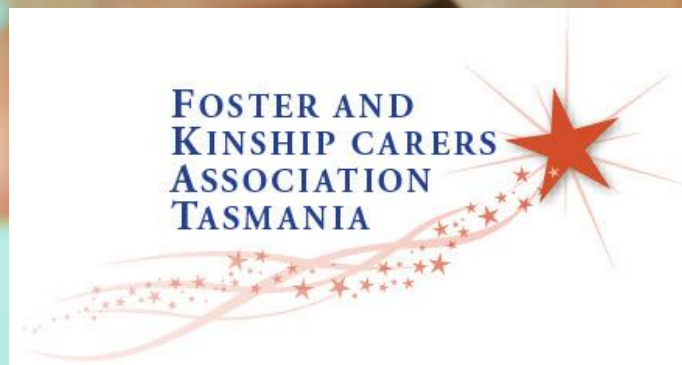


caring matters

**FKAT NEWSLETTER NO: 26
26TH OCTOBER 2020**

**FOSTER AND
KINSHIP CARERS
ASSOCIATION
TASMANIA**



FROM THE CHAIR



The year 2020 will be known as the year with a difference, with the year almost over we can look forward to what lies ahead. Since our last newsletter, FKAT hosted events around the state to celebrate Foster Care Week. This was an opportunity for carers to be acknowledged for all they do in caring for children/young people.

The title is Foster Care Week, however it's about recognising all carers, whether they are foster carers, kinship/relative carers, informal carers and grandparents. The role you play in the lives of the children/young people is beyond words, through all the struggles you continue to care, and this year has added to the struggles.

From discussion with a number of respite carers, just a friendly reminder for foster carers to pack two sets of clothes and some pocket money) when their children are going to respite. This would be a great help for the respite carers.

C.E.O. Kim organised gifts for carers and these were distributed through the agencies Kennerley Children Services, Life without Barriers, Key Assets, and CYS.

We held our Annual General meeting during September. There will be new members on the board and they will be announced after their induction. Christmas events will be included in this newsletter so don't forget to mark your calendars.

Maggie

CEO

DR KIM BACKHOUSE



Hi everyone, FKAT continues to remain focused on supporting all Tasmanian foster, kinship and informal kinship carers. I have had the opportunity to finally meet carers face to face again, over the past few months. I had the opportunity to speak with carers at our Board Meeting in Launceston in August. I also met with carers at our Carer Connect meeting in Penguin in September. It was also great to see so many carers engaged in numerous activities across Foster Care Week.

Most recently it was great to meet carers out at Chigwell in October, where Sue Hickey and her advisor Bec were in attendance to discuss current issues facing our carers. Further opportunity to engage with carers will occur with a meeting with Meg Dickson at our Rokeby Office to discuss Transfer of Guardianship. This will be held on Thursday 19th November from 1.45pm to 2.30pm, everyone welcome.

There will be further opportunity to meet carers at our Southern Xmas Lunch on the 11th December at the Claremont Golf Club from 11.30am until 3.00pm. I will also be hosting a Christmas Morning Tea on Wednesday 16th December at our FKAT Centre at Rokeby, from 10.00am until 11.30am. All carers are welcome to attend. Please note, any carers who requested Xmas presents from the Special Children's Christmas Party will be able to collect their presents at this time. This will be your only opportunity to do this. FKAT will also be hosting Christmas Lunches in the North and North/West, details of these are provided later in the Newsletter.

It has been fantastic that Anita Jones has been able to facilitate First Aid Training statewide. We did not have a lot of choices in regards to dates offered for these first aid training events, and we appreciate that they are late in the year but we are hoping for 16 carers at each training event. More details are provided later in the newsletter. Please be aware that we will be undertaking further First Aid training in March/April 2021, if you miss out on these ones.

I am pleased to let you know that Julian Watchorn will be undertaking a two-day training course with Informal kinship carers/Grandparents raising grandkids in the South, North and North/West later this year. More details are provided in his report.

We held our AGM in Penguin in September and I am pleased to announce that we have two new carers who will be joining our Board, Anne-Marie Wright (who will represent the North/West) and Belinda McPherson (who will represent carers statewide). Their appointments are subject to an induction process and they will officially join the Board for the December meeting.

I can announce the winner of our Covid Quiz is a carer from Forcett. She will be receiving a lovely handmade quilt as well as a hamper of beauty products.

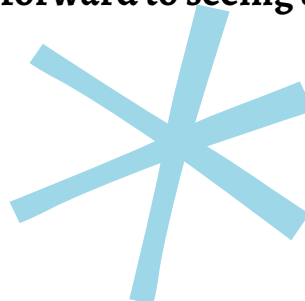
Julian and I had a meeting with the Minister recently and he was very keen to hear about issues facing foster carers, particularly during this Covid period. We discussed with the Minister a number of key issues including:

- **An identity card for carers,**
- **Sonya Enkelman's Discussion paper on Out of Home Care,**
- **Grandparents raising grandkids,**
- **Informal kinship carers,**
- **The possibility of an office in the North and North/West, and**
- **Training and support resources for all of our carers.**

Julian and I recently met with Sonya Pringle Jones (Children's Advocate) and Olivia Montgomery (Client Liaison Officer) to discuss systemic issues facing carers around care concerns and quality of care concerns. Please see the flyers from Sonya and Olivia later in the newsletter.

With lots of events coming up, I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible over the coming months.

Take care, Kim





TRAINING & SUPPORT

DR JULIAN WATCHORN

As I have previously reported, FKAT (with the financial support of the Sidney Myer Fund) developed the '**Carers Connect**' website to be a connection point for foster and kinship carers to access: training resources information, a calendar of events, and access to our advocacy and support services (FAST). Carers can access the website via the Resources Tab on our website fkat.org.au. To assist carers in navigating this comprehensive resource, I will be conducting an **Information Session** in Launceston on the **26th November (10.00 to 12.00)** and a **live webinar** on **9th December (10.30am - 11.30am)** to walk carers through the webpage resource and answers any questions they may have. We will also be making that recording available to be viewed later. Following the meeting in Launceston, I will be available from 12.00 until 1.00 to meet carers and discuss any care concerns. More details will be provided shortly including the venue details.

FKAT will be undertaking a **2-day training course** with **Informal kinship carers/Grandparents raising grandkids** on "Trauma Informed Care, Developing our understanding of the impact of trauma on children/young people and an awareness of the key principles for supporting their recovery". Please pass this on through your networks. Training will be conducted on the following dates.

North/West: Monday & Tuesday, **November 23rd & 24th** from 10.00am until 2.30pm (location to be decided);

North: Wednesday & Friday, **November 25th & 27th** from 10.00am until 2.30pm at the Tailrace Centre, Launceston;

South: Thursday & Friday, **December 3rd & 4th** from 10.00am until 2.30pm at the FKAT Centre, Rokeby.

There will be time at the end of each day for more general discussion around issues that may be challenging carers. For further information or to register for the training please email ceo@fcatas.org.au



STRATEGIC MATTERS

DR JULIAN WATCHORN

In 2019, we commenced the development of a pilot program (in collaboration with CYS) that will deliver a state-wide therapeutic care model called “**Trust Based Relational Intervention**” to carers and CYS staff and possibly Department of Education staff. I have been collaborating with Lionel Walters (CYS) and staff from University of Tasmania in developing the TBRI (Trust Based Relational Intervention) pilot training program. Progress with this has been stalled by Covid-19. We are now envisaging commencing a pilot training program at the **beginning of 2021**, followed later on by a roll out across the state.

I would also like to inform carers of the work FKAT have been doing at a **strategic level** in regards to a number of major reforms that are occurring within **Child Safety Services** that we have been actively involved with. Most importantly;

- a reform of 'Case in Care' Plans and the Care Team Meetings process, and
- a major review of the Care Concerns and Quality of Care Concern process.

Since July 2019, I have worked closely with the **Foster Carer Recruitment and Retention Committee** in promoting the public perception of foster carers and promoting new carers to Departmental OOHC.

I have also been undertaking the Chair role of the **Foster Carer Providers Group (FCPG)** since later 2019, which includes representatives from Child Safety, Departmental Out of Home care, and all of the non-government OOHC providers. This group became very active as Covid-19 began to impact on carers and the children and young people in their care.

julianwatchorn@fkate.org.au





With the Charter of Rights for Tasmanian Children and Young People in Care as the foundation, broadly speaking, the work required of the Child Advocate in individual advocacy matters falls into one of four areas, defined in categories on the following page.

In summary, and with an example, the individual advocacy work of the Child Advocate either:

- Provides advocacy to access the resources or outcomes needed for a child,
- Provides advice to adults on how to consult with a child,
- Involves consulting with a child to get their views, or
- Consulting with a child to obtain clarity on their views.

The length and extent of involvement of the Child Advocate is varied and is at times quite extensive. The Child Advocate will usually only cease involvement once satisfied that the planning and decision-making is child-centred, and involves the child in some capacity.

Determining what approach and to what extent the Child Advocate is involved will depend on the nature of the issues. For example, if all key adults state that Sammy wants to go home, the last thing Sammy needs is to have another adult asking the same question. What Sammy needs is for the Child Advocate to work with adults to overcome the challenges that are preventing or delaying Sammy getting home.

If, however, some adults articulate that Sammy wants to go home, and others state Sammy doesn't want to go home, the role of the Child Advocate will look different. The Child Advocate needs clarity on Sammy's views. To do this effectively, often the Child Advocate needs to consult with key adults to understand their views first, prior to meeting the child. This also helps adults to understand the Child Advocate role, and get their input into the Child Advocate's plans to meet with the child.

Determining what is in Sammy's best interests lies in consulting with Sammy, and indeed, it is in ensuring Sammy is able to participate in the decision making and planning, that Sammy's best interests are met when there has been differences of opinion amongst adults.



0419 970 181 / 1800 549 725



child.advocate@communities.tas.gov.au



communities.tas.gov.au/childadvocate



child.advocate.tas



GPO BOX 65 Hobart TAS

1. General Enquiry and seeking advice

A referrer may require information about what a child's rights are in a situation, how the Child Safety-OoHC system works, what should be expected, or how they may approach a particular issue.

The Child Advocate can access relevant detail from the Child Safety Information System, provide clarification, brief consultation and advice on how to pursue the resolution of an issue, or to connect them to relevant people or programmes.

This is a brief, information sharing process with minimal input from the Child Advocate.

2. Direct Advocacy

If a situation presents whereby all adults agree on what the child needs, and there is a consistent understanding of the child's views, the input of the Child Advocate is required to help overcome challenges that are due to either administrative, legal, financial, or systemic constraints.

The Child Advocate assists adults in adding weight to the child's views/needs to address the barriers that are impacting on decisions or actions required, when it is collectively agreed by all involved to be in the child's best interests.

This process requires consultation between the Child Advocate and the child's Care Team, and working with the Care Team to advocate for particular outcomes.

3. Capacity Building & consultation with a Child/Young Person

When adults are collectively working well, but might be unclear on the child's views and needs, or how to engage and/or assess a child, the Child Advocate provides advice on how a child can participate and ensure their voice is integral to planning and decision-making processes.

The Child Advocate provides recommendations to the Care Team on how child-centred consultation, decision-making and assessment can progress. If appropriate and aligned with the child's needs to have an independent person directly involved, the Child Advocate will engage directly in the consultation process with the child.

The Child Advocate works closely with all key adults so that a consistent understanding of why the Child Advocate is involved can be conveyed to the child.

4. Amplifying the Child/Young Person's views

If key adults have different views on what is in the child's best interests, and/or different understandings on what the views and wishes of the child are, then the work of the Child Advocate usually focusses on firstly establishing connected and inclusive planning and decision making processes, and helps to minimise the conflict by amplifying the child's needs.

This ideally occurs via a Care Team approach, and is the forum to help address different views. The Child Advocate provides a child centred perspective to this, which may have got lost in different competing adult agendas.

The Child Advocate will progress directly consulting with the child, ensuring all adults have a clear understanding of what the steps to this engagement involves, and that all adults demonstrate support of this process with the child.

Client Liaison Officer (CYF)

Since July 2020, **Olivia Montgomery** was appointed to the position of Client Liaison Officer within Children Youth and Families after 18 months of the role being vacant. Olivia comes to the role with no previous connection to the department or to the Child Safety Service but with experience in complaint handling and investigations after previous positions within the Department of Justice. The Client Liaison Officer's role is to co-ordinate and respond to all enquiries, complaints and feedback received by, or on behalf of, children families and carers.

The dedicated Client Liaison Officer position within CYF demonstrates the division's commitment to listening and responding to the views of children , families and carers in out of home care environments. This position works in collaboration with the independent Tasmanian Child Advocate Sonya Pringle-Jones. The two positions meet weekly and refer to one another and work together for the best outcomes for children, families and carers.

The Child Advocate's role is about ensuring that the child's voice is heard and that their best interests are at the forefront of any decision making, whereas the Client Liaison Officer's role is to manage complaints about the Child Safety Service, or practice concerns.

The Client Liaison Officer can receive complaints and enquiries directly from children, families and carers as well as via the Office of the Minister for Human Services, the Commissioner for Children and Young People and the Ombudsman.

Complaints and enquiries can be made to:
complaints.caf@communities.tas.gov.au
or Olivia can be contacted on **6166 3526**.

Invitation to Carers

North/West FKAT Christmas Party

Venue - Wesley Vale De'Cafe

Date - 16th December 2020 2 course Christmas Luncheon, a Christmas Hamper will be drawn. There will be Secret Santa, can carers to provide a small gift up to \$10.00. RSVP - Kim Backhouse or Maggie Phillips.

Northern FKAT Christmas Party

Venue - Apricus (used to be Stonestrow) Launceston.

Date - December 11th at 11:30am - 1:30pm

RSVP - Anita Jones. *(see following page)*

Southern FKAT Christmas Party

Venue - Claremont Golf Club, 1 Bournville Cres, Claremont TAS 7011

Date - Fri Dec 11, 2020 11:30am - 3pm Hobart

RSVP: Kim Backhouse by 8th December.

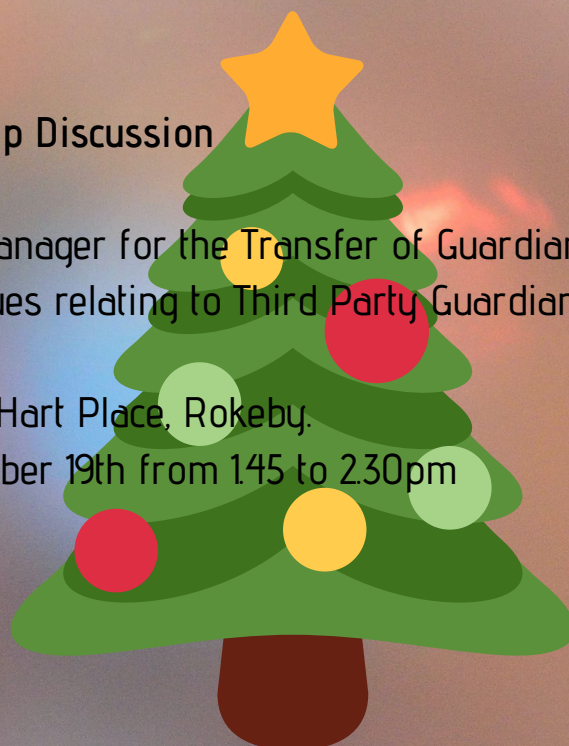
Transfer of Guardianship Discussion

Meg Dickson (Project Manager for the Transfer of Guardianship Project) will be available to discuss issues relating to Third Party Guardianship.

Venue - FKAT Centre, 4 Hart Place, Rokeby.

Date - Thursday November 19th from 1.45 to 2.30pm

RSVP - Kim Backhouse





EAT
DRINK
and be
MERRY

FKAT INVITE YOU TO JOIN US FOR A

Christmas Luncheon

DEC 11TH



11:30AM

APRICUS (STONESTHROW) - 55 SUNDOWN RD,
LAUNCESTON

RSVP TO ANITA BY DEC 8TH - 0451 309 775

**FOSTER & KINSHIP ASSOCIATION
TASMANIA INVITE YOU TO PLEASE
JOIN US FOR**

CPR AND FIRST AID TRAINING



NORTH • ST GILES (65 AMY RD, NEWSTEAD) • DEC 8TH

SOUTH • FKAT (4 HART PLACE, ROKEBY) • NOV 17TH

N.WEST • PARANAPLE CENTRE (145 ROOKE ST, DEVONPORT) • DEC 2ND



**EMPOWERING & TRAINING CARERS
TO BE CONFIDENT TO SAVE LIVES**

**WE UNDERSTAND
YOU MAY NEED TO
ARRIVE LATE AND
FINISH EARLY**

**FREE 6 HOUR
FIRST AID
COURSE IN
EACH REGION**

9:00AM - 3:00PM

TO BOOK YOUR SPOT PLEASE CONTACT ANITA ON 0451 309 775

FASD News

NOFASD Australia is a family-focused organisation and is the essential bridge linking those with lived experience with researchers and clinicians. For FASD information, guidance and support, contact the Helpline on 1800 860 613. The second series of our Pregnancy and Alcohol: The Surprising Reality podcast is now available. In this series, parents, carers, pioneers, and people living with FASD share their experiences each week. Use the following link.

<https://anchor.fm/pasurprisingreality/episodes/06A-Parents-and-Carers-Special-Part-01-eiv2mj>

Are you a Kinship Carer?

Kinship carers are invited to complete a 30-45 minute National Kinship Carers Survey which seeks to learn about the experiences and needs of kinship carers in Australia with a view to communicating this information to policymakers and stakeholders within the child protection and out-of-home care systems. Use the following link.

https://scu.au.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6G1Zzf6qUh86z9b

Workshops and webinars

As we practise social distancing, webinars and online learning are a great opportunity for professional development in your workplace or at home. Workshops – NOFASD offers a range of tailored workshops to suit community and organisation needs. We are now delivering our workshops via teleconferencing, so that remote teams can attend from their homes or offices. Read more or contact us to book a workshop. NOFASD provides a series of webinars for parents and carers, teachers, OTs, and those wanting to bust the myths of FASD.

Building Carer Resilience – two fantastic webinars for carers and the professionals who support them. Alcohol and Substance-Exposed Pregnancies – an online mini-course for maternal and child health staff working with pregnant women and their families.

Go to the NOFASD website for more information. <https://www.nofasd.org.au/>

Christmas Party

Where: Launceston

Date: Friday 18th December 2020

RSVP is essential (limited places available) Call 6223 7749 OR 1800 655 105

If leaving a voicemail or email, don't forget to leave us your contact number so we can call you back.

This is a free event for children and young people ages 0-25 with a care experience, and their care givers. Children will need to be accompanied by an adult.

A bus will travel from Hobart and the Northwest, if you require transport.

Thanks to our collaborative partners:



Baptcare





UPCOMING EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Check out our free activities for children and young people with a care experience!

For more information, details or to RSVP please contact the Tas CREATE Team on 6223 7749 or tasmania@create.org.au



CREATE YOUR FUTURE WORKSHOPS

Call Your Shots!

A workshop about how you can participate in decisions that affect your life!
This is a workshop for young people 13+ in the South

November 21st 1-3pm: Location TBC



YOUTH ADVISORY GROUPS (YAGS)

Join other young people 10+ and share your views!

North YAG

FRIDAY 13th November 4-6pm

Location TBC

Youth Change Makers

The Child Advocate's Youth Change Makers are Tasmanian young people 12-25 years old with a care experience.

Youth Change Makers meets face to face and online to help design the care system and ways to make it better. The group runs through a partnership between the Child Advocate and CREATE Foundation.

Call or email for more info if you are interested to join.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

FRIDAY 18th December @ Airtime 360, Launceston

GUARANTEED to be a hit! CREATE's amazing Christmas party, with Santa, BBQ and trampolines!! Gigantic play space for all ages. Don't miss out!

Children must be accompanied by an adult.

The is a free bus from the north west and the south if you need.

Bookings are essential. RSVP using the email or phone below.



6223 7749 Tasmania@create.org.au

www.create.org.au | www.createyourfuture.org.au

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