Queensland
Foster and
Kinship Care

Queensland
Government

# REPORTER

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DECEMBER 2020

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*DISCLAIMER: Information in this Reporter has been obtained from sources deemed reliable. However, we cannot guarantee its accuracy and interested persons should rely on their own enquiries. All material submitted for publication herein are the expressed views of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor or Queensland Foster and Kinship Care Inc.*

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# A FEW WORDS FROM QFKC PRESIDENT

**HAZEL LITTLE**
QFKC President

*Hi Everyone,*

Here we are, nearly at the end of a year like no other. It has not been easy for any Queenslander or Australian, but I believe we can all be proud of survival skills especially as Foster and Kinship Carers being responsible for the care of children and young people.

The postponement of our annual conference was a difficult situation to deal with, but in the best interests of all concerned a new date has been confirmed for 29-31 July 2021. A vast majority of our workshop presenters are still available which is really good. Please set the new date aside and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on the Sunshine Coast next year.

During the pandemic QFKC was awarded funding to undertake completing assessments for a new Returning Carers Program, where families who have withdrawn from fostering can apply to return to the sector, while still meeting all the current criteria, within a 6-week time frame. This should indeed help boost the number of carers.

Thanks must go to our FAST Representatives and our Support Workers from QFKC for all their hard work in 2020. It has been a very difficult year with many issues never seen before. FAST Reps have dealt with an ever-increasing number of concerns from Foster and Kinship Carers while of cause still being carers and family members themselves. Our FAST Program would not exist without our volunteers.

Our Carer Survey responses have reached the goal of 1000 by early November, so we are anticipating a record number by closing on 3rd December. Thank you to everyone who took part, the information and opinions gleaned from the survey are essential for future planning in the sector.

Approval of a revised and up to date version of the Statement of Commitment is about to be provided to our sector. The original version was printed in early 2000, so we are delighted to have an up to date manual under which carers and staff can have assistance and clarity on roles and responsibilities when working with children, young people and each other.

In closing I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and take the time to have a well-deserved break. Please stay safe.

**Hazel Little**
**QFKC President**

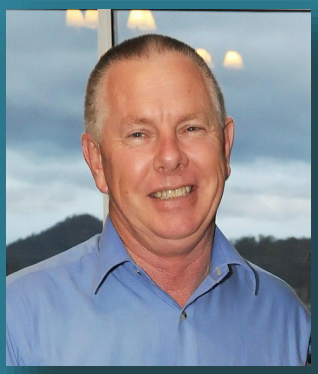
# Qld Foster and Kinship Care Office

The **QFKC** Office will close at midday on **Thursday, 24th December**.

On call number will be **07 3256 6166** over the Christmas period

The Brisbane & Townsville Offices will re-open **Monday, 4th January 2021**

# A FEW WORDS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**BRYAN SMITH**
QFKC Executive Director

*Hi Everyone,*

With 2020 just about done and dusted, I would think most would be happy to see the end of the year. At the time of Writing the state elections would be over with the USA elections taking centre stage in all our media outlets and Queensland has won the first State of Origin. There has been next to no community transmission of Covid19 in Australia and hopefully by Christmas we will once again be able to travel to a state of our choice.

As Queenslanders and certainly all Australians, we should be proud that we have managed to keep this horrible virus at bay, unlike the US and other countries where it seems to be running rampant. Throughout this year we have learnt new strategies for engagement with people while having to endure lockdowns and at times the inability to travel anywhere. It shows our strength, determination, resilience and patience when dealing with such significant change. Foster and Kinship Carer families, Foster and Kinship Care staff and Departmental staff got through this with one important vision in mind and that was to continue to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of our families including the children we care for.

As an organisation we are very aware of the challenges that we will face in the coming year and I, for one, take that little bit of time we have off over Christmas to not only recharge the batteries, but also to start to look at what all our priorities are. There will be sitting with the Department and the Minister to discuss the ongoing need to not only recruit Foster Carers, but just as important, the issue of retaining carers which is a significant issue. The results of the Carer Survey and Exit Reports as well and information received directly from our FAST Representatives and carers will drive those priority areas.

We also know we have much more work to do with the Department around communication especially with Service Centre staff and of course, the ongoing need and push for changing decision making, child related costs and permanency. As a carer, I have seen the challenges of not having sound communication and information, not so sound decision making, and the results of not making permanency decisions when they should be made. However, I have also been privileged to see some amazing work being undertaken by Child Safety, agencies and carers where children have had fantastic outcomes. The problem being that it is not consistent and we don't share and grow our successes with others very well. If you had asked me 29 years ago when I first started, about the same challenges I would have said the same thing, which does make me frustrated and impatient but also drives me and our organisation to get the message across in a more significant manner and practice what we preach and get in and help.

On behalf of QFKC, I would like to wish all our Foster and Kinship Carer families, our children, Care Services, Departmental staff, QFKC staff, FAST Representatives as well as our amazing Management Committee a very merry and safe Christmas and let's head into 2021 with patience, perseverance, strength, love and vision to keep making things better for those around us.

Merry Christmas Everyone, see you next year.

**Bryan Smith**
**Executive Director**

***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 that 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.

# New QFKC Members

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Leanne Aiken | Julie Biasi | Jessica Briggs | Renaete Churchward |
| Nicholas Klein | Jane Morrow | Shelly Middelbosch | Lahnie Robinson |
| Duncan Reddell | Emily Reddell | Scot Rotgans | Alison Rotgans |
| Stephen Melvin | Sarah Melvin | Anne Patell-Gray | Michelle Pemberton |

Leanne Patell-Gray

# RETURNING CARERS PROGRAM [redacted]

Child Safety have made changes to the process of assessment for returning foster carers to reduce the amount of time it takes to begin caring again.

The streamline process will involve the following;

- Personal history and criminal history checks will remain the same
- All members of the household over the age of 18 will still require Blue Cards
- Mandatory checks will take place to include (previously discretionary checks):
  1. Domestic violence
  2. Traffic history
  3. Referee checks (one referee to be selected by an assessor)
  4. Medical clearance from the applicants general practitioner
- An assessment will still take place, but this will be informed by the applicant's previous initial assessment and renewal documents to provide an overview of their carer history. Meetings with the assessor will still occur to discuss the prospective carers current situation.
- It is unlikely the applicant will need to undertake training if they have previously undertaken training (this depends on the timeframes).

There will be a number of factors that need to be taken into consideration to determine whether or not a person/s can undertake the streamlined process. This may include but is not limited to the following information;

- Changes in the household (whether previously a sole entity and now applying as a joint entity);
- Complexities within previous carer history that need to be afforded a full assessment process;
- The length of time since the applicant was previously a foster carer;
- The applicant was previously a FOSTER carer in QLD, not a kinship carer or foster carer in another state.

The streamlining process could potentially mean that an applicant could be caring again in a six-week timeframe. Timeframes will be subject to;

- Applicants Carer History
- Availability of assessors in their region
- Outcome of mandatory checks

If you know anyone who was previously a foster carer and they are considering returning to fostering please ask them to call Queensland Foster and Kinship Care on 1300 550 877 or alternatively the office on 07 3256 6166 or email recruitment@qfkc.com.au

# SERVICE SUPPORT MANAGER UPDATE [redacted]

In writing this Reporter edition in November I feel like the only one who does not yet have the Christmas tree up. It seems to be the thing to do this year – where many are putting Christmas trees up early in the hope that the rest of 2020 will bring them joy and happiness.

Just yesterday, I was watching a movie with my husband called 'I Am Legend' with actor Will Smith in it. The movie was essentially about the end of the world being brought about by some infectious virus that makes people go crazy. I turned to my husband and said to him that watching this movie some years ago, it would have seemed so unreal but, watching it today you can definitely relate to some of it. No doubt that in years to come we will be watching movies about covid19 and Hollywood will dramatise it to some extent, but we will all be remembering just how different our lives became for a period of time.

QFKC has continued to be very busy with the addition of a new position within the organisation. Joanna Brennan has joined us as part of the Returning Carers Program. Joanna will be completing assessments on eligible returning carers, we already have many assessments underway and are very excited as an organisation to be contributing to bringing carers back into their caring journey. With well over 10,000 children and young people in care, QFKC identified returning carers as a key untapped area requiring attention. We are already seeing the huge benefits the program is bringing and look forward to seeing how the next 12 months will see the program grow.

**FAST Program**

Rose Pearse has been a FAST Rep for QFKC over many years and has contributed extensively to the FAST program. Whilst Rose will continue to be a carer, we recently farewelled her as a FAST Rep as she now embarks on her professional career as a qualified Social Worker. QFKC wishes Rose all the very best for her future career and thank her for the years of dedication to the FAST role.

QFKC have welcomed three new FAST Reps - Colleen Humphrey from South West, Michelle Eastabrook from South East and Sam Bonaccorso from South East who has re-joined the FAST team.

A huge welcome to our newly appointed FAST Reps. For details of your local FAST Reps, please see the end of this Reporter or visit our website www.qfkc.com.au.

QFKC's priorities at this time leading into Christmas is our work with Child Safety regarding the Standard of Care Project which is coming along really well through our joint collaboration with Child Safety. This is a huge area of work and one that is extremely important to the carer community. We would like to thank those who completed the Standard of Care Surveys, these have been instrumental in the considerations taking place about what this space will look like into the future.

Our other key priority areas will be the collation of the QFKC Carer Survey 2020 – the response from carers has simply been amazing with over 1000 completed surveys at the time of completing this report. This will be the biggest ever response achieved and the results will provide such a great representation and insight for Child Safety and sector staff. We hope to have public reports out in February 2021. The survey will be closed by the time this edition of the Reporter is distributed.

Finally, I would like to take this time to acknowledge every single carer in Queensland in 2020. We published in a previous Reporter the story relating to everyone being in different boats through these difficult times, so their experiences of this year have all been very different. Our carer families have all had their own unique experience through lockdown, coming out of lockdown and the rest of the year, some of these experiences were very positive and others extremely challenging. During this time, whichever way you look at it, over 10,000 children in Queensland were not with their biological parents and the vast majority of these children were in family based placements with Foster or Kinship Carers.

We thank you for opening your home and hearts to these children and young people. We wish you a safe and happy Christmas and holiday period as we go into the New Year with optimism for a better and brighter 2021.

**Carissa Inglis**
**QFKC Service Support Manager**

# NORTHERN REGION NEWS

Hello Members,

And just like that 2020 is just about over! What a year it has been! Here's hoping that 2021 is the complete opposite.

It was great to be able to travel to Cairns recently to present some training. We had a good mix of carers and agency staff attend the Reunification training. I was so excited to be able to do face-to-face training again now that restrictions have eased.

FAST Reps in the Northern Region have been working closely with Child Safety staff reviewing the Partners in Care Plan. It is great to be able to reflect on the positive outcomes over the last 12 or so months even through COVID-19. These included things such as:

- each CSSC now having alternative contact points for carers to contact for assistance if the CSO is not available;
- CSO's being able to complete minor expense Child Related Costs in a timely manner through Carer Connect and;
- Carer Hotline and email address developed and disseminated.

Our FAST Reps are listening to carers in their region and share their views about how to continue to improve processes in order to ensure that carers are feeling supported to meet the needs of children and young people.

Attending the Child Protection Week event in Innisfail provided me with the opportunity to hear from Elders about the importance of maintaining cultural connections for Aboriginal and Torres Strait children and young people. Again, our FAST Reps were very active in this space. One of the highlights of the day was lunch with local food such as eel, turtle and curry prepared for everyone by the Elders.

I am really looking forward to 2021 where I hope to be able to travel across North Queensland to present the various training that QFKC have developed for carers, agency and departmental staff. All trainings are listed on our website at www.qfkc.com.au. Feel free to have a look and touch base with us if there is something that interests you and we will see what can be done to present it in your area.

I am sure that for many the end of the year will see you all become busier with end of school and sports activities, not to mention preparing for the man in the big red suit! Most importantly remember to take some time for yourselves!

Until next time.

**Jodie Baird**
**Case Officer, QFKC Townsville Office**

29th – 31st July 2021

Queensland Foster and Kinship Care

Angel Identity

Queensland Government

# FOSTER CARE ALLOWANCE UPDATE

There has been a recent change to the Fostering Allowance policy as it relates to payment of the fostering allowance for young people over the age of 18. When the original policy came out, there had been a requirement for a young person to be engaged in a Service Support Plan in order for the carer to continue to receive the allowance post their 18th birthday. This was problematic for many reasons, the most being that many young people wanted nothing to do with Child Safety after their 18th birthday and therefore would simply not consent to a Support Service plan being opened. QFKC worked with Child Safety to change the policy and we can advise that the new policy has now been uploaded onto Child Safety's website.

https://www.csyw.qld.gov.au/resources/dcsyw/child-family/foster-kinship-care/exp-fn-caring-allowance-interstate-foster-payments-procedure-365.pdf

There is no longer this requirement which means that where any young person who has turned 18 and is still living with their approved carer, the carer can continue to receive the fostering allowance up until their 19th birthday or until they leave the home. Please note that the HSNA and CSNA cannot continue to be paid as both require a child or young person to be subject to a Child Protection Order to receive.

# What Does Christmas Mean for You?

How lucky we are as Queenslanders to have the opportunity to celebrate Christmas with family and friends. To celebrate the fact we are all safe and can look forward to better times. Material things mean little in comparison. I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas.

**Hazel Little – President QFKC**

Christmas is a special time of year for a lot of people however for some it's a very sad and lonely time, especially if they have no family to share it with. Christmas to me means sharing joy and laughter and taking the time to reach out and care about others who may be having a difficult time, trying to bring some light into their lives. Christmas also means to me a time to reflect on the year that was and start to think about what a New Year can bring.

**QFKC Secretary – Linda Smith**

Christmas 2020 means reconnecting with Family and Friends after a year of longing to be close to my village. Sharing meals, being present in each other's company. Less emphasis of gifts this year. It will be sun, sand, salty air and beach, but also country, mountains, bonfires, open spaces, clean air, technology free at times.

2020 has challenged me, it's been horrible at times but I did things I never thought I could. New resilience and strength has grown me as a person, I have 2 feet firmly grounded, clarity in my head. 2020 has been a year of personal growth, so I will thank it for what it was and definitely say goodbye on New Year's Eve and welcome in 2021 with family and friends - my village.

**FAST Rep – Tanya Watts**

Christmas is bedlam and can be an expensive time. It is a time for family and a very busy time as well. The atmosphere is phenomenal. The wife goes overboard with presents but the time spent together is fantastic with lots of cleaning up afterwards. We love Christmas with the kids, they are all happy and that's the important thing. We are very lucky to have what we've got.

**FAST Rep/QFKC Management - Ian McIntyre**

Christmas means togetherness, celebrations and cheer.

It means being grateful for all we hold dear.
It means we can thank those who we love,
And make sure our stars shine like those above.

I hope everyone enjoys some wonder and sparkle in their 2020 Christmas.

**QFKC Management – Sarah Grainer**

We always make sure we are available for placements over Christmas so young people have somewhere to be. Christmas is generally pretty low key, as it can be a rough time for some. We try to keep our day filled with games, presents and gift-giving. This time also generally goes over a week or two period so that we can include the siblings of those in our care who live in different households.

**FAST Rep - Nikki Gallatly**

By the time you read this Queensland may have a new government. Regardless of who is in power, it is CREATE's responsibility to advocate on behalf of children and young people in care as the national peak body.

For the last 20 years, CREATE has been consulting with children and young people in care to ensure their voices are heard within the sector. Between June 2018 to June 2019, there were 44,906 children and young people in care in Australia; 8,125 of those were from Queensland (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2020).

In the lead up to this year's state election, CREATE Foundation consulted with children and young people and identified the following priorities.

**These include:**

1. **Make it 21:** Young people to have the right to a supported placement until 21 years
2. **Participation:** Decision-making processes are shared with children and young people
3. **Transition Support:** The provision of transition support to 25 years
4. **Stability:** Increasing the stability of the care experience for children and young people
5. **Sibling Contact:** Maintain sibling connections for children and young people in care

Many of the children and young people we work with are years away from voting. CREATE Foundation firmly believe that children and young people have every right to demand a safe and secure future and their voices need to be heard by those in power.

We encourage the new government to include the voices of children and young people in decision making and ensure that change reflects their priorities to make the system work better for themselves, their siblings and their families. If you are interested in finding out more about CREATE Foundation and our work please visit: www.create.org.au

## REFER A CHILD

### THE PYJAMA FOUNDATION'S LOVE OF LEARNING PROGRAM

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.

**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."

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/.

# Partners in Care

UPDATE

## Carer Connect App

### What's New!

You may have noticed some recent changes to the Carer Connect app. Here are some of the exciting features you can now experience when you log on!

- Improved communication between Primary and Respite Carers
  - A carer will receive a phone notification when there has been a Who am I section created, edited or deleted by another carer who has that child in their care.
  - This functionality has been developed to support communication between carers, particularly between Primary and Respite placements.
  - This allows real time communication between carers that is also creating and storing a narrative for our children and young people.
  - So how will this work?
    - Let's say that Paul is the primary carer for Sarah and Emma is the respite carer.
    - Paul has been using Carer Connect to update the Who am I section for Sarah.
    - Sarah goes for her respite stay with Emma.
    - Emma notices that Sarah has got really good at riding her bike and other things... she seems much more confident. Emma takes out her Carer Connect app and updates the "I am..." section in Who am I and adds 'confident' as a strength with a few little notes why.
    - Paul, the primary carer, will immediately be notified of this new information by way of a notification on his phone and can log into the app and see what it is!
    - The CSO for Sarah also receives an email to let them know to go and check Kicbox for staff and see what's been updated.

Want to know a bit more about the Who am I section? Follow this link to open a factsheet. https://www.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/126406/carer-connect-factsheet-who-am-i-welcome-pack.pdf

Access when children are attending boarding school
When children attend boarding school the children will no longer become unavailable in the app. **This change recognises the continual relationship and allows the child's information to remain**. Carers will now be able to enter any posts or Who Am I information for the child.

Carers will no longer receive duplicate welcome packs. We know this has been the source of frustration for some and we have worked to eliminate multiple welcome packs being received in a short period of time.

### What's Coming!

The Carer Connect support team have been mapping out what could be developed over the next few months. Some of the plans include:

- Documents – providing staff with the functionality to share documents across all carers for a child.
- Account management – changing email addresses associated with Carer Connect.
- Child Related Costs – ensuring that carers can see their whole request that's been submitted.

What do you think? Any ideas about what could make the app better? Let the team know at carerconnect@csyw.qld.gov.au .

Queensland Foster and Kinship Care

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# OPG helped Adam celebrate his farewell

The Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) is an independent agency whose purpose is to promote and protect 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 that the services being delivered by Government agencies are appropriate to support their wellbeing.

Community Visitors and Child Advocate Legal Officer's 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 advocated for Adam's views and wishes:*

*Adam had been living with a foster family for 18 months when he found out he would be moving to a new kinship placement in a different town. Before he was to leave, his carers decided to have a big farewell celebration with Adam and the carers' extended family, who had all been part of Adam's life during those 18 months. The whole family were to visit a theme park for the day, which would be a fun and positive experience and provide an opportunity for some closure on this placement for Adam.*

*The day before the planned trip to the theme park, Adam called his Community Visitor and was really upset because he couldn't go to the theme park due to a last-minute change in arrangements with his kinship carer. It turned out that Adam's kinship carer had arrived in town early and wanted to leave town with Adam at 10am the next day. Knowing that Adam's carers had planned the theme park outing and that Adam was now really upset he couldn't attend, the Community Visitor spoke with Child Safety about continuing with the previous arrangements, but to no avail. The Community Visitor then called Child Safety Central Complaints Unit who were very helpful and advised they would look into the situation. Within an hour Child Safety had contacted the Community Visitor and advised that Adam would be able to attend the farewell celebration. Adam was thrilled and had a great day out with his foster family before starting his new placement.*

From this example it can be seen that, the Community Visitor saw how important this excursion was to Adam, so they advocated for Adam's views and wishes and worked hard to ensure the event could still go ahead. Although this may seem like something small and somewhat insignificant, it was a big deal for Adam and for those who cared for him too. The Community Visitor acknowledged this and strongly advocated on Adam's behalf.

If you would like to find out more about the role of a Community Visitor 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 Adam is not a real person.*

*By Danny Hemsley*

1. **What year did the Titanic sink in the Atlantic Ocean on 15 April, on its maiden voyage from Southampton?**
   a) 1912
   b) 1913
   c) 1914

2. **What is the title of the first ever Carry On film made and released in 1958?**
   a) Carry on Brigadier
   b) Carry on Major
   c) Carry on Sergeant

3. **What is the name of the biggest technology company in South Korea?**
   a) Samsung
   b) Nokia
   c) Hyundai Motors

4. **Which singer fronted the 1970s' pop group Showaddywaddy?**
   a) Dave Bartram
   b) Dave MaChews
   c) Dave Williams

5. **Which now famous TV chef started cooking at the age of eight in his parents' pub, 'The Cricketers', in Clavering, Essex?**
   a) Anthony Bourdain
   b) Jamie Oliver
   c) Ainsley HarrioC

6. **Which Dutch darts player won the 2012 BDO World Championship at the Lakeside Country Club, Frimley Green on 15 January?**
   a) Vincent Van Der Voort
   b) Michael Van Gerwen
   c) ChrisÎ an Kist

7. **Which metal was discovered by Hans ChrisÐan Oersted in 1825?**
   a) Silver
   b) Aluminium
   c) Zinc

8. **What is the capital of Portugal?**
   a) Porto
   b) Lisbon
   c) Lagos

9. **How many breaths does the human body take daily?**
   a) 10000
   b) 15000
   c) 20000

10. **Who was Prime Minister of Great Britain from 1841 to 1846?**
    a) Robert Peel
    b) Robert Alexander
    c) Robert Delaware

1. 1912 2. Carry on Sergeant 3. Samsung 4. Dave Bartram 5. Jamie Oliver
6. Christian Kist 7. Aluminium 8. Lisbon 9. 20000 10. Robert Peel

Source: hCps://ahaslides.com/blog/170-general-knowledge-quiz-quesÎ ons-and-answers-for-your-next-virtual-pub-quiz/#general-knowledge

# Welcome New FAST Reps

**Colleen Humphrey**
**South West Region**

Hi there, my name is Colleen Humphrey and I am a newly appointed FAST Rep in South West region. When I first started my foster carer journey I was a single mother of 4 children and I lived at Mooloolah and now I live in Proston. I now have 13 grandchildren in total and one grandson that even lives in Canada. We live on 100 acres so the children have plenty of room to play and explore. We have built a great big playground also to make this even more enjoyable.

I have been a foster carer since 2001 and I have had quite a few children over the time but I mostly have long-term children now. I took guardianship of 1 child back when he was 15 who I had since he was 11 months old back in 2001. He has forged a strong career path and it's a proud feeling of helping him come such a long way. I love being a foster carer as it is so rewarding. It is so great to see the children have a smile on their faces. I am looking forward to being a FAST Rep so that I can help the carers with some of their issues from my experience. I have accessed FAST Reps myself for advice in the past so know how valuable this is. It is also one of the reasons I wanted to be a FAST Rep to help others.

**Michelle Eastabrook**
**South East Region**

My name is Michelle. I have been a carer for 14 years, I still remember getting my approval in the mail! My nieces were so excited for me they danced in the rain! My first placement arrived on our doorstep via a stork, I knew from that moment on that I was a gonner!

Within the next year another little human arrived and brought along a completely new world that would knock me for a six. This little person had trauma and baggage, the behaviours completely surprised me. They also got me researching and delving for answers, the answers to the behaviours shocked me to the core. I vowed that I would not give up on that child, would give everything to help heal the pain.

My mum became a carer the next year and together we braved the system together, advocating for our precious charges and filling their emotional cups (almost to the same degree they filled ours). Over the next few years we added more littlies to our brood and even had some say good bye.

In 2010 my mum, Kerrie became a FAST Representative, a role she absolutely relished until her passing in 2016. To say that I am so excited to have become a FAST Representative is an understatement and I can certainly feel approval from above.

# REGIONS

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

# 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 | | Ianjacob_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 East** | Michelle Eastabrook | 0414 840 965 | | Shelley_T_71@hotmail.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** | Colleen Humphrey | 0448 182 322 | | colleenmario@hotmail.com |

# IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS

## 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**
(Monday to Friday – 5pm to 11.30pm, Saturday and Sunday 7am – 11.30pm)

## Quality Family Based Care

For policy and program information about Blue Cards.
Foster and Kinship Carer Handbook and 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**

## Blue Cards Services Unit

Information about being child-safe and screening people who work with children

Phone: **1800 113 611 (Qld only) or (07) 3211 6999**

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

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www.qfkc.com.au

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 advise, support and advocate for Carers throughout the State.