

Welcome to Winter, 2015 Newsletter



Dear Members

The State Government has made \$2million available in recurrent funding to new permanent care families to support the placement of children. As this is in the planning stage, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is currently consulting stakeholders in the community. We will keep you informed on these new developments.

Thanks to all of you who have participated in our recent surveys. The legal survey provided interesting results and can be found on our [web-site](#). Our legal issues group has already started planning another legal forum in partnership with DHHS.

As you can see from the calendar we will providing additional Life Story Work sessions for parents, carers and professionals. We hope to expand this training to other areas in country Victoria, in particular Morwell, Gippsland before Christmas. If you are interested in this training being provided in your areas, please call PCA Families.

I hope you can donate to our organisation to continue valued service. If you have any fundraising ideas, please give us a call or email info@pcafamilies.org.au; we would be happy to hear from you.

Brenda Carmen, General Manager

Donate to Permanent Care and Adoptive Families before the end of the financial year

As you are aware, PCA Families relies solely on grants and donations to offer support and advocacy to permanent care and adoptive families.

Figures from last years financial year show that only 36 per cent of Australian taxpayers claimed a deduction for a charitable donation. This means over 60% didn't claim a single dollar as a charitable donation.....**don't let this be you!**

With June 30 fast approaching, please donate to PCA Families and you can claim your refund within weeks! Any donations would be greatly appreciated!!! Here is the link <https://www.givenow.com.au/ppss> or you can call 03 9020 1833.

Dates for Your Diary

Thursday June 25
7.30—9.00pm
Peer support Peninsula

Thursday July 2
8.00 – 9.30 pm
Journal Club, Fairfield
formerly Collingwood

Friday July 17
10.30—12.00pm
Peer support Ballarat—Beechworth Bakery

Sunday July 26
10.00am—2.00pm
Life Story Work for adoptive parents - in CBD

Wednesday July 29
7.30—9.00pm
Peer support for Parenting Plus! - Thornbury

Friday July 31
10.00—12.00pm
Peer support Ringwood; Presentation on Education

Friday July 31
10.00am—2.00pm
Life Story Work for parents & carers—Bendigo

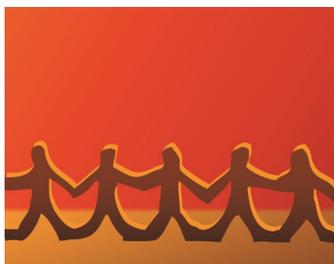
Tuesday August 4
10.00am—2.00pm
Life Story Work for professionals —Warrnambool

Wednesday August 5
10.00am—2.00pm
Life Story Work for parents & carers—Warrnambool

Thursday August 6
8.00 – 9.30 pm
Journal Club, Fairfield
formerly Collingwood

Tuesday August 18
9.30am—1.30pm
Life Story Work for professionals —Geelong

Information including venues and how to RSVP, visit www.pcafamilies.org.au/event-calendar-all



Life Story Work for parents and carers

Life Story Work is a therapeutic parenting tool to use with your children.

Children of families created through **permanent care, adoption, foster or kinship care** often require additional guidance from the adults in their lives to ensure they have opportunities to record their history. They may also need help reflecting upon the impact of this narrative on their life. Life Story Work is a researched and highly regarded approach to providing structure and purpose to children and families engaged in this activity. It includes communication and documentation tools to encourage identity and self-esteem development such as life books, journal writing, life maps, life narratives, therapeutic play and family trees.

Please join us at any of the events listed below.

Melbourne CBD — for adoptive parents only

Date Sunday July 26

Time 10.00am—2.00pm
(doors open at 9.30am)

Venue PCA Families,
Level 5, 50 Market Street,
Melbourne CBD

Booking <http://www.trybooking.com/HXTU>

Lunch and refreshments provided

Bendigo — for parents and carers

Date Friday July 31

Time 10.00am—2.00pm
(doors open at 9.30am)

Venue Bendigo (TBA)

Booking <http://www.trybooking.com/IBWQ>

Cost Adult \$40.00,
concession \$20.00

Lunch and refreshments provided

Warrnambool — for parents and carers

Date Wednesday August 5

Time 10.00am—2.00pm
(doors open at 9.30am)

Venue Warrnambool (TBA)

Booking <http://www.trybooking.com/IBWY>

Cost Adult \$40.00,
concession \$20.00

Lunch and refreshments provided

Life Story Work for professionals

Learn how life story work can be used by parents and carers as a therapeutic tool to use with children. Life story work begins a healing journey with children; helping them understand their past and present while providing resources to move on into the future.

At this session, we will also explore via guided discussion, Life Story Work and how this aligns with your agency and the work you do with families.

Warrnambool—for professionals

Date Tuesday August 4

Time 10.00am—2.00pm (doors open at 9.30am)

Venue Warrnambool (TBA)

Booking <http://www.trybooking.com/IBVI>

Cost \$60.00

Lunch and refreshments provided

Geelong —for professionals

Date Tuesday August 18

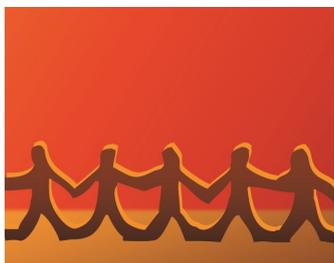
Time 9.30am—1.30pm (doors open at 9.00am)

Venue Geelong (TBA)

Booking <http://www.trybooking.com/IDUC>

Cost \$60.00

Lunch and refreshments provided



Guest speaker discusses trauma behaviour in the classroom

Come and hear Anne Flynn discuss educational perspectives on trauma and behaviour.

Anne Flynn is a primary and secondary teacher with a certificate in allied health.

In her role as a teacher, Anne has been working with children who have challenging behaviours. In particular Anne has been working with children who have been disengaged from school life because of their behaviour.

Since many of these children have experienced significant trauma and abandonment, Anne also advocates for the rights of children living with challenging behaviours and delivers information sessions to help schools adapt their programs to meet the needs of the children.

Date: Friday July 31

Time: 10.00—12.00pm

Where: Bendigo Bank, 62 Railway Ave, Ringwood East

RSVP: Deborah on 03 9020 1833 or email info@pcafamilies.org.au

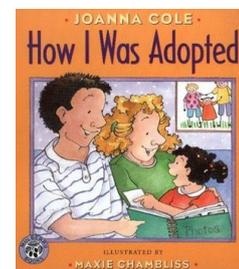
Cost: Free

Book review

How I was adopted

By Joanna Cole

Ideal Age group: Ages 4-8.



Adoption can be a complicated subject to talk about but after reading "How I was Adopted" Sam explains the steps in a way children can understand.

Sam uses this delightful picture book format to tell her story. She begins with a brief, but realistic lesson on how babies are born and then describes the adoption process and her family's delight in receiving their child. It explains in short sentences with fun full colour drawings which allows the reader to get to know Sam as she describes her room, her parents, and her history.

The language is simple, accurate, fun and playful. There is even a busy page near the beginning that allows a younger child to engage in a 'point and tell game' about the items in Sam's room. The whole story is a conversation with the reader.

"How I was adopted" includes a preface with excellent tips for continuing the conversation past the pages of the book.

TED Talks

Have you heard about "Ted talks"? This talk is about "How childhood trauma affects health across a lifetime"

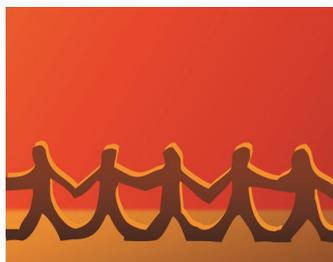
Nadine discusses how exposure to early adversity affects the developing brain of children and how prolonged toxic stress negatively impacts on the fear response centre of the brain which supports the content of the Parenting Plus! program. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Stressors include :

- physical, sexual and emotional abuse
- physical and emotional neglect
- incarceration
- parental mental illness
- parental substance dependence
- domestic violence
- parental separation or divorce

Essentially most people (67%) have experienced at least one ACE however the more ACE's (over 4) a child is exposed to, the greater the chance of experiencing poor long term health outcomes.

It is nevertheless a candid talk and may be useful for parents to hear. If you would like to listen to what Nadine has to say, follow this link

http://www.ted.com/talks/nadine_burke_harris_how_childhood_trauma_affects_health_across_a_lifetime/transcript?language=en



Melton!

Parenting Plus!



Don't miss out on our reputable Parenting Plus! course running over August and September. The course covers four separate modules built around the core challenges of parenting children with early experiences of disrupted attachment and trauma. The sessions explore:

- Impact of early experiences
- Models of Therapeutic Parenting
- Tools and strategies
- Understanding the impact of early experiences
- Triggers for parents and children

Date: combination of Thursdays and Saturdays. (commencing 20 August until 17 September) - Dates & times TBC

Location: Melton (venue to be advised)

Cost: PCA Families members \$240, concession card Holders \$150. Please call 9020 1833 to express your interest.

Department of Health and Human Services – Intercountry Adoption Victoria (ICAS)

Summary of statistics and program update – May 2015

The Victorian program is continuing to struggle to attract suitable and eligible prospective applicants for the current open and accepting overseas country programs. Combinations of the length of waiting times in country, eligibility requirements and the increasingly complex profile and ages of the children requiring placement are leading to greater withdrawal rates at all phases of the program.

Victoria currently has 60 active households who are at various stages of the adoption process.

The revised entry process took effect from 1st February 2015 with applicants no longer required to attend a mandatory information session. Unfortunately this has not resulted in any increase to applications. There continues to be a large interest in both the South Africa and Indian programs, which are both inactive. A combination of the wait in country for an allocation in addition to the special needs profile of the children appears to be influencing potential applicant's decision to not proceed.

We have scheduled additional education programs across the year to ensure that applicants do not experience long waiting periods to access these. The major issue faced in relation to providing education programs is their labour intensive nature for often a very small number of households e.g.: 2. This trial system will be reviewed in November 2015.

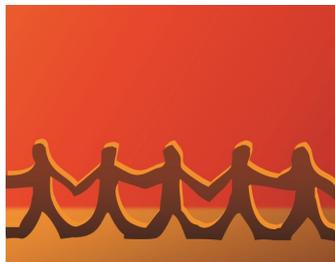
Second and subsequent applicants will continue to submit applications under the old system until the review period is finalised and a recommendation made.

Seven new applications have been accepted and are in the process of being approved with an additional six approved this year. Ten families have their files overseas and are awaiting a proposal. Four have had a child matched to them and are waiting to travel and 27 have arrived in Australia with their child and are receiving post placement support.

Most of the ten files that are overseas waiting are with China's mainstream program (3), Thailand (2) and the Philippines (2). The average waiting time for China's mainstream program is seven plus years. Thailand is four plus years and the Philippines are three years.

There have been eight placement proposals this year. All of these proposals were classified by the sending country as special needs. This year to date there has been nine children arrive in Australia (out of the 9 arrivals-6 relate to children proposed in the previous financial year). Four of these children came from India, two from Hong Kong and one each from Taiwan, Thailand and the Philippines.

In February the Commonwealth announced that they would be developing a support service for families going through the adoption process but that states and territories would continue to approve families to adoption. This service commenced Sunday 17 May with no prior notice to states and territories.



Legal Issues & Payments for Permanent Care Parents (LIP) project

From time to time we have students doing their placement with PCA Families to gain a greater knowledge of their field. At present we are fortunate to have Arianne Broadbent who is a Master of Social Work student at the University of Melbourne currently completing her final placement with PCA Families. Currently she is investigating the legal issues and payment aspects of permanent care.

The **Legal Issues & Payments (LIP) project**, addresses legal and financial support issues experienced by permanent care parents. Some of these issues have been identified through the PCA Families Telephone and Advocacy Support Service (TASS), while others have existed as long standing issues within the area of permanent care. PCA Families is working closely with Social Security Rights Victoria and Marilyn Webster, the Director of Research and Social Policy with the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, to complete the LIP project.

One component of the LIP project is to research and compile carer reimbursement payment rates at both a Federal level (i.e. Centrelink) and an individual state level; across Australia for adoptive parents, foster carers, kinship carers, and each state's version of permanent carers. This information will allow PCA Families staff to provide families who are joined through permanent care and adoption with the most up-to-date information about what financial payments they are entitled to receive in order to best support their children.

The second area of the LIP project is investigating the legal status of both the permanent care child and the permanent care parent following the granting of a Permanent Care Order. Specifically, this project will focus on issues around Child Support, Centrelink entitlements for children aged 16 to 18 who have experienced a placement breakdown, and the possibility of Paid Parental Leave for permanent care parents who have recently been granted a Permanent Care Order.

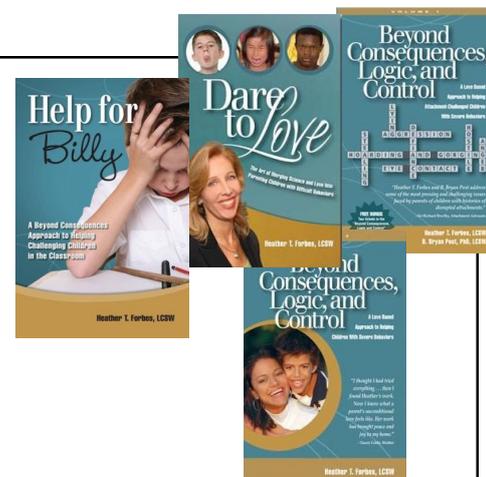
If you would like to discuss this project, or if you have experienced any legal or payment issues related to permanent care, please feel free to contact Arianne at Arianne@pcfamilies.org.au or (03) 9020 1833.

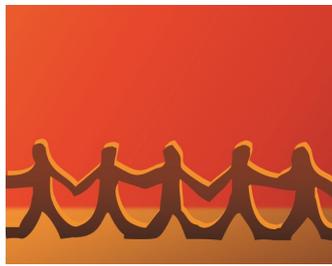
We have the following **Beyond Consequence Institute** books written by Heather Forbes in stock

- **Help for Billy**
- **Dare to Love**
- **Beyond Consequences Logic and Control Vol I**
- **Beyond Consequences Logic and Control Vol II**

All are **RRP \$20.95** (not including postage)

Act swiftly to avoid disappointment... you can either go online to order from our bookstore <http://shop.pcfamilies.org.au/books-for-parents-carers> or call 9020 1833 to arrange purchase. *PCA Families is the sole Australian distributor.*





Peer support

Peer support for permanent care and adoptive parents in Fairfield

Journal Club is a monthly facilitated discussion and support group where participants discuss an article relevant to parenting in home-based care and adoption. It allows confidential conversations around the challenges of parenting and is facilitated by skilled volunteers with lived experience in raising children through home-based care and adoption.

Journal Club will meet **Thursday July 2 from 8.00pm—9.30pm at the Fairfield Community Room, 121 Station St, Fairfield**

This month's topic is

Dreading Parent-Teacher Conferences?

<http://www.empoweringparents.com/dreading-parent-teacher-conferences-try-this-new-approach.php?&key=Abusive-And-Violent-Behavior>



Peer support for permanent care and adoptive parents in Peninsula

After having a break in the first term due to Parenting Plus training running, we are ready to re-group again and meet on **Thursday 25 June from 7.30—9.00pm**

Let's meet at the **Brass Razu, 13 Main Street, Mornington**

Please feel free to come along for a cuppa in a relaxed environment and chat to other parents who have a similar lived experience.



Peer support gathering for permanent care and adoptive parents in Bendigo

The peer support group gets together on a bi-monthly basis and will be meeting at different venues to keep life more interesting. In May we are meeting at

Sim R, 236 Hargreaves Street, Bendigo

Our next catch up will be **Wednesday 13 August from 10.30am—12.00pm**. Please feel free to come along for a cuppa in a relaxed environment to chat to other parents.

Pre-schoolers are welcome to attend. We look forward to seeing you.



Peer support for permanent care and adoptive parents in Ballarat

The peer support group meets on a bi-monthly basis and will meet in July at

Beechworth Bakery, 6 Grenville Street, Ballarat

Please join us on **Friday July 17 from 10.30—12.30pm** for a cuppa in a relaxed environment to meet and chat to others who have a similar lived experience.

