FRSA eBulletin, No. 7, 2021

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From FRSA's Executive Director

Happy Families Week!



Not sure who is going to hate me more for posting this photo – my brother-in-law or my youngest but – I am happy to take the heat.

My mum had a significant birthday this year and following multiple complaints about our respective failings of having decent photos with her daughters (my sister and I), our husbands and kids – we got a friend to take some happy snaps. The majority are quite glamorous. The one below, as you can tell – is not. This was taken at the end of our photo session and the photographer suggested we make 'crazy faces' (I am third from the right). Clearly some of us are better at it than others. However, it is the imperfect nature of this photo that draws me to it. By combining our strengths and foibles – we make this thing called family work. And whilst this is my side of our immediate family, not only do we have my husband's side of the family, but we have our extended family and friends who are vitally important to our ability to function and fulfill our special and unique role as citizen participants in the broader community.



I take great pride in heading up FRSA. My great team and I dedicate our energy to supporting organisations working with individuals, families, and communities, more often than not during hard times in their lives and goodness knows, we all have them. Our aim is not only to help people through difficult times but to ensure that through our engagement, our impact results in improved wellbeing for the children, men, women and communities we work with. Knowing there are so many fabulous organisations with dedicated and committed people working in them is a great strength of the organisations individually and of the sector and society more broadly.

It will be great to showcase the outstanding work and achievements of the sector at the FRSA Conference in May 2022, almost a year to the day, in the week beginning 16 May 2022. What a great way to celebrate Families Week in 2022!

My congratulations too to Families Australia for their carriage and administration of National Families Week. It is great to see Families Week continue to grow from strength to strength. This is due in a significant part to CEO, Brian Babbington, and Deputy CEO, Stella Conroy, who have both recently announced they will be moving on from Families Australia following 16 and 13 years respectively with the organisation. There is a whole lot of intellect, heart and soul that both Brian and Stella have brought to their roles, the organisation and as a consequence to children, families and communities throughout Australia. Or course, Families Week isn't the only thing Families Australia does (the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children is another significant contribution that comes to mind, among many). I have no doubt that Brian and Stella will be missed and will leave big shoes to fill. I wish them both all the very best for the future.

Kind regards, Jackie Brady FRSA Executive Director

Telepractice in the family and relationship services sector – paper released

We are pleased to report that Child Family Community Australia (CFCA) has just released a paper that reviews the evidence for telepractice as a service delivery method in the family and relationship services sector. FRSA helped shape the



research question for CFCA's review and we believe the paper is an important contribution to this relatively under-researched topic.

When the COVID-19 pandemic reached Australian shores and physical distancing restrictions were introduced, the family and relationship services sector quickly adapted to ensure that vulnerable children and families could continue to be supported. In many cases, this meant moving services partially or fully online, complemented by telephone support.

In the longer-term – in a post-COVID context – what are the opportunities and the limits for telepractice? In what circumstances is telepractice a safe and suitable mode of service delivery?

CFCA's paper answers the research question: *What evidence is there on the use of telepractice in family and relationship services?* It describes the acceptability of telepractice as a service delivery method for practitioners and clients, implementation considerations and client outcomes.

We soon hope to build on CFCA's paper with further work on telepractice. Watch this space!

CFCA's paper, *The use of telepractice in the family and relationship services sector*, is available online.

Consultation on establishment of an accreditation scheme for Children's Contact Services

FRSA has lodged its submission to the Attorney-General's Department consultation on the establishment of an accreditation scheme for Children's Contact Services (CCS).

Children's Contact Services were set up to enable children of separated parents to have contact with the parent they do not live with, and other significant people in their life, in a safe and neutral space.

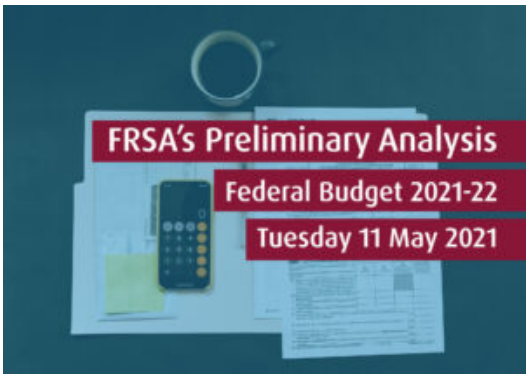
A number of FRSA members deliver government funded/subsidised services. Whilst the government funded services must adhere to a Guiding Principles Framework, private operators of CCS services are not required to. In fact, there is currently no oversight of private CCSs. The fact that a number of unregulated private providers have been able to operate services aimed at supporting some of the most vulnerable children and families in the absence of necessary safeguards has been a significant concern for FRSA Members and the FRSA Board for many years. It has long been FRSA's view that some form of regulatory oversight is needed to ensure that

vulnerable children and families are safely and appropriately supported, and that CCS workers and clients alike are not placed at risk due to inadequate skills and training and/or deficient workplace safety supports.

Drawing on the insights and wisdom of an FRSA member advisory group, FRSA's submission supports the establishment of an accreditation scheme for CCS's that can build on the current CCS Guiding Principles Framework. This move will need adequate funding support and transition time for any process introducing a new accreditation regime. We also acknowledge there are specific issues around staffing skills and training that require more intensive investigation and discussion.

The closing date for submissions has been extended to **28 May 2021**. For more information, go to the Attorney-General's Department website.

FRSA's Preliminary Analysis – Federal Budget 2021-22



Last year's Budget was a standout given that the Federal Government increased baseline funding to DSS and AGD eligible, funded programs to meet the ERO Sacs Supplementation payment that will come to an end 30 June this year. FRSA was keen to see how the social services sector fared in this year's 2021-22 Budget, especially as demand and need for our services increases with the ongoing impacts of COVID-19.

This preliminary analysis of the Budget provides a summary of some of the line items through an FRSA lens that are unlikely to get mainstream coverage. Read FRSA's Preliminary Analysis for the Federal Budget 2021-22.

Register today for the online Child Inclusive Practice Forum 2021 on Monday 7 June!

This year's program is centered around the theme ***"Expanding the Lens: Child Inclusion and Vulnerable Children"***. The COVID-19 Pandemic brought with it additional challenges for vulnerable children. This CIP forum provides a great opportunity to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on children through a CIP lens and the

learnings from these experiences that will impact practice from hereon in. You can register right up until the Forum!

Registration Categories	Fees
FRSA Member	$95
Non-FRSA Member	$150

Forum registration includes streaming access to:

- The Keynote address/es
- All concurrent presentations
- A panel discussion
- The opportunity to participate in the live Q&A with speakers

Access to the on-demand library for up to **60 days post forum**.



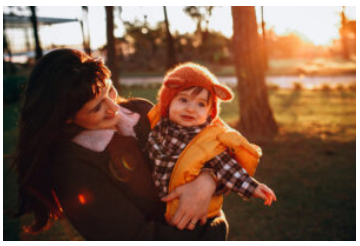
ACWA ENDORSED CPD

This year's CIP Forum is an Australian Community Workers Association endorsed CPD event. All registrants of the event will be eligible for seven Continuing Professional Development hours/points for their participation.



Budget 2021-22 – Children's Contact Services

The Treasurer handed down Budget 2021-22 on Tuesday 11 May 2021, with good news for Children's Contact Services.



Children's Contact Services, in the main, experience the longest waiting times across all family law services, with children and parents/significant others sometimes waiting many months to see each other. From 1 July 2021, total funding for the 64 existing services will more than double with an increase from around $18 million to $35 million annually.

The Government also announced it will fund a further 20 Children's Contact Services, with an additional $27.5 million over three years from 2022-23 allocated in the Budget. For the 20 new services, a selection process will commence in 2021-22 to select providers. The measure is intended to increase access to CCSs and assist in reducing wait times.

The Budget papers are available here.

Parliamentary Inquiry into Mental Health and Suicide Prevention – FRSA Submission Published

The Select Committee on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention has just published FRSA's submission on its website.

Our submission discusses the role of family and relationship services in helping build supportive relationships and increasing protective factors for children and families at risk of health and social problems, including mental health issues.

We recommend that Government facilitate greater coordination between the health, education and family and relationship services sectors to provide prevention and early intervention supports that contribute to mental well-being outcomes for Australian children, adults and families.

We also recommend greater Government investment in the Family and Mental Health Support Services (FMHSS) program to ensure it has a broader (universal) reach to

children and families across Australia.

Further information about the inquiry can be found here.

Submissions to government

Consultation on a New Decision-Making Framework for Family Law Property Matters

Last week, the Attorney-General's Department released a consultation paper, *A New Decision-Making Framework for Property Matters in Family Law.*

The consultation paper seeks feedback on approaches to amending the *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth), to improve the clarity and operation of the decision-making framework that applies to the resolution of property disputes.

This consultation process will inform the implementation of aspects of the Australian Government's response to the 2019 Final Report of the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC), *Family Law for the Future – An inquiry into the Family Law System*.

Submissions close on **9 July 2021**. For more information visit the Attorney-General's Department website.

Review of direct cross-examination ban – Family Law Act 1975

The government's review of amendments to the *Family Law Act 1975* to ban direct cross-examination in certain circumstances, is well underway. The amendments were passed in late 2018 and designed to protect victims of family violence by banning direct cross-examination in family law matters involving family violence.

Mr Robert Cornall AO and Ms Kerrie-Anne Luscombe are conducting the review and will report to government by August 2021. Submissions are due by **28 May 2021.**

For more information about the review visit the Attorney-General's Department website.

Developing the next National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children

The public consultation on the next National Plan to reduce family, domestic and sexual violence is open. You can have your say here . The consultation closes **11:59pm, Saturday 31 July 2021.**

ALRC Inquiry: Judicial Impartiality

The Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) is inquiring into judicial impartiality and is calling for submissions on its questions and reform proposals outlined in a consultation paper.

The Inquiry will consider whether, and if so what, reforms to the laws on judicial impartiality and bias may be necessary or desirable. The consultation paper identifies problems related to the existing law, inadequate data collection undermining transparency around issues of judicial bias, and importantly, systemic and ongoing issues such as socially-based attitudes, stereotypes, and a lack of cultural competency negatively impacting the impartiality of judicial decision-making, and the highly discretionary nature of decision-making under family law legislation.

Submissions are due by **30 June 2021**. More information about the inquiry, including the terms of reference, are on the ALRC website.



FRSA Members celebrate National Volunteer Week

It's National Volunteer Week this week from Monday 17th to Sunday 23rd May 2021, the week celebrates the significant contribution of Australia's almost six million volunteers. Each year these volunteers dedicate over 600 million hours to help others.

The theme for 2021 is *Recognise. Reconnect. Reimagine.* View some of the volunteers FRSA members are celebrating and staff who have joined in the Wave Your Appreciation campaign. Click the images to find out more.

National Families Week



It's National Families Week this week. Held each year from 15 May to 21 May to coincide with the United Nations International Day of Families. This year's National Families Week theme is '*Stronger Families, Stronger Communities*'. It highlights the important role families play as the central building blocks of our communities. Community wellbeing is enhanced by family wellbeing. FRSA members have been celebrating the week with a variety of activities including:

- CatholicCare Wollongong has started a 5 part webinar series for the week on all areas of Family. These are the ones they have held already: Family Resilience, Family Values and Family Connection.
- Relationships Australia WA has been sharing their tips on all the different types of relationships in families including: parenting, step and blended families, siblings and parenting teens.
- OzChild held a picnic event in Victoria to celebrate the week.
- MacKillop Family Services shares single mum, Karnie Hill's story of resilience, strength and doing whatever it takes to keep her family together.
- Centacare South West NSW celebrated National Families Week with a community stall in Jerilderie.
- Kids First Australia's Early Years Learning Centres created family portraits.

SECTOR MOVEMENTS



Families Australia bids farewell CEO and Deputy CEO



Families Australia has announced that Brian Babington will be retiring from his role as CEO of Families Australia at the end of August this year.

Brian has been CEO for the past 16 years, during which time he has played key leadership roles in relation to the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020 and a wide range of other national, international and local child and family safety and wellbeing initiatives. He has convened the National Coalition for Protecting Australia's Children for the past 14 years in support of the National Framework.

Along with this, Deputy CEO, Stella Conroy is moving onto a new position, continuing to work in policy relating to families, children and young people. This comes after 13 years at Families Australia, during which time she worked on a range of national

policy initiatives including the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009 – 2020, providing secretariat support for the National Coalition on Child Safety and Wellbeing and on national policy relating to work and family.



AnglicareSA announces new CEO



AnglicareSA has announced that Grant Reubenicht will be taking over as CEO of AnglicareSA.

Grant was Acting CEO following the retirement of previous CEO, Peter Sandeman at the end of 2020. Grant has made significant contributions to the organisation over the last 8 years through his position as Chief Financial Officer and Executive General Manager Corporate Services.

New CEO appointed at ANROWS

Padma Raman PSM has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS), following the retirement of current CEO, Dr Heather Nancarrow. For the last 11 years Padma was the chief executive of the Australian Human Rights Commission. She will begin with ANROWS in July.





National Reconciliation Week 2021



It's National Reconciliation Week from 27 May to 3 June. This year's theme is *More than a word. Reconciliation takes action*, urges the reconciliation movement towards

braver and more impactful action.

Register your National Reconciliation Week 2021 event here. Use the hashtags #NRW2021 #MoreThanAWord on social and download the poster and other digital assets via their posters and resources page.

Compliance With & Enforcement of Parenting Orders: Last Chance to Complete the AIFS Survey for Professionals



The Australian Institute of Family Studies has been commissioned by Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) to undertake research in relation to the compliance with and enforcement of family law parenting orders. The research will involve multiple studies, including a survey of legal and non-legal family law system professionals.

You are invited to take part in this survey if you are a legal professional (including judicial officers, barristers and solicitors) and non-legal professionals including: FDR practitioners and professionals working in post-separation support services, including parenting order programs and family violence sector professionals.

The survey closes in early June, click here to complete the survey**.** For more information on the research click here to download the information sheet.

LGBTIQ+ Health and Wellbeing Community Needs Survey



Queerspace has launched a survey to help understand community needs and service access including rates of family violence, financial distress, housing insecurity, AOD, mental health, as well as impacts of COVID-19.

They are hoping to reach a broad and diverse range of Australians including, but not limited to, First Nations peoples, parents, carers, people with disabilities, remote and regional communities, intersex people, people who identify across the different LGBTIQ+ communities and people from various faith and cultural backgrounds.

They are also asking non-LGBTIQ+ people to participate in the survey to draw comparisons and identify general community needs.

The information will be used to assist in planning and delivery of appropriate and improved healthcare services and analysis of results will be shared with organisations for the purpose of improving the health and well-being of LGBTIQ+ people.

Click here to complete or share the survey.



FRSA EVENTS & TRAINING CALENDAR

Wed 15

CHC81015 Graduate Diploma of Relationship Counselling – June 2026, Online

June 24, 2026 @ 2:00 pm - December 8, 2027 @ 5:00 pm AEST
Wed 15

Effective Group Leadership Course

July 15 - July 16
Mon 20

AMDRAS Training & Accreditation

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

Safety in the Family Court webinar

Monday, 24 May 2021 | 1:00pm – 2:30pm

ANROWS is holding a webinar on Safety in the Family Court. An expert panel will draw on their diverse experiences to offer insights into improving safety for women and children in the Family Court. The panel will discuss: what can we learn from what is working, what can we learn from what isn't working, and where are the opportunities to build change?

The discussion will be facilitated by Michele Robinson (ANROWS) with:

- Dr Jane Wangmann (University of Technology Sydney)
- Dr Rae Kaspiew (Australian Institute of Family Studies)

- Tracey Turner (Domestic and Family Violence Specialist Worker (Aboriginal Focus), Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service)
- Angela Lynch AM (Women's Legal Service Qld)
- Janet Carmichael (Child Dispute Services, FCA & FCCA)
- Molly Dragiewicz (Griffith University).

There will also be a live Q&A. The webinar is open to anyone and free to attend, and a recording will be made available on the ANROWS website following the event. Register here.



VIC

Project Administrator – Support for Fathers | Relationships Australia Victoria

Counsellor Extreme Climatic Events | Relationships Australia Victoria

Family Violence Practitioner and Case Manager | Relationships Australia Victoria

NSW

Manager Permanency Support Program| Anglicare NSW South, West & ACT

Mental Health Clinician – headspace Batemans Bay | Relationships Australia Canberra & Region

Fundraising Specialist – Major Gifts and Corporate Partnerships | BaptistCare NSW & ACT

Couple & Family Counsellor, Wollongong | Relationships Australia NSW

Counsellor Team Leader | Relationships Australia NSW

RESOURCES

Vital support: building resilient charities to support Australia's wellbeing | ***Social Ventures Australia***



This report finds that despite Australia's promising economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, many charities remain in vulnerable financial positions and require urgent funding from the Australian government to continue supporting thousands of Australians in need and providing employment opportunities.

Report of the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor | ***Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor***

This is the fourth report of the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor, and the final report tabled as specified in section 23(1) of the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor Act 2016. The report covers reform implementation for the period 1 November 2019 to 1 November 2020.

How does domestic violence escalate over time? | ***Australian Institute of Criminology***

In this paper, the authors conclude that the disparity between studies using different data highlights the difficulty in determining whether escalation is in fact characteristic of abusive relationships. It is apparent that additional research, using different data and methods, is needed to explore this dimension of abusive relationships and understand what escalation means for victim–survivors.

Avoiding simple solutions to complex problems: Independent Assessments are not the way to a fairer NDIS | ***Children and Young People with Disability Australia(UNSW)***



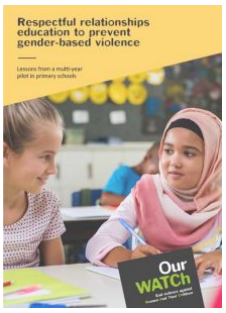
This report explores the experiences of children, young people and families with the NDIS. The research also explores the proposed introduction of Independent Assessments and the attitudes of NDIS participants towards this major change.

Respectful relationships education to prevent gender-based violence – final evaluation report | ***OurWatch***

This report is the final evaluation report of a pilot of respectful relationships education in primary schools in Victoria and Queensland.

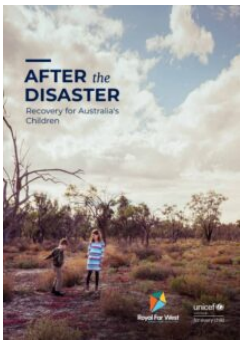
The focus of the Respectful Relationships Education in Primary Schools Pilot was on implementing and evaluating a whole-of-school approach to respectful relationships

education in primary schools, focusing on Years 1 and 2 (students aged five to seven years) in particular.



The evaluation also explored structural and systemic opportunities for the continued take-up of respectful relationships education.

After the Disaster: Recovery for Australia's Children | ***UNICEF Australia and Royal Far West***



This report describes the challenges that many children and young people face when they live in areas affected by disasters. It includes case studies of service delivery and lessons learnt.

Child witnesses of family violence: An examination of Victoria Police family violence data | ***Crime Statistics Agency, Victoria.***

This report highlights the high number of young children witnessing intimate partner violence in Victoria, often over many years.

Findings include:

- An estimated one in 50 children in Victoria witnessed a police recorded family violence incident
- Nearly two-thirds of child witnesses were aged 9 or younger, and over a third were under the age of 5
- Over three-quarters of child witnesses came in contact with the justice system again within five years, such as by being a protected person on an intervention order.

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

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