# FRSA eBulletin, No. 1, 2024

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frsa eBulletin

**No. 1, 2024 | 18 January 2024**

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## From FRSA's Executive Director

Welcome to 2024!

As a kid – I always relished in the 'getting ready for school' ritual. The buying of the books and stationery, collecting magazines to cut out the 'topic relevant' pictures for the covering and labelling books – everything in order, everything in its place. I must confess I am still the one that loves to hover around behind my kids as they scour the aisles of Big W or Officeworks for their school stuff. Although if I ever had the sort of stuff Officeworks has in its fancy smancy, super, super organised aisle – I would have been totally beside myself! It's definitely at a totally different level these days.

Although it seems we can afford ourselves less and less time to do so, the first week or so back into the New Year certainly does give us a chance to get things in order for the year ahead. I have had that luxury and feel set to go – it will be a big year again this year – and I will start by thanking my Board, my staff, our members and stakeholders for coming on the journey of discovery and assertion with us! The Family and Relationship Services sector is under the microscope on a range of fronts and our advocacy needs to be strong and resolute. Thankfully we are 'at the table' but there is a lot of work to be done.

That said, I know that the start of the year – and including the end of 2023 – has been far from smooth sailing. The weather has been unpredictable and downright life threatening in some parts of Australia and our thoughts are with the services as they work tirelessly to support their staff and community through these times.

As we have been preparing our input to the Federal Government's pre-Budget process I am also really conscious that we are hearing from members that many more people are struggling financially and we are seeing more and more of these people presenting to our services – coming through different doors. I encourage you to keep these life experiences coming through to me – they feed the fire that drives us to advocate for much needed change when it comes to addressing poverty and hardship in this country.

We have taken the liberty in this edition of the e-bulletin to highlight significant works completed at the end of last year and highlight some key events and processes coming up in 2024. Conference registrations are open (we are in Melbourne this year) and I am delighted to see the regos flowing in – May is great timing to be showcasing the work of the sector – I hope to see you there!

I also wanted to let you know about a unique job opportunity we have going at FRSA – that can be filled from anywhere in Australia. If you have been or are involved in the Communities of Practice we have been running – you would be well aware of the great role that our Project Officer, Sandra Rabjohns has been doing. Regrettably – at the end of last year she decided to take up an opportunity to return to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. So, that means we are hiring! This is a short term appointment (we only have funding through until the end of June this year) but if you know of someone who would be fantastic at driving and running 'communities of practice' in the FRS sector, who is passionate, enthusiastic and looking to expand their skillset with the strength and nurturing of a peak based national office (with great staff and supports) – then I would love to hear from you. I am open to exploring secondment arrangements which means that if you want to offer a staff member a new and unique opportunity or if you want an opportunity to do something a bit different – they don't/you don't need to give up their current position. But – it does mean that you/your employer would need to be open to 'releasing' you for a period of time. Or – you could be working part-time at the moment and want to step up to full-time work and try something a little different – I would love to hear from you too. You can find the PD in the Jobs section below. If it is not for you but you know of someone – please pass it on.

Thanks to you for reading the e-bulletin. We are up to 1530+ subscribers and we value this great opportunity to connect with people out there in the network. I know it does take time out of your day but I do hope the FRSA lens we present to you in the e-bulletin is a value add to your work.

Kind regards, Jackie Brady FRSA Executive Director






**FRSA National Conference 2024 - REGISTER FOR EARLY BIRD!**




Don’t miss out on early bird registration rates, which end 4 March 2024. As the sector’s ‘go to’ National, annual event – FRSA will not fail to deliver great speakers, great sessions, great networking and a great venue.

**Early Bird Registration Fee* Until 4 March 2024**

| | Member Rates | Non-Member Rates |
|---|---|---|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Complete Conference Experience – Including dinner** | $1,095.00 | $1,395.00 |
| **Conference Only – No dinner** | $1,020.00 | $1,320.00 |

** To be entitled to the early bird registration fee you must have registered and paid by 15 March 2023.*

**Pre-Conference Workshops – FRSA MEMBERS ONLY**

| | **Member Rates** |
|---|---|
| **Dadirri – Ancient Aboriginal Mindfulness Traditions (Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Workshop)** | $175.00 |
| **Family Law Workshop** | $175.00 |
| **LGBTIQA+ Family Practice Workshop**<br>**Presented by Drummond Street Services** | $175.00 |
| **Using evidence to paint a picture: Finding opportunities for learning, growth and sharing the success of child and family services**<br>**Presented by the Australian Institute of Family Studies** | $175.00 |
| **Communities for Children Facilitating Partners (CfC FP) Workshop** | $175.00 |

**Bursary Program Applications open!**

FRSA is pleased to offer two bursaries available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are registered for or would like to attend the 2024 Family & Relationship Services Australia National Conference.

Bursaries are provided to assist with covering the cost of conference registration, and travel & accommodation. Each package includes:

- 1 x Complimentary full registration to the Conference (including dinner)
- $500 towards travel and accommodation

To be eligible you ***must be*** an employee of a fully financial FRSA member organisation. Applications closes on **THURSDAY, 28 March 2024**.

**Welcome 2024 Sponsors!**

We're thrilled to welcome the following organisations who join us as Sponsors for this year's National Conference in Melbourne.

- Drummond Street Services as a Silver Sponsor.
- The Australian Institute of Family Services as Reciprocal Sponsor
- Interrelate as the Wi-Fi Sponsor
- Strategic Grants as an Exhibitor
- Relationship Matters as an Exhibitor
- 54 Reasons as an Exhibitor
- Family Life as an Exhibitor

This year's Conference is expected to attract 550+ delegates, including practitioners, researchers, managers, executives, and policy and program developers from government and non-government agencies.

Sponsorship has always been a big part of FRSA's Conferences and in acknowledgement of this support, we have designed packages that will allow for maximum visibility to showcase the work and activity of your organisation/business.

We welcome your support of the Conference and hope that you will take advantage of the opportunities available to you in joining with FRSA as a Conference 2024 sponsor.

If you are interested in a more bespoke package for your organisation don't hesitate to get in touch with the FRSA team on (02) 6162 1811 or events@frsa.org.au.

frsa
is thrilled to have the following
Conference Partners and Sponsors

## CONFERENCE PARTNERS

Australian Government
Attorney-General's Department

Australian Government
Department of Social Services

## SILVER SPONSOR

Drummond Street Services

## WI-FI SPONSOR

interrelate
relationship experts since 1926

## CONFERENCE EXHIBITORS

STRATEGIC GRANTS

relationship matters
Counselling & Mediation

54 reasons

family life

## RECIPROCAL SPONSOR

Australian Government
Australian Institute of Family Studies

# FRSA NEWS

**Not-for-Profit Sector Development Blueprint Consultation – FRSA Submission**

Submissions to the Not-for-Profit Sector Development Blueprint consultation closed on 20 December. FRSA appreciates the Government's commitment to a strong Not-for-Profit sector, and we welcomed the opportunity to contribute to this consultation. You can read FRSA's submission here.

The Not-for-Profit Sector Development Blueprint will be used to develop a suite of sector-led workable and effective options for reform to strengthen social capital and a vibrant sector.

More information about the consultation can be found on the DSS Engage website.

**FRSA Submission to the Review of Family Relationship Services Program**

FRSA welcomed the opportunity to make a submission to the review of the Family Relationship Services Program (FRSP), which is funded by the Attorney-General's Department and delivered by FRSA Members.

The FRSP was introduced in 2006 and marked a radical shift in the way in which the Australian Government assisted separating couples with children. The intention was to assist parents to resolve their parenting arrangements and figure out how they would continue to be the best parents they could to their children – to give them the care, love and nurturing their child/ren required whilst no longer a couple. The FRSP has been operating since then within an evolving landscape, including changes in family structures, and legislative reform. This change, coupled with the fact that baseline funding for family law services under the FRSP has remained relatively static, in real terms, over several years, while the cost of delivering services has increased, means the review is timely.

The strength of the non-adversarial FRSP service system is that it seeks to minimise conflict between separating couples, refocus attention on the best interests of the child and offer therapeutic interventions for men, women and children attempting to deal with family separation in a constructive and future focused way. Our submission is framed by evidence that the FRSP delivers important benefits to Australian children, families and communities and strong value for investment. FRSA recently commissioned the Centre for International Economics (the CIE) to undertake an economic evaluation of family and relationship services using cost-benefit analysis to assess the value of services. The results of the evaluation were strong with family law services under the FRSP returning, on average, $7.85 for every dollar invested. Therefore, while there is scope for improvement in the FRSP, evidence suggests that the program provides a sound platform from which to design future activities.

FRSA sees this review of the FRSP as an opportunity to refocus Government's attention on dispute resolution pathways and supports that place the wellbeing and

safety of children and the needs of families at the centre.

The review is being led by Mr Andrew Metcalfe AO, with the support of the Australian Institute of Family Studies. It is due to be completed on 28 June 2024.

You can read FRSA's submission here.

**headspace National Youth Mental Health Survey**



headspace recently released findings of their 2023 National Youth Mental Health Survey.

Encouragingly, the research found that three in five young people feel they tend to bounce back quickly after hard times (61%). Asked to respond to the statement, "It does not take long to recover from a stressful event," 52 per cent agreed or strongly agreed. Overall, more than two-thirds (69%) of young people surveyed were found to have normal and high levels of resilience.

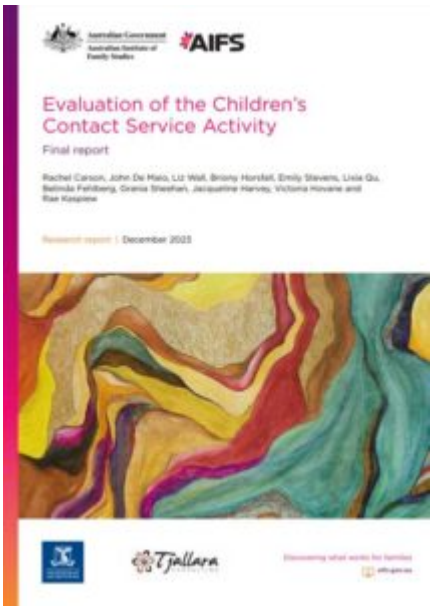
The research also revealed, however, that some young people didn't feel as resilient compared to their peers. One-third of survey respondents agreed it's hard for them to snap back when something bad happens (33%), and that they tend to take a long time to get over setbacks in their life (31%). Young women (39%) and young people identifying as members of the LGBTQIA+ community (52%) were among those most likely to report having a hard time making it through stressful events.

Other key findings include:

- 53% of young people feel fearful of the future due to climate change
- One on three young people surveyed experience problematic social media use
- Only one in two young people feel confident applying for a job or that they have the necessary skills to succeed.

Infographics of the findings are available here.

**Evaluation of the Children's Contact Service Activity**




In 2023 the Attorney-General's Department commissioned the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) to undertake a review of Children's Contact Services – a service offering funded under the Department's Family Relationship Services Program. The evaluation report was published in December 2023.

Children's Contact Services (CCSs) facilitate the supervision of parenting time and changeover for families, most commonly where the parents are separating, or have separated, and require a safe and neutral venue to enable contact to take

place. There were 64 services in scope for this evaluation, operated by not-for-profit providers (most of them FRSA Members). Private providers of children's contact services are currently unregulated and therefore were not within the remit of Government for the purposes of this evaluation. The Government has, however, committed to development of an accreditation system for all providers – private operators and government funded not-for-profit providers – to ensure safe, quality service delivery in the future.

The evaluation sought to assess:

- If these services are operating in accordance with, and achieving the objectives of, the relevant guiding documents
- how effectively these services are providing culturally appropriate service for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and First Nations populations and are supporting families experiencing domestic and family violence
- if the current number and location of CCSs are meeting existing demand for services.

The report makes 9 recommendations:

1. Consider modification of CCS program expectations relating to self-management to suit the needs of different families
2. Facilitate access to wrap-around supports to families where necessary
3. Provide additional transition and follow up support to families
4. Clarify expectations about the nature, quality and consistency of CCS written reports
5. Ensure that feedback from families and the child's voice are key elements of the CCS quality improvement process
6. Greater consistency in training and professional development in relation to child safety, child-inclusive practice and DFV and trauma-informed practice and in meeting the Guiding Principles Framework would be supported by accreditation
7. Encourage the development of culturally safe services in partnership with First Nations peoples
8. Encourage the development of culturally responsive services with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities
9. Current population and demographic data should be considered to identify potential additional locations of CCSs to service unmet demand.

The report is available on the AIFS website.




**Select Committee on Cost of Living – submissions extended**

The submission closing date for the Parliamentary Cost of Living inquiry has been extended to 28 March 2024.

The inquiry is looking at the cost of living pressures facing Australians and measures to ease these pressures through policy and service responses. An interim report was published in May 2023 and the final report is due 31 May 2024.

For more information on the inquiry or to make a submission, visit the Committee website.

**2024-25 Pre-Budget submissions closing soon**

The Federal Government is inviting individuals, businesses, and community groups to submit their ideas and priorities for the 2024-25 Budget.

Submissions must be lodged by Thursday 25 January 2024.

Further information about lodging a submission is available on the Treasury website.

**Draft Early Years Strategy – survey open**

The Australian Government has developed a draft Early Years Strategy 2024-2034 (Strategy) to shape its vision for the future of Australia's children and their families and is inviting feedback via an online survey.

The draft strategy was developed following public consultation by the Department of Social Services in 2023. FRSA made a submission to this consultation, which is published on our website.

The Strategy is intended to be an overarching 10-year document. The Strategy will be implemented through Action Plans, as well as an Outcomes Framework to measure its progress and effectiveness. Action Plans will be developed after the Strategy is finalised.

The survey closes 9 February 2024. You can find out more about the Early Years Strategy and complete the survey here.




**Vale Mike Cross**



FRSA would like to acknowledge the life and work of Mike Cross who had a long history in the FRSA network – most prominently as the Project Officer for the Australian Childrens' Contact Services Association (ACCSA) – a position he has held since 2008. Sadly, he passed away not long before Christmas.

Mike was a strong, committed advocate for ensuring that the Children's Contact Services were safe and accessible spaces for the families and children that used them and that the practitioners working in these services were well educated and well supported to do the important, and often vital work they did. Most recently he had been instrumental in advocating for the advancement of Children's Contact Services, including the implementation of an accreditation system for ALL CCS services.

We thank ACCSA for their tribute to Mike, to his work and for documenting so well, the significant influence he had in advocating for change in the CCS sector. He was a clever, insightful and thoughtful person who put his heart and soul into his work. He will most certainly be missed.

**Thousands of dollars of support for regional psychology and social work students on offer**




Centacare South West NSW is funding scholarships for aspiring regional psychology and social work students at Charles Sturt University in 2024 and 2025, valued at $30,000.

Centacare South West NSW has partnered with Charles Sturt University to ease the financial burden of students from Griffith and surrounding areas studying psychology and social work.
The University has established the Centacare South-West NSW Scholarship, which will be awarded to three individuals in 2024 and an additional three in 2025, valued at $5,000 each.

The donation from Centacare South-West is to aid students studying Psychology or Social Work at Charles Sturt with expenses relating to completing their qualifications at any regional Charles Sturt campus. Read more.

**Training boost for foster carers at Mallee Family Care**




Mallee Family Care has partnered with Oregon Social Learning Centre Developments Inc, a non-profit, collaborative, multi-disciplinary research centre located in Eugene, Oregon, United States of America. Together they launched the Keeping Families Supported and Trained Program (KEEP), to the Mallee region. Mallee Family Care are the only organisation in Australia delivering the program.

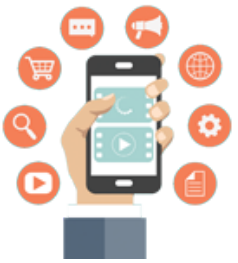
KEEP is an evidence-based support and skill enhancement education program that concentrates on educating foster carers with positive parenting strategies, prioritising child well-being with an emphasis on the prevention of placement breakdowns.

Mallee Family Care recently hosted KEEP facilitators, Rohanna Buchanan, Senior Scientist and KEEP Clinical Director, and Katie Bennet, KEEP Implementation Director from Oregon Developments Inc, to conduct a 5-day training block for the Care and Placement Services team. So far, six foster carers have completed the program.

Mallee Family Care CEO, Teresa Jayet said it was exciting to see the organisation move back into evidence-based programs.

“We teach capacity-building, we talk about behaviour, we give them tips, and we’re quite honest and open about what happens when a child comes into care, so there is no stone unturned in this training,” she said. Read more.

# SECTOR MOVEMENTS



**ANROWS appoints new Chief Executive Officer**



Late last year, ANROWS announced that Dr Tessa Boyd-Caine was appointed Chief Executive Officer of Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS), following appointment of former CEO Ms Padma Raman PSM to Executive Director of the Federal Office for Women. Dr Boyd-Caine will take up the position in February.

Dr Boyd-Caine will lead ANROWS as CEO following her tenure as the inaugural CEO of Health Justice Australia, a position she has held since 2016.

FRSA congratulates Dr Boyd-Caine on her appointment and looks forward to working together when she enters her new role.




**ANROWS Research Grants**




ANROWS are currently seeking applications for research projects that will inform policy and practice design decisions about prevention, early intervention and

responses to people who use domestic, family and sexual violence.

This grants round is funded by the Commonwealth government.

Applications close 11 February 2024. Click here for more information or to apply.

**Survey: Opportunities to promote nutrition and movement behaviours in early childhood and parenting support services**

Researchers at Deakin University are conducting a study to understand how early childhood services could best be supported to promote healthy behaviours in young children.

The study will explore how effective healthy lifestyle interventions in early childhood may be integrated across community, education, and health services to maximise adoption, reach and public health impact in Australia. It will also explore strategies to better reach and support population groups most in need. The findings will provide strategic guidance on the scale up of health behaviour support in early childhood in Australia.

They are asking participants to take part in 15 minute survey that asks about your perspectives on the value of health behaviour support, potential opportunities to provide support and considerations for implementation of healthy lifestyle behaviour support as part of the early childhood services you are managing. Participants can also choose to go into a draw to win a $100 gift voucher. Click here to complete the survey.




Tue 21

## CHC81015 Graduate Diploma of Relationship Counselling – June 2026, Online

June 24, 2026 @ 2:00 pm - December 8, 2027 @ 5:00 pm AEST
Tue 21

## AMDRAS Training & Accreditation

July 20 @ 9:00 am - July 28 @ 5:00 pm AEST

Wed 22

## The Occasional Counsellor ™- eWorkshop 22nd -July-2026

July 22 @ 9:30 am - 12:30 pm AEST
Wed 22

## CHC81115 Graduate Diploma of Family Dispute Resolution – July 2026, Online

July 22 @ 10:00 am - November 26 @ 4:30 pm AEST
Thu 23

## SOLUTION FOCUSED BRIEF THERAPY – Brisbane

July 23 - July 24
View More…




**ACT**

**Project Officer** | FRSA

**VIC**

**Team Leader Family Relationship Centre** | Mallee Family Care

**Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner (FDRP)** | Mallee Family Care

**NT**

**Counsellor (Family and Relationships Services)** | Relationships Australia Northern Territory

**Counsellor / Community Engagement Officer Redress Scheme Support Service** | Relationships Australia Northern Territory

**Family Skills Facilitator** | Anglicare NT

**headspace Vocational Specialist** | Anglicare NT

**HIPPY Tutor** | Anglicare NT

**NSW**

**Client Services Officer** | Relationships Australia Canberra & Region

**Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner (FDRP)** | Relationships Australia Canberra & Region

**Portfolio Manager** | CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes

**QLD**

**Program Supervisor** | OzChild

**Foster Care Recruiter & Trainer** | OzChild

**Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner** | CatholicCare Central Queensland

*If you have any events you'd like listed on the FRSA Events and Training Calendar or job vacancies you'd like listed on the FRSA Jobs Board, email Communications Officer, Vanessa Lam at communications@frsa.org.au. Please note that posting onto the FRSA website is reserved for FRSA Members only.*




Australian views on what makes a family | ***Australian Institute of Family Studies***

The findings of the Families in Australia Survey conducted in late 2021 provide useful insights on aspects of Australian families.

Education programs for male university students to prevent sexual violence | ***ANROWS***

This Intervention Review focuses on educational sexual violence prevention interventions for male university and college students. The interventions captured in this review are primarily didactic in nature and may include additional components such as bystander intervention. Programs based primarily on bystander intervention set in tertiary education are the focus of forthcoming Intervention Reviews, which will be hyperlinked here once published.

Family, domestic and sexual violence | ***Australian Institute of Health and Welfare***

This website brings together information from a range of sources to provide a comprehensive picture of FDSV in Australia and summarises changes in key measures over time. Regular updates are made to include the latest available data for key national data sources.

Supporting your child's wellbeing during a separation or divorce | ***Emerging Minds***



This resource is for parents who are currently navigating separation or have separated or divorced. It offers information about children's experiences and reactions to parents' separation and advice from other parents, health professionals and researchers about ways parents can lessen the impacts of separation on children.

Separating with debt: a guide to your legal options translated resources | ***Attorney-General's Department***

The Attorney-General's Department (the department) published 5 additional translated versions of the department's Separating with debt: a guide to your legal options resource (the Guide). The Guide has now been translated into a total of 11 languages, including:

- 6 original languages (published April 2022): Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Filipino, Hindi and Vietnamese, and
- 5 new languages: Dari, Korean, Punjabi, Spanish and Thai.

The translated versions of the Guide aim to increase accessibility for culturally diverse communities who may experience greater barriers to identifying, accessing and understanding legal information relevant to their circumstances.

## Want to submit something to the FRSA eBulletin?

If you have an news item or event that you would like to be featured in a future eBulletin please submit your announcement via the form below or email communications@frsa.org.au with the subject "FRSA eBulletin submission".

Please note FRSA members receive priority for items posted in the eBulletin. And to keep information current, relevant and useful, submissions will not be repeated from week to week.

eBulletin submission form
Please enable JavaScript in your browser to complete this form.

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