

AnglicareSA Awards

On the 25th of August AnglicareSA held its annual awards ceremony. As an ongoing recognition of what a valuable contribution Foster Carers make to the lives of the children and young people they care for but also our society and organisation as a whole, an award specifically for Foster Carers was introduced. Many nominations were received and the executive committee of AnglicareSA had the unenviable task of trying to select 3 winners out of such a large and deserving list (I am still not sure how they did it!)

Congratulations to **Jennifer Shegog, Ken and Sharon Bretag, and Lois Sullivan** on their awards.



Farewell Marjory!



Marjory Ingram retired from AnglicareSA on Friday 16th October 2015 after many years of service in a number of different roles within Connecting Children and Young People. Marjory initially came to AnglicareSA in the early 2000's where she worked as a Respite/Placement worker at the Elizabeth Mission. Marjory then had a break from AnglicareSA and South Australia for a couple of years when she got married and moved to WA but upon her return to SA in 2008, AnglicareSA was lucky to have her back again.

Marjory has undertaken a number of different roles including; Placement Support Worker; Respite Worker; Placement Worker; number of Acting Manager posts, culminating in her most recent post as Manager, Foster Care Support Services. With Marjory's retirement we will remember not only her great love and passion for spreadsheets, databases and stats (what will we do without you!), but her genuine care for everyone who's lives she touched. Her passion and "heart of gold" has been greatly valued and she will be missed.

FosterCare

Join the Family.

CarerNews

Welcome to the October edition of Carer News!

October 2015

As we draw near to the close of the year (and the start of the silly season!) I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank you all for your ongoing commitment and care for the children and young people in your homes.

We feel a great responsibility in partnering with you and are committed to advocating for greater rights for you as foster parents and carers.

If you were at our Foster Care Week Cocktail Event you would have heard our CEO Peter Sandeman talk about our ongoing discussions with Minister Susan Close and the Department of Education and Child Development. Specifically, we have been discussing the review of the Families SA Consents and Decisions document which outlines who is responsible and able to make decisions for children and young people under Guardianship of The Minister. We were pleased to have been given the opportunity to gather and present your thoughts and strategies for improvement and will continue to work with the Minister and Families SA on this.

As most of you would be aware the Interim Report of the Select Committee on Statutory Child Protection and Care in SA was released on September 24. There are 40 recommendations stated within the report.

Please go to: <http://www.parliament.sa.gov.au/Committees/Pages/Committees.aspx?CTId=3&CId=307> if you would like to read the full report.

ONE COMMUNITY

One Community Campaign

Being a foster carer is taking an opportunity to change a child's life forever when the child is unable to live with their birth parents. Foster carers are heroes to our community by giving their time, compassion, support and their love to help children right across South Australia.

We need to do more to acknowledge and support the important role that foster carers have in raising children and young people.

The importance of recognising this role was highlighted following the tragic passing of Monica Perrett's foster son, Finn, in May 2014. Under current South Australian law, foster parents are excluded from involvement in the funeral or being listed on the death certificate. These are rights that all parents expect during tragic circumstances such as a child's death, but they are not currently extended to foster carers like Monica.

AnglicareSA have been advocating for enhanced rights for foster carers – in particular, to see more permanency given to them.

We are working closely with foster carers and Minister Close and the Department for Education and Child Development, to review the current rights and identify improvements to acknowledge the role of foster carers.

Sign up to support the campaign on the One Community website:

<http://oncommunitysa.org.au/campaigns/more-rights-for-foster-parents/>

You should have received a letter from Minister Susan Close in early August, where she introduced herself as the recently appointed Minister responsible for child protection and set out her commitment to 'giving more children the benefit of safe and stable foster homes.'

Please advise your Foster Care Support Worker if you did **not** receive this letter as we have been working with the Minister's office to identify anyone that was missed.

I would also like to extend an invitation to anyone that would like to be part of one of our Carer Reference groups in 2016. The groups are held monthly (apart from school holidays) in Salisbury and Christie Downs. Nominations are now open, please talk to your Support Worker for more information and to register your interest.

Thank you, and we hope to see you at one of our Christmas events.

Estelle Paterson, Acting Senior Manager
Connecting Children and Young People.



Australian
Childhood Foundation
Protecting Children

Did you know that the Human Brain has 100 billion neurons at birth? Neurons are life's building blocks and allow us to learn and develop through these neurons connecting and building pathways about our world.

The Australian Childhood Foundation has many resources on the brain and supporting healthy brain development. Please go to our website or query resources available to you with your AnglicareSA Foster Care Support Worker.

Melissa Powney, Therapeutic Specialist
The Connect Program

www.childhood.org

'Carer News' is produced for AnglicareSA Foster Carers by the Foster Care Services Team.
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Contributions and suggestions are most welcome....

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If you wish to receive this Newsletter electronically please email jkoen@anglicaresa.com.au

Around our AnglicareSA

Spotlight on the Evolution Program

The Evolution Program, located in Kilkenny, is set up to support “at risk” young people under the Guardianship of the Minister, who have been suspended or excluded from mainstream school, or require a flexible learning option to help support engagement with their learning.

Evolution also work in partnership with ICAN (Innovative Community Action Networks), working with “at risk” school students who are at risk of disengaging from mainstream school, building employability skills, facilitating transition from learning to earning pathways, as well as assisting with further education, and advocating for their needs.

The program has been operating for just over 13 years, engaging clients in experiential learning, providing help and support with accredited/non accredited literacy and numeracy, life skills for independent living, and employability skills for work readiness.

Evolution offers Case Management Services to support young people break down these barriers, and build motivation to set and achieve goals to assist with further learning, or employment pathways. Case Workers encourage family support through this process, to insure that all stakeholders are on board and assisting young people using the same strategies, to assist with a successful outcome.

Evolution’s Educational Workshops consist of engaging students in a Certificate I & Certificate II in Foundation Skills. This is a basic qualification aimed at assisting students in the fundamentals of literacy & numeracy for the workplace.

Life Skills workshops can consists of range of things, such as Health & Nutrition, Cooking, Children’s rights, Arts n Crafts, with workshops developed based on need, or on request by

students. Consultation with young people is key in making Evolution Work.

Evolution also run Holiday Programs each Holiday break for Guardianship clients, providing them fund and engaging activities, but also offering an opportunity for Foster Carers to have some respite.

For more information contact your Foster Care Support Worker.

Learning & Development

Update on the Foster Carer Training Calendar

We have now provided details for Learning and Development opportunities for the coming months, from September 2015 to January 2016. The Learning and Development Team have been able to organise a number of learning and development sessions including but not limited to:

- *Balanceology*
- *Child Safe Environments Refresher*
- *Infant Care - Birth to two years*
- *Self-Harm Support*
- *Sexual Predator Awareness*
- *Centrelink, Consents and Decisions*

If you have **not** received the updated Learning and Development information in the mail, if you need to find out more information about the sessions available, or to book into a session, you can either contact your Foster Care Support Worker or the Learning and Development Team using the contact details provided below.

E-mail: fostercaretraining@anglicaresa.com.au

or Phone: Kate Lyall 8131 3427 or Jenny Fraser 8131 3461

Updates from the teams....

Southern Foster Care Support

Move to Southern Hub

On the 18th September 2015 the Southern Foster Care Support team moved into our new office, at the new Outer Southern Hub. The team worked hard packing and unpacking, as well as assisting other programs in their move. It is great to be located with other AnglicareSA services such as Communities for Children Onkaparinga, Children’s Contact Service and Staying Attached Program. The new site is looking great already and we are working on getting unpacked and settled.

Our new address is 111 Beach Road, Christies Beach.

Our phone numbers remain the same.

Come for a visit anytime!

Updates from teams – South

It has been a busy time for the Southern Team with some staff changes.

Michelle Blackwell started in the role of Manager Southern Foster Care Support in July 2015.

Michelle Bigland moved to a New Carer Support role and Liz Dos Santos moved to the long term Placement Worker role within AnglicareSA. Luckily for us, Michelle is still part of our Southern Team, as is Anna Olde, providing New Carer Support.

We also welcomed Joanne Millard to our team as a new Foster Care Support Worker. We are thrilled to have her on board.

Ida Mandelos has transitioned from her role of support worker into the Senior Worker Role. The team are all appreciating her support.

Northern Foster Care Support

The Northern Foster Care Support team have said goodbye to FCSW Laura Harvey and welcomed new worker Bernadette Sahb, who brings a broad range of experience over many years. Also joining the team are new carers Support Workers Barbara Gould and Eva Wielogorska, moving from the central new carer support team in line with our new structure. Also in line with our new structure, we welcome Jessica Green to the position of Senior Worker. Jessica has been a FCSW with the team for 3 years.

Thank you to all of those who attended the September Gully Group to farewell Marjory Ingram. Feedback has been received that it was one of the best groups yet and enjoyed by all.

Specialist Team

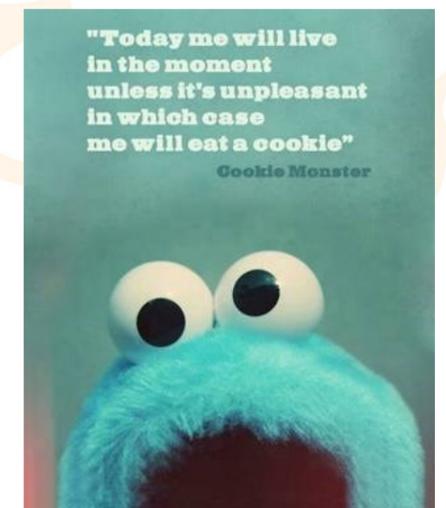
As September came to a close, a special evening was held for our Fresh Start carers and their young people. The Fresh Start Carer’s groups give our carers and young people an opportunity to relax, unwind, enjoy some food and to be able to engage with one another in a supportive and entertaining environment.

The evening’s overarching theme was on Mindfulness, Self-Compassion and Play Therapy. An interactive presentation was held that focused on the effectiveness of mindfulness as a self – care strategy for carers and also a tool that can be used to exercise and strengthen the minds of the young people that we work with. Our carers were given a list of resources as well as a multitude of tools and practical methods to implement mindfulness and self-compassion in day to day life.

The evening was a great success and was a fantastic opportunity for the young people within Fresh Start to get to know one another and to engage in some fun activities with our hard working Fresh Start staff as well. Below is an extract from our presentation on the night...

Self-compassion involves being kind to ourselves when life goes awry rather than being self-critical. It recognizes that the human condition is imperfect, so that we feel connected to others when we suffer, rather than feeling separate or isolated. It also involves mindfulness, the recognition and non-judgmental acceptance of painful emotions as they arise in the present moment. Science shows that self-compassion is more effective than cultivating self-esteem in ourselves and in our young people.

Mindfulness is the awareness that emerges, through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, nonjudgmentally, to the unfolding of experience from moment to moment.



Save the Date– Christmas Events!

In the coming weeks you should receive more details about upcoming events to celebrate the festive season. In the meantime please save these dates in calendars—it is always nice to come together to celebrate the year.

Victor Harbor: Christmas lunch is being held on Monday 7th December, 12noon at McCracken Country Club

South: Event will be held on 3rd December at Café Primo, Marion for lunch, time TBA

North: Tuesday 24th of November for a lovely Christmas lunch, details TBA

Specialist Team: Will be held on 27th November at Tin Lids Play Café 6.30pm