

caring matters

FKAT NEWSLETTER NO: 24

OCTOBER 2019

**FROM THE
PRESIDENT**

**FOSTER CARE WEEK
EVENTS AROUND
THE STATE**

**NATIONAL
CONFERENCE**

**WORKSHOPS AND
RESOURCES**

**NEWS &
EVENTS**

**UPCOMING BOARD
MEETING AND AGM**



from the chair.

MAGGIE PHILLIPS



Hi,

I would like to personally thank those carers who attended the High Teas that were held round the state to Celebrate Foster Care Week. FKAT invited carers to attend the High Teas as a thank you for the care they give to the States vulnerable children. Carers in the South attended the Hadley's Hotel, North West Carers enjoyed a visit to Monclair in Latrobe and Stonestrow Norwood was the venue for Northern Carers...these events were well supported.

Final event for foster care week in the North West was an initiative by OoHC Team leader Georgina Tindall, Glenhaven Family Care, Life Without Barriers, and FKAT... BBQ held at Camp Clayton for a combined celebration for all carers, this event was well attended by workers, carers, children, all enjoying the sunshine, with rock painting, mini gold trampolines football rock climbing for the adventurous ...great event.

The Australian Foster & Kinship Carer Partnership National Conference theme WALKING TOGETHER. Walk alone to get there faster, Walk together to go Far FKAT supported foster and kinship carers to attend the National Conference in Perth Western Australia held early September, 600 carers and workers attended from around the nation to enjoy the conference. Attending the conference gives you the opportunity to meet other carers, make new friends build up networks. Speaking with other carers from Perth also the regional areas of Perth, listening to their concerns makes you realise, the issues that are raised in Tasmania are the same in other states. Carers struggling to cope with the overwhelming pressure of caring for traumatised children with little support from their agencies, struggling to obtain assessments for these children, children being removed from placements when they are stable adding to their already traumatised lives. Walking together is an inclusive theme carers, workers, teachers, psychologist and families all walking together for a better outcome for children.

FKAT will be planning a State Conference for next year more information as planning gets underway. First Aid training is still on the agenda will be rolled as soon as possible.

Maggie



NATIONAL CONFERENCE

We had a number of Board members and foster carers attend the National Foster and Kinship Carers Association Conference in Perth in early September. There were some interesting workshops on a range of issues directly relevant to carers and the children and young people in their care.

Of note was a workshop on the 'Mockingbird model', which creates hubs of carers in a peer network, which is about to be developed here in Tasmania by LWB. We saw other workshops on alternative intensive care programs for children of high needs who may be currently in residential care.

We attended a workshop reporting on research family inclusion initiatives in child welfare including ways foster and kinship carers can “build bridges” for children to their biological families to strengthen their relationships and reunify. Definitely an interesting as well as challenging session.

Another workshop of note was from Claire Orange 'Best Program 4 Kids', providing lots of examples of resources for working with children and young people in care with complex trauma and attachments issues. The website for her resources is bestprograms4kids.com.



CEO

Dr Julian Watchorn



Transition to Independence Program

Extending out-of-home care is a new initiative that is being implemented in a variety of ways across Australia. The extension of support being implemented in Tasmania aims to improve transition planning before young people leave care and provide more support to young people transitioning to independence, with an initial focus on young people in family-based care. The program will be responsible for providing support once a young person's order lapses at 18 years of age.

The elements that are currently being implemented as part of this extended support program include:

Carer Payments: Family-based carers who provide ongoing support for young people aged 18 to 21 years are now eligible for carer payments (this is an expansion of the extended carer payments that were implemented in 2018 for family-based carers supporting young people aged 18 years who were completing education).

Participation in education is no longer an eligibility requirement for extended carer payments, this ensures that the carer payments are available to support a wider cohort of young people.

Information is currently being disseminated to family-based carers to inform them they can now apply for extended carer payments.

The implementation of extended support in Tasmania is a work in progress and there are still elements of implementation that are still being worked out. The first step is to ensure that carers can access the carer payments as quickly as possible, so that carers are financially supported if young people 18 to 21 years remain living with them.

TBRI Training

Children and youth in out of home care have often experienced complex developmental trauma, which lead to significant psychological and behavioural issues. Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) is a therapeutic model that trains caregivers to provide effective support and treatment for at-risk children. TBRI has been applied in orphanages, courts, residential treatment facilities, group homes, foster and adoptive homes, churches, and schools. It has been used effectively with children and youth of all ages and all risk levels. This model of therapeutic care has been widely adopted in New Zealand and we are excited to be developing this in Tasmania.

The overall goals of Trust-Based Relational Intervention® (TBRI®) are:

Create an environment of physical, social, and psychological safety

Recognize and meet children's physiological needs (e.g., hydration)

Structure experiences to enhance emotional and behavioral self-regulation

Enhance caregivers' mindful awareness and mindful caregiving

Build and strengthen secure attachments between caregivers and children

Build and strengthen resilience in caregivers and children

Help caregivers master the use of proactive strategies for behavioral change

Help caregivers master the IDEAL Response (Immediate, Direct, Efficient, Active, Leveled at behavior, not child),

Help caregivers master Levels of Response (Playful, Structured, Calming, Protective)

Here is a link to a great document on TBRI

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3877861/>

For a simpler understanding here is a link to an animated video on TBRI

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWScSJKjn1A>

As I have previously reported, we are seeking to develop statewide training for foster and kinship carers incorporating Trust Based Relational Intervention TBRI. We will be commencing this with free information sessions in November, in the North, North/West and South. We will emailing out information very shortly on these sessions. Please make sure that FKAT has an up-to-date email address for you. If you are unsure please contact Kerrie at the FKAT Office on **62120513** or email her at **admin@fkat.org.au**.

Foster Carers Helpline

13 SEPTEMBER 2019

ROGER JAENSCH, MINISTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES HELPLINE TO SUPPORT OUR FOSTER CARERS LAUNCHES

FOSTER AND KINSHIP CARE WEEK 2019 PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY TO RECOGNISE THE TREMENDOUS SERVICE THAT FOSTER CARERS PERFORM IN OUR COMMUNITY AND IN THE LIVES OF INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN.

BECOMING A FOSTER CARER CAN BE A RICH AND REWARDING EXPERIENCE, AND THE HODGMAN MAJORITY LIBERAL GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO DOING EVERYTHING

WE CAN TO SUPPORT OUR FOSTER CARERS WHO PROVIDE POSITIVE AND NURTURING ENVIRONMENTS FOR CHILDREN. IN ORDER TO SUPPORT FOSTER AND KINSHIP CARERS WITH ADVICE AND INFORMATION, THE TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT HAS SET UP THE FOSTER AND KINSHIP CARER HELPLINE.

THE HELPLINE IS A STATEWIDE SERVICE STAFFED BY EXPERIENCED EXPERTS WHO CAN GIVE DIRECT ADVICE OR REFER CALLERS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES IF REQUIRED, AND ASSIST WITH ANY MATTERS RELATING TO THE CARE OF A CHILD. IN ADDITION TO THIS, WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT THROUGH ROYAL LIFE SAVING TASMANIA, THE GOVERNMENT IS SUPPORTING NEARLY 200 CHILDREN LIVING IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE TO ACCESS LEARN TO SWIM SESSIONS.

CHILDREN WHO ARE IN PREP, GRADE 1 AND GRADE 2 IN 2019 AND LIVING IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE ARE BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART, AS ARE PARENTS AND CARERS WHO CAN ATTEND WORKSHOPS, TO LEARN ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER SAFETY.

THESE INITIATIVES BY THE GOVERNMENT ARE ENSURING OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUT OF HOME CARE ARE THE SAME AS FOR ANY CHILD IN THE COMMUNITY, AND THAT CHILDREN WHO ARE NOT ABLE TO LIVE AT HOME ARE PROVIDED WITH A POSITIVE AND NURTURING ENVIRONMENT. THE FOSTER AND KINSHIP CARER HELPLINE IS 1800 732 522.

CONTACT: TRENT DANN
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EVENTS CALENDAR

Carer Connect Meetings

North/West Carer Connect meetings are the third Wednesday of the Month, from 10.30 to 12 noon, at the Uniting Church Hall, Reiby St, Ulverstone.

Board Meeting

We have a Board Meeting scheduled for 11.00am on the Saturday 12th October at Grindelwald in Launceston. Members are welcome to come and meet the Board members before or after the meeting.

AGM

We will be holding our AGM following our Board meeting on the 12th October at Grindelwald in Launceston, commencing at 2.00pm. Members are welcome to attend.

Newsletter

Next newsletter due out in **December**.



Transition to Independence Program – extended support for young people leaving Out of Home Care

If you continue to provide family-based care for a young person between the ages of 18 - 21 years, you may be eligible to apply for carer payments.

In June 2019, the Tasmanian Government announced extended support for young people transitioning to independence from out-of-home care.

Foster carers, kinship carers and third-party guardians can now apply for extended carer payments to support a young person after their order lapses at 18 years of age until the young person's 21st birthday.

Extended carer payments will reduce each year to reflect the young person's increasing responsibility for their own wellbeing and affairs as they transition to independence:

- 18 years - payments will be maintained at the existing level and will be paid at departmental rates.
- 19 years - Payment will be reduced to the department's base rate for foster care
- 20 years - Payment will be reduced to 50% of the base rate until the young person's 21st birthday.

NEW eligibility requirements for extended carer payments:

- The young person must be in family-based care including kinship, foster or under third party guardianship immediately prior to their 18th birthday; and
- The young person must be aged 18 to 20 years to be eligible for extended carer payments (extended carer payments stop on a young person's 21st birthday); and
- The young person agrees to continue to reside in the formally approved primary carer's home beyond their 18th birthday; and
- The formally approved primary carer agrees to the young person continuing to reside in their home beyond the young person's 18th birthday; and
- The young person must reside with their formally approved primary carer on a full-time basis (at least four nights per week).
- The 'Application for Extension of Carer Payments' form is signed by the young person and their carer.

If a young person (aged 18 to 20 years) returns to live with their formally approved primary carer, following a period of time living independently, then an application can be submitted/re-submitted for extended carer payments.



ROYAL LIFE SAVING
TASMANIA



Dear Carer,

With the support of the Tasmanian State Government, Department of Sport and Recreation, Department of Communities Tasmania and the Foster and Kinship Carers Association of Tasmania.

Royal Life Saving Tasmania is offering Learn to Swim for children in Prep, Grade 1 and Grade 2 in out of home care in the current year being 2019.

Learn to Swim Lessons for Children in Out of Home Care.

We realise that as carers it can sometimes be difficult to personally fund, out of school activities for young people.

In 2018 Royal Life Saving Tasmania applied for Tasmanian State Government funding, to be used to give children in out of home care the opportunity to develop basic learn to swim and water safety skills.

The program also assists carers to receive support and resources ensuring they are aware of aquatic risks around the home, inland water ways and parks with ponds and the like.

Royal Life Saving Society - Australia works to prevent drowning and facilitate healthy, active lifestyles by equipping all Australians with water safety and lifesaving skills.

Royal Life Saving Tasmania is seeking expressions of interest for the following program

We would love you to take this offer and enjoy watching your children gain essential swimming & water safety skills over a ten-week program.

10 FREE

LEARN to SWIM & WATER SAFETY LESSONS

for Children in

“Out of Home Care”



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