a volunteer).

You can still apply and renew your Blue Card using paper based forms

When completing a paper based application, you will still be required to complete the verification of identity through TMR as stated above. This is to ensure your next blue card is able to be supplied with your photo. When submitting an application in paper based form you will also need to provide a certified copy of identity documents.

Processing and approval times may take longer for paper applications. You can find an updated paper based application for both Blue Card renewals and initial applications under Foster and Kinship Carer resources and publication at www.csyw.qld.gov.au

Important to renew you Blue Card

No Card, No Start laws mean people cannot work with children or young people until their Blue Card application has been approved. It is important for all Foster and Kinship Carers to submit your renewal application before your current card expires. You can do this online once you have set up an online account. Renewals can be made at any time 16 weeks prior to your current Blue Card's expiry date.



Partners in Care

UPDATE

So long as you submit your renewal application before your current Blue Card expires, your Blue Card will continue until a new card is issued.

NEW – Kinship Carer online information

Over the last couple of months Child Safety has been working on information designed specifically for kinship carers. This information provides an overview of kinship care and what information may be important to know especially if you are a new kinship carer, including why kinship care may be different to foster care and the challenges that may associated when caring for family.

We are pleased to advise that this new information has been uploaded onto the Information for existing foster and kinship carers website under Kinship Care.

To have a look at this information you can visit www.qld.gov.au/community/caring-child/foster-kinship-care/information-for-carers/kinship-care





Transition to Adulthood (T2A) Month is held in November each year. T2A Month highlights the needs of young people as they make the journey from the child protection system to adulthood, experiencing positive life outcomes along the way.

In T2A Month we encourage carers, workers, and support services to...

Have a conversation, host an event and get resourced!

Have a conversation

Make some time to have a chat with a care-experienced young person who is on their T2A journey, exploring their transition plan with them.

Host an event

Go to www.createyourfuture.org.au/t2a to find out about upcoming T2A events. More events will be added in the coming months. It is exciting to hear of services getting creative amidst Covid restrictions. Some services are running small T2A events and we also have some creative online T2A activities available as a kit. The launch is set for 12th November in Toowoomba and we also have a Young Consultant Panel during the month with a focus upon supporting young parents who have a care experience.

Get resourced

We have lots of great resources for workers and young people including the SORTLI app, Go Your Own Way Kit, T2A Mindfulness Colouring book, a resource for young people about reconnecting safely with family, T2A planning templates and much more. Make sure you check out www.nextstepplus.com.au for information about the Next Step Plus program, supporting young people on their T2A journey.

CREATE also has a podcast called 'Voices in Action' featuring the stories of CREATE young consultants available here: <http://create.org.au/podcast>.

Please contact andrew.foley@create.org.au or call 07 3317 6020 if you'd like more information. Also please contact Create if you are a community organization and have not received promotional T2A pens, posters and resources and we will post you a T2A pack.

"My CSO helped me on my transition to adulthood by listening to me, helping me get a disability companion card, and following through on promises. I felt like they cared and I felt very supported. I also got connected to Next Step which was helpful."
Male, 21

"Going to a T2A event was a positive experience. I won six things in a competition. I walked away with a whole bunch of helpful pamphlets from stalls which was cool."
Female, 18





Transition to Adulthood (T2A)



Myth: Transition is a one-off event

Fact: Transition is an ongoing process that needs effective planning and an approach that is participatory, interagency and holistic.

Myth: Transition is a fixed program.

Fact: Transition should be a flexible process based on individual needs - it is a developmental process which may change over time.



Myth: Transition and change are the same thing

Fact: Change is situational. This means it involves movement from one environment, situation or condition to another. Transition is psychological - the path from one change to another.

Children in care experience many major and critical changes. We need to recognise this, and plan for their transition and empower them. This is a vital part of effective practice. If we give attention to how transition is managed in care, we can assist to reduce the effects of trauma, grief and loss, and improve outcomes - to achieve stable independence in adulthood.

Key Messages regarding T2A

Transition to Adulthood (T2A) planning is integrated into case planning for a young person from the age of 15 years. There isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to transition planning, and planning should move beyond what the young person needs for their survival and incorporate resilience and life skills. It should be ambitious.

Young people in care need to have connections to their families, because this provides ongoing relationships and support as they move into adulthood. Relationships with parents, siblings and extended family need to be revisited regularly to find opportunities to strengthen them or reconnect.

Establishing a relationship with the young person and promoting their active participation in the process is critical to successful transition planning and action. Young people individually guide us about what participation looks, sounds and feels like to them. We need to be respectful and proactive in engaging young people - at their pace - in transition planning.

It is essential that we establish a robust safety and support network and form partnerships with those in the young person's network. In the planning process, we use other relationships that the young person may have with professionals or friends. These people can establish effective relationships and assist with communication. Collaboration delivers better outcomes.

We need to balance the timing of planning so it starts early enough that young people feel like they are planning for their own future, but not so early that they feel pressured. Some are ready to embrace independence earlier than others. We need to take the impacts of trauma, attachment disruption and developmental delays into account in order to move at the pace of the young person.

Effective transition to adulthood is a form of early intervention to break the cycle of intergenerational child abuse and trauma. If we can help young people as they move into adulthood, we reduce the risk that their children will come into contact with child protection.

For more information visit:

www.csyw.qld.gov.au/child-family/our-performance/high-quality-services-improved-wellbeing/transition-adulthood

cspm.csyw.qld.gov.au/practice-kits/transition-to-adulthood/overview-of-transition-to-adulthood/facts-and-myths-about-t2a

cspm.csyw.qld.gov.au/practice-kits/transition-to-adulthood/overview-of-transition-to-adulthood/key-messages



OPG helps Tabitha spend more time with her Mum



The Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) is an independent statutory office that promotes and protects the rights and interests of children and young people in the child protection system and in detention, disability and authorised mental health facilities. So, if you are caring for a child or young person through a foster or kinship care arrangement, an OPG Community Visitor will visit them to ensure the services being delivered by Government agencies are appropriate to support their wellbeing.

Community Visitors and Child Advocate Legal Officers also advocate for these children and young people to make sure they understand their rights, get information and are able to participate in decisions made about their lives. They also raise issues or complaints to help get a resolution for a child or young person.

To see how this works in practice, let's take a look at how OPG supported Tabitha to maintain her relationship with her mother.*

Tabitha is 15 years old, and because her mum is struggling with a drug addiction she lives with foster carers. Tabitha is happy living with her foster carers, but she still likes to see her Mum whenever possible. Whilst Tabitha's mum is unable to care for Tabitha fulltime at this stage, she is always excited to see Tabitha and loves her very much. So the Department of Child Safety arranged for Tabitha to meet with her mum every fortnight for a couple of hours to have lunch together and to maintain a strong connection.

During a regular visit with her Community Visitor, Tabitha expressed that she would like to see her Mum more often because she loves to talk to her and tell her all about what's happening at school. Tabitha told the Community Visitor that she had asked her Child Safety Officer if contact with her mum could be increased, but they had said that due to her mother's addiction it would be best to keep visits as they are.

Tabitha told her Community Visitor that she was really upset by this response, and that she thought her Mum looked a lot healthier and would be up to talking to her more often. The Community Visitor raised the issue with the Child Safety Officer, acknowledging their concerns for Tabitha's safety,

but acknowledging how important it was for Tabitha's mental wellbeing to be able to maintain and build a positive relationship with her mother. The Community Visitor also asked the Child Safety Officer for information about the decision-making process that led

to the once a fortnight arrangement.

From this information the Community Visitor put together a proposal outlining Tabitha's views and wishes to increase the contact she has with her Mum. The Community Visitor submitted the proposal to Child Safety who then reviewed the contact decision. Child Safety decided that fortnightly contact is still appropriate, but due to the Community Visitor's advocacy, Tabitha now also has two phone calls with her Mum during the non-contact week. The Community Visitor let Tabitha know of the new arrangements and she was thrilled! She couldn't wait to call her Mum and tell her about the good news.

In this scenario the Community Visitor recognised the importance of Tabitha's relationship with her Mum and then advocated to ensure Tabitha's views and wishes were listened to and seriously considered.

It's important to note that when advocating for a change in contact arrangements, a Community Visitor can also refer the matter to an OPG Child Advocate Legal Officer if it can't be settled directly through Child Safety. A Child Advocate Legal Officer can help a child or young person get an independent review of a contact decision at the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) and support them through this process.

If you would like to find out more about the role of a Community Visitor or Child Advocate Legal Officer and how they can help a child in your care, call us on 1300 653 187, email:

publicguardian@publicguardian.qld.gov.au or visit our website www.publicguardian.qld.gov.au

**This case study is provided as an example only and Tabitha is not a real person.*



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



1. Where can I find updates and information about smoke alarms?

Carers seeking information about smoke alarms can access information by visiting:

www.qld.gov.au/community/caring-child/foster-kinship-care/information-for-carers/money-matters/smoke-alarm-installation-project

For further information or advise you can email: smokeaip@communities.qld.gov.au

(Please note: this email address is not monitored daily so it may be some time before you get a response.)

2. Where can I find information as an existing Carer about my Rights and Responsibilities and other Carer related issues?

Carers can find information about:

- * Rights and Responsibilities
- * When a child comes into your care
- * Kinship Care
- * Everyday Caring
- * Money Matters
- * Where to get help

by visiting www.qld.gov.au/community/caring-child/foster-kinship-care/information-for-carers

3. Do students need to wear a mask while attending school?

Students are not required to wear a mask while at School.

4. Will a permanent guardian be able to apply for a change of legal name for a child or young person?

Yes. In Queensland, an application to change the legal name of a child or young person can be made by a child or young person's permanent guardians to the Change of Name Register.

In addition, a Magistrates Court can, on application by a parent or guardian, approve a proposed change of name for a child or young person if it is satisfied that (a) the name is not a prohibited name; and (b) the change is in the child or young person's best interests.

5. What is the role of Family and Child Connect?

Family and Child Connect is a referral point for professionals working with children and families needing support.

Family and Child Connect Continued...

Sharing information with consent

Before sharing any information about a child or family with Family and Child Connect, the family's consent should be sought. If the family has given their consent, their information may be shared with whoever they consented to share the information with and for the agreed purpose.

Sharing information without consent

If the family has NOT consented, information may only be shared for the specific purposes outlined in the information sharing provisions in Chapter 5A, Part 4 of the Child Protection Act 1999.

Specialist service provider

The Child Protection Act 1999 now includes a category of 'specialist service provider'. 'Specialist service providers' are defined as non-government entities funded by the Queensland or Commonwealth Government to provide services that have the primary purpose of helping children in need of protection or decreasing the likelihood of children becoming in need of protection. Family and Child Connect services and Intensive Family Support services are considered specialist service providers.

The Act allows 'specialist service providers' to share information with each other for particular purposes, for example, a service providing support to a family will be able to share information with another service in the Event that the family moves from one part of the state to another. It also means that a service that was previously working with a family to provide support such as a Family and Child Connect service will be able to share information with another service, such as an Intensive Family Support service when it begins to work with the family.

In all cases, a service must reasonably believe the information they are sharing will help with the particular purpose for which they are sharing the information. Decisions about information sharing need to be made with consideration of the individual circumstances of the child and **family**.

For more information visit:

www.familychildconnect.org.au/ or

13-FAMILY 13-32-64





Turning Corners: An integrated response to young people who have engaged in, or are at risk of engaging in, harmful sexual behaviour

Since the 90s there has been growing recognition not only of the prevalence of sexual assault of children by adults, but also that sexual assault instigated by young people does occur and is more than experimentation and curiosity. Indeed, research indicates that approximately 30 to 60% of child sexual assault is carried out by children and young people against other children (Grant, et al. 2009).

In the past, work with young people who engaged in harmful sexual behaviour was misguided based on adult sex-offender theory and treatment models, which do not consider the developmental stages and moral development of young people. The program is built on the understanding that young people engage in harmful sexual behaviours for a wide variety of reasons and as a result of many different influences on their lives.

Bravehearts recognised the need for a treatment and early intervention program specific to adolescents. To this end, development of Turning Corners, began in earnest in late 2015. Bravehearts' Founder and Executive Chair, Hetty Johnston AM, said of the program;

“Early intervention is key to making meaningful changes and growth in a young person’s life. We must address the whole cycle of assault if we are truly going to prevent child sexual assault from occurring in Australia.”

Turning Corners was launched in 2016 during Child Protection Week. This innovative program provides a comprehensive and integrated response to working with young people aged 12 to 17 who have engaged in, or are at risk of engaging in, harmful sexual behaviour.

We also provide support for adults with an intellectual impairment up to the age of 21 and are very proud to be a registered NDIS provider. Led by a team of dedicated specialist counsellors, the program was subject to an initial independent evaluation in 2018 by Dr Nadine McKillop of the University of the Sunshine Coast Sexual Violence and Research and prevention Unit with very promising results.

Young people do not need to be engaged in the youth justice system to access the program, nor do they require a professional referral to seek treatment. The program draws on the young person’s strengths and has a strong focus on early intervention and improved outcomes for the client, their family and the community.

Turning Corners began seeing clients in November 2016. From then until now, 80 young people have engaged in the program, over 565 individual counselling sessions.

Referrals for the program come via Department of Youth Justice including conference meeting support, The Department of Child Safety, Youth and Woman Queensland, non-government agencies and private referrals (such as a parents, guardian or GP). Since its launch, there has been a growing demand for the Turning Corners service, which now sees clients in various sites across Queensland. During this current pandemic, we have successfully been delivering our counselling support service through our secure E-health Platform as well as telephone support.

For more information about Turning Corners, please go to bravehearts.org.au/turningcorners or email turningcorners@bravehearts.org.au

NEED SUPPORT OR MORE INFORMATION?
Bravehearts Information and Support Line
FREECALL 1800 272 831
Mon-Fri 8:30am - 4:30pm AEST

REFERENCE: Grant, J. et al. (2009). Intrafamilial adolescent sex offenders: psychological profile and treatment. Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice no. 375. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology

bravehearts.org.au

REFER A CHILD

THE PYJAMA FOUNDATION'S LOVE OF LEARNING PROGRAM



ABOUT THE PYJAMA FOUNDATION

The Pyjama Foundation was founded in 2004 to give children in out of home care a positive adult mentor to empower them with learning, life skills, and confidence. The volunteer-based Love of Learning Program aims to support children with their learning and personal growth to help them achieve their dreams.

Community volunteers are matched with a child in care (aged 0-18 years) and spend one hour a week together at the child's home. When they visit, they focus on learning-based activities, such as reading books, playing educational games, and helping with homework. Most importantly, Pyjama Angels help to give the child they volunteer with confidence, fun, and valuable one-on-one time.

SUCCESS OF THE LOVE OF LEARNING PROGRAM

The Pyjama Foundation's Love of Learning Program has proven to be an effective assistance, as it supports children in care to form and sustain healthy relationships, gain improved educational success and increase their confidence and love of learning.

FEEDBACK FROM A CARER

"Jane is a very creative person who has introduced our child to reading, cooking, science and the arts - with enthusiasm and passion - something that we could never have done. Jane puts so much effort into the hour that she spends with our child. Jane's thoughtfulness and kindness shines through she has been such a good role model for our foster child."



HOW WE CAN SUPPORT CARERS

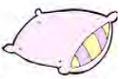
Not only does our Love of Learning Program benefit children, carers have mentioned that a Pyjama Angel visit can offer an hour of respite each week. The Pyjama Foundation recognises the amazing work done by foster carers, helping our community's most vulnerable children. We understand that carers are often dealing with a range of issues – so this is where we can come in to help.

REFER A CHILD

The Love of Learning Program currently operates across multiple regions throughout Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales. If you know of a child you think would benefit from this program, please fill out our online referral form at www.thepyjamafoundation.com/refer-a-child/.

INDOOR SCAVENGER HUNT

How many of these items can you find around the house?

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> stuffed bear  | <input type="checkbox"/> something with buttons  | <input type="checkbox"/> blanket | <input type="checkbox"/> something round |
| <input type="checkbox"/> toothpaste | <input type="checkbox"/> a hat | <input type="checkbox"/> cup  | <input type="checkbox"/> a picture  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ruler  | <input type="checkbox"/> three pencils  | <input type="checkbox"/> something green | <input type="checkbox"/> something noisy  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> book  | <input type="checkbox"/> a pair of socks  | <input type="checkbox"/> ball  | <input type="checkbox"/> something soft |

How many did you find?
How long did it take?

16

OUTDOOR SCAVENGER HUNT

How many of these items can you find in the yard or park?

Add a timer to race yourself or others!

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> one green leaf  | <input type="checkbox"/> something black | <input type="checkbox"/> rough rock  | <input type="checkbox"/> a pinecone  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> one brown leaf  | <input type="checkbox"/> something round | <input type="checkbox"/> feather  | <input type="checkbox"/> ant nest  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> three sticks  | <input type="checkbox"/> a bush  | <input type="checkbox"/> a weed | <input type="checkbox"/> something sharp (be safe!) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> smooth rock  | <input type="checkbox"/> a flower  | <input type="checkbox"/> grass  | <input type="checkbox"/> a bug  |

How many did you find?
How long did it take?

16

Download more resources at www.thepyjamafoundation.com

Moreton Region - Partners in Care

Hi Everyone,

Get to know your local service centre leadership teams within the Moreton Region (Brisbane District). Also in the next Reporter, we will be featuring what is happening in local and regional areas in the Moreton Region for Partners in Care (PIC) and how you can become involved.

Leadership Team Moreton Region (Brisbane District)

CSSC	Role	Name		
Alderley	Manager	Kylie Hutton	STL OI	Aylene Grant
	STL IA	Katherine Weatherley	Senior Practitioner	Pater Oxley
	STL OI	Derek Paton	Business Officer	Sarah Smith
	STL OI	Amanda Gilmore		
Cannon Hill	Manager	Loretta Robinson	STL OI	Katie Phelan
	STL IA	Emily Rose	STL OI	Linda Boyd
	STL OI	Erin Campbell	Senior Practitioner	Eleanor Scott
	Business Officer	Karen Benvin		
Chermside	Manager	Belinda Saal	STL OI	Sara Anderson
	STL IA	Nancy Brougham	Senior Practitioner	Chay Hicks
	STL OI	Rosy Narayan	Business Officer	Kerri Gixti
	STL OI	Claire Thomas		
Forest Lake	Manager	Barbara Richards	STL OI	Jessica Rodriguez
	STL IA	Nick Adams	Senior Practitioner	Jeremy Sharp
	STL OI	Vesna Jovic	Business Officer	Leokadia Barnes
Inala	Manager	Sandra Thomson	STL OI	Lissa Lyons
	STL IA	Katrina Wheeley	Senior Practitioner	Jillian Frainey
	STL OI	Kellee Proctor	Business Officer	Liz Parker
Mt Gravatt	Manager	Katrina Lewis	STL OI	Chelsea Daynes
	STL IA	Lisa Flynn	Senior Practitioner	Nadia Giannangelo
	STL OI	Helen Strydom	Business Officer	Cassandra Beutel

Warm Regards,

Michelle Leggett
Kinship Case Officer





Foster and Kinship Carer after hours Support Line

The support line provides foster and kinship carers with access to after-hours support.

Phone: **1300 729 309**

Availability: Monday to Friday from 5pm to 11.30pm, and Saturday and Sunday from 7am to 11.30pm.

Quality Family Based Care

For policy and program information about blue cards, Foster and Kinship Carer Handbook & Training.

Phone: **13 QGOV (13 74 68)**

Foster Carer Recruitment line

For information about becoming a foster carer.

Phone: **1300 550 877**

Email: fostercare@communities.qld.gov.au

Central Screening Unit (CSU)

For information about criminal history checks and blue cards.

Phone: **(07) 3097 5600**



FAST REP CONTACTS

FAST Region	Representatives	Mobile	Phone	Email
Central Queensland	Lyndal Hughes	0417 744 959		lyndal.hughes@qfkc.com.au
Central Queensland	Tanya Watts	0455 100 294		watts-3@hotmail.com
Moreton	Aidyn Deleo	0432 009 905		aidyndeleo@gmail.com
Moreton	Maree Frampton	0428 453 859	5494 2786	bobframpton@hotmail.com
Moreton	Cheryal Higgins	0407 112 197		cheryal.higgins@qfkc.com.au
Moreton	Hazel Little	0412 457 705		littlehazel@bigpond.com
Moreton	Ian McIntyre	0421 693 999		lanjacob_14@outlook.com
Northern Queensland	Rayleen Barlow	0499 366 825		raylenebarlow@yahoo.com.au
Northern Queensland	Sarah Grainer	0418 404 539	4033 0941	sarahgrainer@hotmail.com
Northern Queensland	Lee-Ann Davis-Collier	0499 119 782		leeanndaviscollier@gmail.com
Northern Queensland	Raymond Metzger	---	4093 3464	raymond.metzger@optusnet.com.au
Northern Queensland	Kerri O'Connor	0407 138 954	4749 0170	kerri.oconnor@qfkc.com.au
South East	Sandra Ehlers	0427 168 226		sandrat@live.com.au
South East	David Podger	0448 432 233		david.podger@qfkc.com.au
South East	Kathy Smith	0417 826 547		kathy.smith@qfkc.com.au
South East	Katie Taylor	0418 788 122		tamborinetaylors@gmail.com
South West	Emma Bubeck	0438 321 973		aeajpkm@gmail.com
South West	Nikki Gallatly	0421 084 440		nikki.gallatly@gmail.com
South West	Cheryl Gill	0419 738 871	4162 7809	cheryl.gill@qfkc.com.au
South West	Mick Luke	0420 442 482	5464 3423	mick.luke@qfkc.com.au

CHILD SAFETY SERVICE CENTRES

Moreton Region	South East Region	South West Region	Central QLD Region	Northern QLD Region
Alderley Caboolture Caloundra Cannon Hill Chermside Forest Lake (incl. Carole Park) Inala (incl. Bellbird Park, Camira, Galies, Goodna, Redbank) Maroochydore Morayfield Mount Gravatt Redcliffe / Strathpine	Bayside Beaudesert Beenleigh Browns Plains Labrador Logan Central Loganlea Mermaid Beach Nerang	Charleville Ipswich North Ipswich South Roma South Burnett Southern Downs Springfield (incl. Bundamba, Dinmore & Swanbank) Toowoomba North Toowoomba South	Bowen Bundaberg Emerald Gladstone Gympie Mackay Maryborough Rockhampton	Aitkenvale Atherton Cairns Cape York North & TSI Cooktown Edmonton Innisfail Mt Isa-Gulf North Cairns and Lower Cape Thuringowa Thursday Island Townsville Weipa





**Queensland
Foster and
Kinship Care**

OUR VISION

Leave no child in foster care behind.

OUR MISSION

Represent. Advocate. Inform.
Support. Excel.

OUR GOAL

To contribute to the development of an inclusive, responsive and fair foster care system.

WHO ARE WE ?

Queensland Foster and Kinship Care Inc. is the non-government peak body for all Foster, Kinship and Provisionally Approved Carers. The organisation was founded in 1976 and today exists to support, advise and advocate for carers throughout the State.

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER - Queensland Foster and Kinship Care Inc. ABN 16 454 122 946

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