



Aboriginal Family Support Services Newsletter

Sep - Oct 2023

Foster and Kinship Carers Week 2023



AFSS Foster & Kinship Care Team (Metro) from left: Nishani Seneviratne, Susie Crisa, Liv King, Carmela Lagana, Shayla-Rose Hampton-Twilley, Amy Cox, Rachael Dodd, Adette Hanley, Megan Proctor, Linda Ubert, Zoe Smith, Mark Griffiths, Deb Irvine & Kristee Matthews.

On September 13, the Metro Foster and Kinship Care teams collaborated at Sunnybrae Estate Functions Centre in Regency Park, to celebrate Foster and Kinship Carers Week 2023.

The Estate's Coach House, which is surrounded with elegant gardens, made a beautiful venue for hosting the approximately 80-90 Carer families for their luncheon. The Coach House was filled with fairy lights and a relaxed ambiance and was dazzled by guest singer Nathan May. Nathan performed a beautiful selection of acoustic songs and was later accompanied by carer Dianne who might we add has a wonderful voice. Carer families were also treated to a massage, thank you to Fiona and partner for providing the relaxing service.

Carer families met with other carer families alike to share stories and food in a celebration of thanks to the wonderful work they do. Our Foster/Kinship Liaison Officers joined in on the festivities.

The teams held the inaugural Carer Week luncheon raffle. Tickets were provided upon entry. In celebration and to say thank you, a number of carer families were treated to gift baskets and gift cards. Congratulations to our winners and a big thank you to our young raffle draw helper Violet.

The teams wanted to gift something handmade to the carer families; around 120 colourful hand woven drink coasters were made for the event by the Southern Weavers. Carer families were treated individually to a gift from their Liaison Officers which included the coaster, AFSS key ring and chocolate.

A message from the Chief Executive

Welcome to our September/October Newsletter - it has been another busy few months at AFSS!

Since the end of October, I've been on long service leave and am looking forward to a long-awaited break. The Board of Management have appointed an Acting CE, Dan Mitchell, who will be working with you throughout this time. I would like to extend a warm welcome to Dan, who brings with him a wealth of knowledge in Child Protection, as well as having worked for various Aboriginal organisations throughout metro and rural South Australia.

I would like to welcome our new Executive Assistant, Kate Rice. She comes to us with extensive knowledge and experience of systems and processes. With a passion for making processes more efficient and user-friendly, she maintains our high quality standards. In her short time with AFSS, she has already been able to make a huge impact on the structure of the organisation and bring fun to the workplace (as well as decorations).

AFSS AGM meeting will be held on Thursday 23 November from 11am-12pm at our city location, 134 Waymouth Street Adelaide. We invite all members of the community to join us to learn more about our work during the 2022-23 financial year.

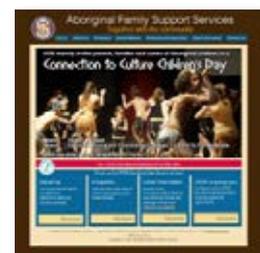
The Annual Report is in its final stages of production, and will be available at the AGM.

Our metro carers once again enjoyed a luncheon at Sunnybrae Farm in Regency Park on 13 September, along with the Foster and Kinship Care team. This event coincides with Foster Carers Week and we always enjoy acknowledging their amazing efforts throughout the year.

I would also like to acknowledge the cultural activities that have taken place in our Residential Services. The team have gone above and beyond to organise a variety of events throughout the year, connecting the kids to culture, and making fantastic memories.



*Sharron Williams
Chief Executive*





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We were joined for the event by AFSS acting Chief Executive Dan Mitchell, AFSS Board-Chairperson Donna Henry and her family, Senior Manager - NDIS, Specialised Accommodation and Metro Services Olivia King, and Senior Manager Corporate Services Anna Draper.

The Metro Foster and Kinship Care teams would like to sincerely thank all of the carer families and staff who attended the special event and thank all of our wonderful carer families for the generosity and commitment in providing the children in out of home care with a happy, safe, and nurturing environment to grow, learn and heal.




Aboriginal Family Support Services
Together with the community

AFSS Annual General Meeting

When
Thursday 23 November 2023

Time
11.00am – 12.00pm

Where
134 Waymouth Street, Adelaide
(Training Room - 1st Floor)

Contact
Please RSVP to AFSS' Executive Assistant Kate Rice
by Monday 13 November on:
(08) 8205 1523 / Kate.Rice@afss.com.au

A light lunch will be provided



*Have you ever thought about becoming a Foster Carer?
Contact our team on 8297 5708 for more info*

AFSS NDIS Team Rocks The 2023 #MYLIFECHOICES EXPO!

The AFSS NDIS team had a blast showcasing and promoting our services to our local and wider community at this year's #MyLifeChoices Disability, Ageing & Lifestyle (DAL) Expo held in the Jubilee Pavilion at Adelaide Showgrounds on October 13-14.

The DAL Expo - a social initiative led by Catalyst Foundation - is the biggest two-day event of its kind and celebrates the importance of inclusivity, diversity and the drive to live life to the fullest. This year saw over 200 exhibitors in attendance with highlights being the DanceAbility performances on the main stage (Dolly & Kenny lifted the roof!) and the children's Activity Zone which included an 8m rock wall!

Our AFSS NDIS team took full advantage of this amazing opportunity, taking turns to network and advocate with a variety of government and independent agencies and organisations over the two days. We explored education, housing, health, recreational and employment options available to our clients living with a disability, and also had the chance to learn about the newest technologies on offer.

Our stand was very busy throughout both days of the expo and it was wonderful to engage in so many meaningful conversations with members of our community. Our NDIS info packs and merch flew off the table with our cute AFSS cow and crocodile squeeze toys a massive hit with stand visitors!

Well done to our AFSS NDIS Team!



Congrats Taryn for being the lucky winner of the lollie jar!



Aboriginal Family Support Services
Together with the community

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

& DEVELOP AN AMAZING CAREER!

Aboriginal Family support Services (AFSS) has been supporting Aboriginal communities for over 45 years and is the largest Aboriginal Controlled organisation in South Australia. We aspire to ensure all services are innovative, creative and healing based.

The visions we share together with Aboriginal communities help to strengthen families to ensure safer and culturally strong futures for our children and young people across all of our services.

It's more than a job at AFSS! We provide career pathways to develop our people while supporting and helping vulnerable children, young people and adults. Our talent retention strategy includes identifying and developing future leaders.

THE BENEFITS AFSS OFFERS TO THE RIGHT CANDIDATES INCLUDE:

- Generous pay rates
- Full Time & Part Time positions
- Salary sacrifice
- Opportunity for career growth and development
- Diversity in the workplace
- Self Care Day

WE PROMOTE OUR TALENT!



Shane Catterall, Senior Manager, Residential Services – Metro. Shane has thirteen years' experience of youth work in roles that have included Youth Worker, Senior Child and Youth Worker, Senior Case Manager, Principal Aboriginal Consultant, and Manager Residential Care before joining AFSS in January 2022.



"Kiarra Christensen, Acting Manager, Residential Services. Kiarra has more than five years' experience working in Residential Care as a Youth Worker, Team Leader and Acting Manager. After working with DCP, Kiarra joined AFSS in the role of Team Leader, Residential Services in March 2022 and progressed to Acting Manager in March 2023. Kiarra made the move to AFSS to be able to work closer with Aboriginal Children and Young People residing in Residential Care and to continue working on her professional development working for an NGO."



Divya Sibal, Manager, Residential Services. Divya has worked in the Community Services Sector for nearly seven years. She joined AFSS in 2017 as a Support Worker, Residential Services, appointed to Lead Support Worker, Residential Care Services in 2019, and was promoted to Manager in 2022.

To find out more please contact our friendly Recruitment Officer, Amanda Tanti on:
recruitment@afss.com.au - 0499 337 789 - <https://www.afss.com.au/employment>

Horse Riding and Sheep Herding at Wirraway on Peramangk Country

On Friday the 6th of October we planned a day of horse care, trail riding and sheep herding for some of our Young People across AFSS.

Arriving at the absolutely stunning property of Wirraway Homestead, we entered the old shearing shed where we would learn some of the animal behaviours we needed to be mindful of before heading down to meet the horses.

We had a few nervous young people as the sheer size of the horses was quite intimidating. This was a first time experience for most of the group, and it was amazing to see how well they responded to the experience. Each young person showed a tremendous amount of bravery when first approaching the horses and in a short space of time they were brushing and braiding their hair.

After morning tea, it was time for the young people to saddle up and start learning how to ride the horses. Standing back with staff, it was great to see just how well the young people responded to this type of activity. The kids really enjoyed being around the horses and were taken to riding really well. With some instruction and basic teachings in the arena, and staff Jess surviving her first trot in hysterics, the group were ready to head off for their trail ride. With smiles all around, the group headed off down the trail amongst the scenic backdrop of gum trees and rolling green hills.

As the group headed back from their trail ride we soon learned that Jess had not been controlling her horse and was likely taking selfies which resulted in her horse running her through a tree branch, almost knocking her off her horse. Nevertheless, there were still smiles all round and the kids had a great time. There were some stiff legs climbing down off the horses but the young people laughed and shared their recollections of the ride.





After lunch it was time to head down to the lower paddocks to do our first sheep herding activity. No one really knew what to expect, but one thing was for sure we knew it was going to be a laugh as the group vibe was brilliant. "This is the best day of my life!"

The young people had to move sheep around barrels and from different enclosures across multiple paddocks.

The young people quickly learned that they needed to work as a team to successfully move the sheep. There was laughter everywhere and it was great seeing the kids enjoying connecting with the animals and nature together.

The final challenge was to get all the sheep through the cattle chute. Team work was key and after a few failed attempts, the kids figured out each of them needed to play specific roles to navigate the sheep through the paddock and down the chute. It was giggles all round and was such a great way to finish off a fantastic day out.

This activity really pushed the young people out of their comfort zones. Working with the horses and sheep was such a natural and therapeutic experience with everyone thoroughly enjoying the day. Watching one of our young people leave with a huge smile after a very difficult week made the entire day worth it. It was agreed by all staff who attended that this activity was so successful that it should be recommended for others to participate in.



Cooper Pedy YOUTH SHED



These last couple of months have been a busy few for the AFSS Cooper Pedy Youth Shed, with school holidays, Youth Shed camps and community events. With lots of rain this year we have had a spectacular season of wild flowers.

'Cooper Pedy Together' held the opening of the new playground equipment. AFSS helped with planning and the designing of the new equipment and space, and the use of the Youth Shed and BBQ on the day.

We also had Science Collective come to town for the 2nd week of school holidays to introduce science and technology to the students of Cooper Pedy. We had over 100 children, parents and carers attend over the 2 days. Thanks to the Local Drug Action Team, Peak Iron Mining and Complete Personnel for sponsoring this amazing event for the holidays.

Busy Times in Port Lincoln with NAIDOC Week, Carers Lunch & staff attending the National SNAICC Conference in Darwin

Port Lincoln has had a couple of busy months.

This year, we celebrated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Day at the Port Lincoln Children's Centre.

On the day we had the children put their handprints onto a canvas, which was displayed outside our office throughout August. Port Lincoln Aboriginal Health Service invited us to celebrate this day on the 4th of August. Simon from our Gambling office cooked up the sausage sizzle and staff handed out fresh fruit to some hungry children. It was freezing on the day, but that didn't stop the children from having a great time.

On 2 September I (Angela Backman) was lucky enough to attend the SNAICC conference in Darwin. The cultural performances were amazing, and the key note speakers were powerful and passionate to make changes within the system. It was also a great opportunity to catch up with the other regional managers. The only good photo I got was of Darlene Allen (Port Augusta Manager) and me in the lift heading to the conference.

On September 13 we headed out to the Carers lunch, which as usual was well attended and the staff threw me in and made me do a speech. It was great handing out gifts to our carers and just thanking them for all of the hard work that they do. It should be carers week every week!





AFSS Port Lincoln Staff attend Office For Problem Gambling - Community of Practice

On Friday 22nd of September, AFSS Gambling support staff and Port Lincoln Manager Angela Backman attended the Office For Problem Gambling – Community of Practice.

The day started with Welcome to Country by Jack Buckskin “Kuma Kaaru”, who had the audience engaged and in awe with his Didgeridoo, followed by laughter with some ‘light hearted yarning’.

The Minister for Human services. The Hon. Nat Cook then opened the event, receiving a warm welcome from all attending.

The day consisted of presentations from government and non government organisations encompassing all aspects of gambling and gambling help. AFSS Gambling Support staff Russell Coulthard, Rhett Colls, Nicole Rhodes and Simon Noack, put together a powerpoint and video which was presented and well received. Staff had a fun, informative, and educational day. Lots of networking was done and new relationships were formed.



CS&W Open Day

On the 20th October 2023, The Community Safety & Wellbeing (CS&W) team hosted their second annual Open Day. The event began with a ‘Welcome to Country’ by Cliffy Wilson from Kuma Kaaru. Our CSW Manager Winnie Warrior then welcomed attendees and provided information about each of the services and programs offered by CS&W.

We had a greater attendance of services and community members this year compared to our 2022 event, and all attendees had a chance to talk to CS&W staff to learn more about our programs and services. Information packs and flyers were available and provided to all who attended.

A sausage sizzle along with a variety of salads and popcorn was provided. Face Painting by Nyrelle Adams from AFSS Reconnect was a huge highlight for all the little ones.

Well done to the CSW Team for putting on an amazing event and for all your hard work behind the scenes.

We would like to thank all services and community for attending and making this day a huge success.

Community Safety and Wellbeing

Remaining Workshops for Term 4 - 2023

REGIONAL AREAS			
WORKSHOP	WHERE	WHEN	FACILITATOR
Healthy Homes Resilient Families Rules and Routines	Whyalla Stuart Primary School 76 Bastyan Street Whyalla Stuart	17 & 24 November 10am - 2pm	Fiona Stanley
Healthy Homes Resilient Families Rules and Routines	Mount Gambier 26 Kurrajong Street	28 Nov - 5 Dec 10am - 2pm	Dawn Cardona

METROPOLITAN REGIONS			
WORKSHOP	WHERE	WHEN	FACILITATOR (S)
Healthy Homes Resilient Families – Growing Up Healthy & Rules and Routines	Hampstead Primary School 38-57 Muller Road Greenacres	15 Nov 10am - 2pm	Annette O'Loughlin
Healthy Homes Resilient Families – Growing Up Healthy & Rules and Routines	Berri 3 Wilson Street Berri SA	28 Nov 10am - 2pm	Catherine Momo & Annette O'Loughlin

Pamper Day Young Mums and Bubs

Connected Beginnings, Ngura Yadurirn Children and Family Center, Ceduna, invited Mel, AFSS Community Safety and Wellbeing Facilitator, to join with community and other community agencies, to 'Pamper Mums and Mums to be of Nunga bubs'. Everyone had a fabulous time being pampered while weaving, chatting and connecting. Thank you to Cecelia Cox, for making the day such an incredible success.

AFSS Community Safety and Wellbeing team in Port Lincoln are also looking forward to facilitating Parenting workshops in term 1 2024 including Healthy Homes - Resilient Families (Growing Up Healthy & Routines and Rules), and Circle of Security-Parenting (COSP). If you are interested in attending or would like more information, please contact AFSS Port Lincoln office on (08)8683 1909.





AFSS Attend the Women of the World Festival

On October 19-20, Women of the World (WOW) festival hosted the 2 day 'Voices Shaping the Future' Conference in Brisbane.

AFSS Residential Support Officer, Tiarna Power attended as a sponsored delegate for the Australian Human Rights commissions' Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's voice) youth focus group.

Organised by the Global Institute of Women's Leadership, the 2 day conference consisted of conversations, performances and workshops.

The first day covered topics from gender equality and sexism in the workplace, to policy writing and turning plans into action. All conversations and workshops provided new perspectives and ideas and were a great learning and networking experience. The second day started with a workshop followed by a debrief and feedback session of the conference before breaking off into the Wiyi Yani U Thangani youth focus group. The purpose of the youth focus group was to be a part of the third stage of establishing an Institute for First Nations Gender Justice and Equality at the Australian National University and the development of the National Framework for Action.

Working closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner June Oscar, participants were to respond to the 2020 Report and the 2021 Implementation Framework, gathering evidence and identifying needs to implement the changes and achieve outcomes that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls are calling for. The ultimate outcome to achieve from this project

is to create a National Framework that will be an overarching generational roadmap to provide structural support for diverse work taking place across communities while the Institute drives the implementation and monitoring of the National Framework. The launch of the National Framework for Action and First Nations Gender Justice Institute intends to be launched in March 2024.



From Left: Tiarna Power, Taya Olman, Amber O'Loughin and Tayla Rawson.



June Oscar - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social justice commissioner of the Australian Human Rights Commission

Where to find us

Adelaide
134 Waymouth Street
Adelaide SA 5000
☎ 8205 1500

Berri
23 Denny Street
Berri SA 5343
☎ 8582 3192

Ceduna
28 Poynton Street
Ceduna SA 5690
☎ 8625 3466

Coober Pedy
Lot 1991 Aylett Street
Coober Pedy SA 5723
☎ 8672 3066

Cross Road
503 Cross Road
South Plympton SA 5038
☎ 8297 5708

Mount Gambier
20 Elizabeth Street
Mount Gambier SA 5290
☎ 8723 6110

Morphett Vale
Unit 1-365 Main South Road
Morphett Vale SA 5162
☎ 8186 4000

Murray Bridge
67 Adelaide Road
Murray Bridge SA 5253
☎ 8532 1790

Paralowie
254 Kings Road
Paralowie SA 5108
☎ 8281 5440

Port Augusta
8-10 Victoria Parade
Port Augusta SA 5700
☎ 8641 0907

Port Lincoln
21 Washington Street
Port Lincoln SA 5606
☎ 8683 1909

Port Pirie
23 Norman Street
Port Pirie SA 5540
☎ 8632 2227

Salisbury
4 Ann Street
Salisbury SA 5108
☎ 8182 6567

Salisbury
20 Ann Street
Salisbury SA 5108
☎ 8281 3440

Whyalla
19B Darling Terrace
Whyalla SA 5600
☎ 8644 0116

Staff Updates



Judy Spooner (right) at a Foster Care Expo with past employee Bridie Valentine.

Happy Retirement to our CLO Judy Spooner

It with mixed emotions that I announce the retirement of Judy Spooner, a valued member of the FBC team. Judy has provided AFSS with 7 years of devoted service.

Judy's attention to detail, while keeping the broader picture in mind, has been invaluable not only to the carers she supported but also to the team. Her willingness to put in extra time and effort to help carers, the team and other members of the AFSS staff has demonstrated her commitment to service excellence.

In addition to Judy's incredible competence and skill, she has been a friend, a great team member who has gone above and beyond to help others, and share her knowledge and expertise in so that carers are equipped to provide the best care possible for the children in their care.

It has been a pleasure to work alongside you and also learn from you, I wish you all the best for the next chapter of your life.



Congrats Liv King who has been nominated for 'Outstanding Leader of the Year' for the 2023 National Disability Awards

Our Senior Manager Metropolitan Services, NDIS & Specialised Accommodation Liv King continues to make strides in her career and has been nominated for 'Outstanding Leader of the Year'.

This award recognises someone who demonstrates excellence and commitment in supporting people with disability.

Finalists and winners will be announced at the Awards Ceremony on 11 December 2023 at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. National Disability Services (NDS) hosts the Awards along with sponsors NDIA, NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, HESTA and etrainu.