



CARER CONNECT

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IN THIS ISSUE

Shared Family Care Program has had an exciting year since our move in August to the new premises at 296 Ross River Road, Aitkenvale. Our aim is that the new offices provide greater accessibility for our foster carers and greater exposure to the general public.

As many of you would be aware, Althea Projects is required to pass external accreditation for the Queensland Government's Human Services Quality Framework. After a great outcome during the mid-cycle audit in March 2015, SFC and Althea Projects as a whole is now preparing for our very first whole of organisation audit in June. We are hoping for our Carers to once again volunteer to participate in this process. Most of you should have received a letter in the post over the past week about this.

Shared Family Care remains the largest funded organisation for the provision of foster carer support services in the Townsville Regional area.

Shared Family Care Program has experienced a very productive year over the past 12 months with a huge emphasis on

In addition to the recruitment and advertising initiatives spoken about in previous Carer Connects, we are now thrilled to also have the NQ Cowboys supporting Shared Family Care through their Field of Dreams promotion. We thank 4TO FM for nominating our organisation to the Cowboys and hope that all Carers and children who receive tickets enjoy the games. Thanks Cowboys!!

On a personal note, I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to each and every one of our Foster and Kinship Carers. Our children are our most precious resource. This has been said many times, by many people. Thank you for investing your time, love and care into the children you look after on behalf of our community.

Mandy Thompson

CEO, Althea Projects

May 2016

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Please send your contributions to admin@altheaprojects.org.au



health and wellbeing

Building healthy relationships

Good parenting skills are always acquired with time. In order to become the best parent one has to keep on learning.

Parenting is not something which can be taught in a school. And no one can become the best parent from Day 1.

So take your first step towards being the 'best parent' and understand the suggested ways which can help improve your parental skills.

1: Be a good listener

It is essential to understand your child and for that, it is important to listen to them. Many parents just keep on explaining the do's and don'ts without giving the child an opportunity to explain his fears, anxieties and doubts. Be sure to give your total and undivided attention to your child, when they communicate with you.



2. Show your unconditional love

It is obvious that all parents love their child, but it is also necessary to show your love and affection visibly. After all, nobody, least of all a kid is a mind reader! An embrace every day and few loving words can make your child feel cherished and beloved. At the same time, the child will feel safe and happy.

3. Spend some quality time with your Children

There is a difference between 'spending time' and 'spending quality time'. Being a parent you should try to make the most of your time with your kids interactive, i.e., by playing games, telling stories or even by simply chatting about all things under the sky. This will strengthen your emotional bonding with your child.

4. Be firm, fair and friendly

It is important to decide disciplinary rules at home. The rules should be fair and just which implies that punishment for breaking a rule should not be too harsh. However, in all cases the communication should be amicable, non-threatening and non-abusive. Your child should respect you and not be afraid of you.

5. Be firm, not flakey in your boundaries

Don't make rules just for the sake of them! It is necessary to establish firm boundaries and to stick with them. One should not change rules frequently as per their convenience. If you strictly follow the rules that you had created, it sends a firm signal to your child to abide by them.

6. Set a remarkable example

A parent is a child's first role model and they should not have clay feet. What you tell your child and what you follow should be the same. As it is rightly said, a child might learn less from what you say but more from what you do. Be a role model to your child in all senses.

7. Use appreciation, not condemnation:

Positive parenting is very important. Instead of always telling your children what not to do, try to tell them what to do. Also remember to give them proper praise and recognition for all the good work they do. You can also reward them for their good deeds; it ensures that such behaviour gets repeated.

cultural connect



We are very proud of our first ever Indigenous Corporation logo. Thanks to Michelle Pilot Tyhuis for the design—we love it!

National Sorry Day – 26 May 2016

National Sorry Day is an Australia-wide observance held on May 26 each year. This day gives people the chance to come together and share the steps towards healing for the Stolen Generations, their families and communities. Stolen generations refer to Australian Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders who were forcibly removed from their families and communities.

NAIDOC Week Townsville – 3/07/2016 – 10/07/2016

This year's National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) will commence on the 3- 10 July 2016.

Townsville NAIDOC Week provides an opportunity for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians to join together and recognise the valuable and continuing contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians have made to this country.

NAIDOC Week is a celebration of significant reconciliation and closing the gap process between Indigenous and Non Indigenous people by promoting understanding, acceptance and harmony - regardless of cultural background. This also continues to strengthen new and existing partnerships. It is through these partnerships that we can lead and raise broader community awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures.

National Reconciliation Week 27/05/16 – 03/06/16

National Reconciliation Week is celebrated across Australia each year between 27 May and 3 June. The dates commemorate two significant milestones in the reconciliation journey—the anniversaries of the successful 1967 referendum and the High Court Mabo decision.

The week is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures and achievements and to explore how each of us can join the national reconciliation effort.

May 27 marks the anniversary of Australia's most successful referendum and a defining event in our nation's history. The 1967 referendum saw over 90 per cent of Australians vote to give the Commonwealth the power to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and recognise them in the national census.

On 3 June, 1992, the High Court of Australia delivered its landmark Mabo decision which legally recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a special relationship to the land—that existed prior to colonisation and still exists today. This recognition paved the way for land rights called Native Title. 2012 marked the 20th anniversary of the Mabo decision.





ALTHEA PROJECTS INDIGENOUS LOGO ON FURY SHIRTS



Althea Projects are very excited for the upcoming Fury game being held on 30th July 2016, as for the first time the Indigenous logo will be showcased on the Fury shirts/jerseys. Althea projects will have a limited supply available for purchase, so if you are interested in purchasing a shirt, please contact us on 4779 3332 before stocks run out. Orders need to be in by the 12th June.

Please see below the different styles of shirts that will be available.

Yellow — Goal Keeper



Playing Strip



Polo Shirt



events and opportunities

Kinship and Foster Carer celebration



The Kinship and Foster Carer celebration evening dinner was held at Brother's Leagues Club held on Friday, 22 April 2016. Sandra Moore, Regional Executive Director, and Nicola Jeffers, Regional Director for Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. Another special guest was a gorgeous young girl who sang "Don't give up on us" so magically bringing tears of joy to the room.

The function was attended by TAIHS, Pathways and Life Without Barriers carers, as well as the Shared Family Care foster carers who were able to attend. Shared Family Care appreciate the difficulties a lot of our kinship and foster carers had in sourcing sitters for the children in their care so they could attend the Celebration evening, however, please be aware that your presence was missed.



events and opportunities

T150 Heritage Day

15 May 2016
10:00 am - 02:00
pm
West End Park

Messy Play In The Park

25 May 2016
09:30 am - 11:00 am
Aitkenvale Park

Free Tickets

Cowboys VS Manly

27th June at 1300 Smiles Stadium

If you are interested in attending please contact your family case worker to arrange tickets.



Billabong Sanctuary Passes Available

Shared Family Care have a number of passes available for our Foster Carers to access so that they can visit Billabong Sanctuary. As many as 17 people can attend on each card at one time.

If you are interested in using the cards please call Shared Family Care on 47793332 to book to attend

Riverway Movie Night

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day
27 May 2016
06:30 pm
Cost- Free



T150 4TOFM Pacific Festival

03 Jun - 05 Jun 2016
11:00 am - 09:00 pm
Every day, until 5th Jun 2016
Friday: 5pm - 9pm, Saturday:

V8 Supercars Castrol EDGE

Townsville 400

8 Jul 2016 to 10 Jul 2016

Reid Park

55 Boundary Road, Townsville

training

Upcoming

Evolve Interagency Services Training

Day 1.

Brain Development and Complex Trauma

Trauma and Attachment

Anxiety and related case studies

Day 2

Strategies and Skills for Positive Behaviour Support

COST

Free (Tea and coffee, Certificate of Training, training materials CD all provided)

WHEN

Townsville

Day 1: Wednesday 8.06.2016 (8.30am – 4.30pm)

Day 2: Thursday 09.06.2016 (8.30am – 4.30pm)

Charters Towers

Day 1: Wednesday 27.07.2016 (8.30am – 4.30pm)

Day 2: Thursday 28.07.2016 (8.30am – 4.30pm)

WHERE

Townsville

Conference Room, Townsville Hospital and Health Service
35 – 38 Gregory Street, North Ward, Townsville

Charters Towers

Eventide Aged Care Campus
57 – 78 Dalrymple Rd, Charters Towers

HOW TO REGISTER

To register or request more information,
please contact:

Shannon Baker

Phone: 4433 9068

Email: Shannon.Baker@health.qld.gov.au



Caring for infants who have experienced domestic and family violence

The Practice Leadership Unit, Department Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, is hosting a series of two day free training events led by Wendy Bunston (La Trobe University, Melbourne).

OVERVIEW

Day One Thursday 16th June (9am to 3pm)

'let's start at the very beginning' - overview of the impact of trauma and family violence on infant and child development

'going into lock down' how the overwhelmed child defends themselves

'the ties that bind' – how infants and children attach and/or fail to attach to caregivers

'what lies beneath' – understanding the stories behind the story that traumatised infants and children present us with

Day Two Friday 17th June (9am to 3pm)

'a few good men' - the critical importance of 'good men' in the lives of infant and children

'living in hope' - what we give and what we get from caring for children

'it is easier to build strong children' – introduction to infant and child led thinking

'what a difference a day makes' – how we make every contact count

COST

Free

WHERE

Mercure Inn
166 Woolcock St
Townsville



HOW TO REGISTER

To register or request further information,
contact:

Administration and event management

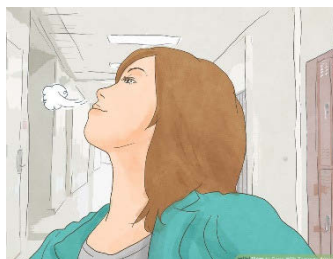
PLUmailbox@communities.qld.gov.au



kids corner

Managing Anxiety

Anxiety is the general feeling of worry, stress, and tension we all live with to some extent. It can be difficult to deal with anxiety at any age, but teenagers also have school, friend, and family issues to deal with that can make anxiety a huge burden. Get familiar with numerous coping strategies that can help you deal with the anxiety in your life.



breathe deeply

It's a portable tool that you can use any time, anywhere, and no one can see you do it. Deep breathing helps a major nerve running to your brain, called the vagus nerve, to send a message to relax and loosen up, so before your next exam try this deep breathing exercise.

Gently place a hand on your belly. Breathe in slowly through your nose, to a count of 4, feeling the air inflate your belly, pushing your belly slightly against your hand. Hold the breath for a count of 4 then slowly exhale for a count of 4, feeling your belly sink back. Repeat 3 times or until you feel calmer



tense and release your muscles.

Sometimes, stress and anxiety we feel gets built up in our muscles and we don't even realize it. By practicing what is called progressive muscle relaxation, we release this built up tension and feel better.

Focus on one muscle group at a time. People often start with their face and work down to their toes. Take a slow, deep breath, then squeeze the muscles in your face (not so tightly that you hurt yourself) for 5 seconds. Slowly relax the muscles you just tensed, rest 5 seconds, then move to another muscle group, doing each slowly and in turn until your whole body feels more relaxed.



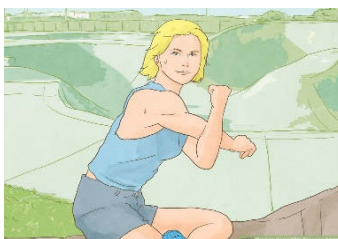
practice relaxation

Really relax, not just in front of a device or screen. Tai chi, for example, is a physical practice with a mind-body connection that truly help you to relax and cope with your anxiety.^[1] Relaxation can't completely take away your anxiety but it will help



get enough sleep

Sleep is the body's time to rest and regenerate so you can be better prepared to deal with your day. In your teen years, you need about 9 hours of sleep a night. If you don't get enough sleep, you can have low energy, memory problems, and difficulty thinking, and be irritable. Try to go to bed at the same time every night and wake at the same time every day. A regular schedule helps regulate the sleep chemical in your brain called melatonin.



exercise

Your brain needs oxygen to cope and the best way to get it there is through exercise. If your brain isn't getting enough oxygen, you'll be on edge, irritable, and tense. Getting more exercise also means reduced tiredness, increased alertness and concentration, and clearer thinking. Exercise releases endorphins, the chemicals in your brain that make you feel good, and is therefore recommended by doctors for everyone who has anxiety or depression.



be brave

Make efforts to face your fears. Take reasonable risks and get involved. Your confidence will increase, as will your ability to deal with anxiety inducing situations.

Don't avoid school or social situations that make you anxious. You're just delaying the inevitable. Instead, leave your comfort zone and push yourself a bit.



child safety news

Maintaining confidentiality

Everyone who works with children, young people and their families, needs to respect their privacy and maintain confidentiality.

As a foster carer or kinship carer, you need to be aware of your responsibilities under the *Child Protection Act 1999* for handling information you may receive in your role as a carer.

You must not disclose information, or give access to information about another person (including a child, young person or their family), unless it is necessary to perform your role as a carer, or it is for the child's protection and wellbeing.

There are some circumstances where it is permissible to use or disclose information.

For example, if it is required or permitted by law, or if the information is about the person you are disclosing it to.

Always talk to your Child Safety officer or your Althea Case Worker first, if you are unsure about what information can or can't be disclosed.

You must not publish information without the written approval of the Director-General of the department of Communities that could identify a child as:



A child who has been the subject of an investigation under the Child Protection Act 1999

A child who is in the custody or guardianship of the chief executive

A child for whom an order is in force

A child living in Queensland who has been harmed, allegedly harmed or is allegedly at risk of harm by a parent, step-parent or another family member.

This includes publishing information on social media (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Myspace, other discussion forums), or by way of television, newspaper, radio or other form of communication.

You can always discuss details about the child and their family with relevant Department staff, your CSO or Althea Case Worker

Only disclose as much information as necessary, to help that person understand and meet the child's needs.

You may share certain information about a child with others (for example a school teacher, child care staff member, Foster Care QLD or member of your immediate family) if it is necessary for the child's protections and wellbeing or to perform your duty as a carer.



Tips for Maintaining Confidentiality

Before sharing information, ask yourself "does this person need to know the information I am about to share?"

Ensure that personal information is stored securely, For example, hard copy records are locked away in a filing cabinet and electronic records on your computer are password-protected.

If in doubt, ask your CSO or Althea Worker about what information can be disclosed

If you intend to provide information or photographs to the media about a child in care or allow the media access to a child in care, you must first check with your CSO that nothing is disclosed that indicates that the child is in care.

Maintaining confidentiality does not prevent you from advocating for the child. However, it is important that you disclose the least amount of information necessary.



fire safety for children



Ensure that all adults in the household know and understand the latest fire safety tips and how to use and maintain smoke alarms, fire blankets and fire extinguishers and how to call Triple Zero (000) in an emergency.

Maintain adequate supervision of your children.

Trying to scare children about fire, or what will happen to them, can be counter productive. Remain calm and always be honest and reasonable to children in your response and approach to the issue.

Understand that receiving a minor burn from fire may not reduce a child's level of interest.

Be aware that children watch and copy behaviours so set a good example around the home in the way you use heaters, open fires and other heat sources.

Teach your children that fire is a tool, NOT a toy and may be useful when used

Try channelling their energies towards more positive activities such as sport.

Smokers are more likely to have children that play with fire so consider quitting smoking to give your family the best chance of preventing the behaviour.

Any lighters and matches you need to keep should be kept secure under lock and key.

Watch for evidence of fire play such as burns on bedding or clothing, or lighters or matches in their pockets.

Ensure that your home has sufficient working smoke alarms and consider installing them in all bedrooms / sleeping areas for extra protection.

Everyone should know what to do if a fire occurs in their home. Take the time to learn about escape plans and remember to include your children in the discussion, planning and practice.



regional news



National Families Week

National Families Week 2016

Stronger families, stronger communities

National Families Week 2016 will be held from Sunday 15 May to Saturday 21 May 2016 (coinciding with the United Nations International Day of Families on 15 May). The aim of National Families Week 2016 is to celebrate the vital role that families play in Australian society.

The 2016 theme is '*Stronger families, stronger communities*'.

Shared Family Care will be at the **Charters Towers Sunday Markets**

Sunday 22nd May 8am-2pm
Centenary Park, Hackett Terrace,
Charters Towers



partnerships & supporters



Our deepest appreciation

Aboriginal Women's Shelter - Flora House
 Adspeak Marketing
 Anonymous Donors
 APEX
 Australian Government - Dept of Social Services
 Backpacks 4 Aussie Kids Inc
 B-Fitt
 Brothers League's Club
 Café Bambini Fairfield Waters
 Café 1939, Townsville Airport
 Captains Lounge Café, Townsville Airport
 Centacare Townsville
 Centrelink (Townsville Cyclones Social Club)
 Child and Mental Health Services
 Churches of Christ Pathways Fostering Service
 Coast 2 Country Housing Company
 CWA Country Women's Association
 Danielle Josey
 Drug Arm Australasia
 Drop-In Centre
 Families of Townsville
 Family Emergency Accommodation Townsville
 Food Relief NQ
 Food Rescue
 Fortel Communication Pty Ltd
 Foster Care Queensland
 Grill'd Restaurant, Townsville
 GYG Restaurants, Townsville
 Life Without Barriers
 Leos Club
 Lions Club City of Townsville

Lotsa Printing Pty Ltd
 Maria House - Women's Shelter - Ozcare
 Mayors Christmas Tree Appeal
 Moore Stephens Queensland Limited
 Nth Qld Domestic Violence Resource Service
 Outcome Results
 Pyjama Foundation
 QCWA Tsv Branch
 Qld Dept of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
 Qld Youth Services
 Red Cross
 Relationships Australia
 Richard Kelly Automotive
 Ridley Animal Nutrition
 Rollin Dough Bakery
 Ron Keeler
 Rotary Club of Townsville Sunrise Inc
 Seaview Hotel
 Second Bite
 Second to None Nutrition
 Sera's Women's Shelter
 Southside Milk Supplies
 Sportscene Super Warehouse
 Strand Café, Townsville Airport
 Sun City Trees
 TATSICHS Recognised Entity
 TAIHS Foster & Kinship Services
 TM & VM Thomson Builders
 The Alannah and Madeline Foundation
 The Townsville Hospital
 Townsville Tidy Bags
 Undees for Kids
 VARIETY—The Children's Charity
 Zambrero Stores
 Cannon Park
 Willows Shopping Centre
 Castletown
 Thuringowa
 Domain Central
 Flinders Street

