



APPOINTMENT OF PROXY

I, _____ [insert name] of
 _____ [insert address]

Being a voting member of Permanent Care and Adoptive Families (PCA Families), hereby appoint:

<p>Option 1 Chairperson of the Meeting (Chair)</p>	<p>Option 2 Another PCA Families' member:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>(insert name & address of member)</p>
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** Select one option only by circling The Chair or adding PCA Families' member details.*

as my proxy to vote at the Annual General Meeting of PCA Families to be held on Wednesday 27 October, 2021 and at any adjournment thereof.

<p>Option 1 *My proxy may vote on my behalf in any matter as they see fit</p>	<p>Option 2 *My proxy is directed to vote on my behalf as indicated on page 2 of this form</p>
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**Select one option only by circling the appropriate box*

Member's signature _____

Signed this _____ day of _____ 2021

today's date today's month

Completed forms should be emailed to info@pcafamilies.org.au or posted to P O Box 201, Fitzroy 3065 and must be received no later than 48 hours prior to the AGM – being 4:00pm, Monday 25 October 2021.

Option 2 only

Board member election:

Board Member election/nominee	Number your three chosen candidates from 1 to 3
Dan Barron	
Meredith Carter	
Chris Lockwood	
Jenny Conrick	
Kristi Lambert	
Daniel Leach-McGill	
Gina Scuffins	

There are three members to be elected, therefore you will be voting for three candidates. Please place numbers 1 to 3 of your preferred nominations.

Dan Barron

I have over 18 years lived experience of raising two children who joined the family via permanent care, as well as a biological child.

I became involved with the Journal Club when my children were very young, and I was very happy to be able to meet with others who understood the very unique challenges our families face. At the time I had no contact with any other parents of children who were not biologically linked to them, so it was a revelation and a huge source of support and reassurance for me, especially as at the time I was a stay home dad.

I became aware over time of the inequities of services for our families, and the lack of recognition and understanding of 'permanent care' within various agencies and government structures. For example, the difficulties in changing a surname for your child or in obtaining a passport, the lack of inclusion within the Paid Parental Leave scheme, the difficulties with expectations around access or contact after a PCO is made. I made submissions to the Victorian Law Reform Commission into Child Protection in 2010, and the 'Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children' inquiry in 2011, raising concerns with our legal standing, as we were then seen as 'carers' rather than 'parents'.

Seeking to further advocate for change in this regard, I nominated for what was then the 'Post Placement Support Service' Board, and was thrilled to be accepted on to the Board in 2011. Over the years on the Board I have consistently sought to raise issues which concern our families. I have in particular been very involved in initiatives that have raised the profile of permanent care, and contributed to legislative change. The highly successful PP55/PCA Families Legal Forums, and Surveys, of 2013-16 gave a powerful voice to our families, and provided direct access to government and policy makers, who were part of these forums.

The Permanency Amendments of 2014, which made changes to the Children Youth and Families Act 2005 and came into effect in 2016, recognised some of these key issues for our families. In particular the true parenting nature of our roles was legally recognised, with the change in language in the Act from 'Guardians' to 'Parents' and the recognition that those with a permanent care order hold full parental responsibility, to the exclusion of all others.

My own journey with my children over the recent past has sadly involved increasing contact again with Child Protection systems and with Juvenile Justice. While this has had a heavy personal toll, it has given me a very vivid experience as a 'consumer' of child protection services, and of how young people experience the workings of the youth justice and legal system.

I remain committed to this wonderful organisation of PCA Families and believe I can continue to make a positive contribution on behalf of permanent care parents.

Meredith Carter

I first became aware of the need for greater support and recognition for permanent care and adoptive families when I became a permanent care mum myself. I wrote the report The Potential of Permanent Care for PCA Families making the case for more assistance for families who offer permanent homes for children who can't live with their biological parents.

As the current Chairperson of PCA Families I have lead the organisation through a time of growing membership, and successful advocacy for growth of flexible funding and home stretch support as well as new services introduced to support all our members, permanent care, kinship families and adoptive families through the pandemic. I also pushed for new research we're about to publish highlighting the need to strengthen the implementation of the Permanency Amendments to the Children Youth and Families Act.

In my day job I'm a consultant following a varied career including as a government advisor, and CEO roles with Kindergarten Parents Victoria and Health Issues Centre. I'm committed to community participation and good governance, as shown by my service on many boards. This includes as Chair of Women's Health Victoria and of my local Community Health Service. I have recently been appointed to the Medical Board of Australia (Vic).

I am a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) and completed a week-long AICD refresher in Not for Profit Governance last year.

Chris Lockwood

Chris Lockwood has over 20 years experience working across the Mental Health, Construction and Finance sectors. With specific knowledge of mental health, safety and suicide prevention in the construction industry, and expertise in managing strategic growth, sustainable funding and partnership development.

Chris is a director of Suicide Prevention Australia and is the National CEO of MATES in Construction, a charity with 60 staff across the country which is recognised as the leader in suicide prevention in workplaces and across industry in Australia.

As the proud father of two children adopted from China and Korea, Chris has the lived experience of adoption, therapeutic parenting and the importance of maintaining cultural and peer connections.

Jenny Conrick

I am a social worker of over 30 years' experience in the child and family welfare field, with a particular focus on the out of home care (OOHC), permanent care and adoption arenas, in which I have worked as a clinician, manager and educator.

Currently I have a clinical practice which primarily serves those who have an adoption or out of home care experience; and I am a lecturer at the University of Melbourne Social Work Department. I remain committed to working collaboratively with those who live the complexities of adoption and out of home care across the life cycle.

As a Board Member, I believe I can bring a considerable range of relevant policy, research and practice expertise that will contribute to the further development and reach of the organisation. As a person who has been member of Permanent Care and Adoptive Families for some years and served on the Committee of Management (2013-2014), I continue to have a commitment to the organisation.

My MSW and Ph. D thesies explored the experiences of adopted women as they mother their own children and my Vera Scantleberry Brown Scholarship (2012) enabled me to travel to England and the U.S to hear about the support provided by agencies who work in adoption and out of home care. I have presented at national and international conferences, and recent work with Take Two (Berry Street) has provided me with a deeper understanding of the NMT approach to trauma as developed by Bruce Perry.

I am a current member of the Australian Association of Social Workers (Accredited Member) and the Australian Association of Infant Mental Health Inc.

Kristi Lambert

I'm Kristi Lambert, and I'm currently a full-time mum of one. My husband Matt and I became parents through Permanent Care in 2016. Like many families, we've benefited greatly from the knowledge, experience and support of PCA Families. I'm excited at the opportunity to give back to the organisation if I'm elected to the Board.

Professional Experience:

Prior to taking time out from the workforce, I was a full-time working professional, at Holden, and before that at Bluescope Steel.

With tertiary qualifications in Metallurgical Engineering and Communications and Writing, the most recent part of my career was in Corporate Communications - predominately employee communications and community liaison and partnerships, as well as media relations. I have extensive experience in stakeholder engagement, working with employees at all levels of organisations, community groups and government.

My communications experience includes writing, editing and publishing, newsletters, articles, presentations, web and social media content, reports, submissions, letters and brochures. Also, managing contracts with community partners, and budget management.

My professional experiences have given me a sound understanding of risk management principles, particularly in the areas of OH&S and organisational reputation.

Whilst my engineering background may not appear relevant to the work of PCA Families, it enabled me to hone my process and project management skills and develop a strong attention to detail, skills essential to being a Board member.

Other Relevant Experience:

I have obtained governance experience through being a past-President and committee member of the Rootes Group Car Club. This also included managing the 2016 Hillman National Rally- a four-day event attracting over 120 Hillman enthusiasts from around Australia. I am keen to undertake further governance training as required for this role.

Since 2013 I have volunteered weekly with St Kilda Mums. I work as a tinker, fixing and rejuvenating prams for families in need across Victoria. Until the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic I was a member of the St Kilda Mums Safety Committee. I contributed to the content for the 2013-2014 St Kilda Mums Annual Report. After an extensive working career in large corporations, I'm keen to follow my passions and give back to the community. I wish to use my communications, stakeholder engagement and project management expertise to the benefit of PCA Families.

If the COVID pandemic has taught me anything- it's to make the most of every day and never give up. I'm honoured to be considered for the role of Board member. Thank you.

Daniel Leach-McGill

Dr Daniel Leach-McGill has over twenty years of leadership experience in a range of community services and early childhood settings. Daniel has a PhD, Education (Early Childhood/Policy) and combines strong implementation skills with in-depth content and policy knowledge related to children, young people and families.

Throughout his career he has maintained a strong focus on children's rights and wellbeing. He has progressed this in a range senior positions leading service development, program implementation and strategic projects as well as contributing to policy development and advocacy work.

Daniel and his husband Jonni, are parents to three young children through permanent care living in Melbourne.

Gina Scuffins

My name is Gina Scuffins. I have over thirty years of experience in both the Community Services Industry as a worker and trainer and as a permanent carer, foster carer and adoptive parent. While married we fostered over 60 children from a variety of homes, having been removed for many reasons. Later when I found myself working in residential care, I soon become aware of the enormous number of children seeking forever homes and families. I had one biological child and one child adopted from overseas when I found myself a single parent. I still wanted to extend my family, so I chose to take my first child in permanent care. This was a massive learning curve for me as my new 5-year-old son had been to nine families before he came to me. At the time I found I needed support that was simply not available. Therefore, I took it upon myself to learn everything I could. It was through his journey with me that I developed a passion to learn about attachment and trauma. As a family of four we worked through the issues one at a time, the good and the bad, and we all made it through, a cohesive family unit.

Eventually my older two boys grew up and moved to their new careers, new partners and one, a new family of his own. I felt the need to fill the almost empty nest again (seriously who wants a quiet house!!). That meant taking on the permanent care of two more children, a brother and sister aged 3 and 5 years. Again, the learning continued with new challenges and issues including a struggle with cancer for one of them. I am now in my sixties; all my children have grown and all but one has moved away to continue their own journeys. I am very proud to say all are happy, healthy individuals in the main. Some still struggle with the left-over results of significant trauma, but all are working, healthy and contributing to society in an amazing way. I could not be a prouder Mum.

My career has continued all this time. I worked in many areas of Community Services including family support, disability and out of home care. I am currently a TAFE teacher at Federation University where I train adults to work in Community Services, Disability and Mental Health. I have also been hired to write the content for the Cert IV in Child, Youth and Family Intervention qualification, allowing me to use my experience and learning gathered over many years.

The journey in permanent care and adoption can be a difficult one. I feel often we are the forgotten type of care, yet we are one of the best choices for a child who cannot return to their biological family. I truly believe every child should be given the opportunity to grow up with their birth family, but that is not always possible. Therefore, we as carers are the best second choice. I strongly feel however that we must fight for the recognition we deserve. It never ceases to amaze me how many people have never even heard of us and what we do. We are indeed fortunate to have this organisation (PCA Families) to support us and I would love to see it grow and strengthen consistently. I would be very honoured to be a part of it as a board member and feel I have a lot to offer due to both my professional life and training and my own family life experience.