



e-News April 2019

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Message from the CEO

As always, we've been moving forward.

As our carer numbers and request for services increase, FKCA has added another layer of support for foster and kinship carers. The new role of Carer Support Officer (CSO) has already started in Darwin and will shortly commence in Alice Springs so that we can increase our value add to the existing services across the regions.

CSO's are the networking gurus of our service. They will work with carers to refer you the right service providers to assist, talk to you when you need someone to talk to and support you in meetings when you self-advocate.

With the ever increasing demands of our team, our CSO's and Advocates are super busy and run on a very tight schedule. It's more important than ever to call the office on **1300 030 928** to book an appointment to meet and discuss your needs with one of our team members. **Book early** as appointments do fill quickly.

We've been busy building partnerships with other Out of Home Care providers throughout the Northern Territory. One of our core deliverables is to be a more inclusive organisation working closely with others in our sector. There are a number of Aboriginal Controlled Organisations coming into this space and we are opening up lines of discussion to work together in this space. Yes, we need more carers. Yes, we need more Aboriginal carers. We can only resolve this if we all work together.

I trust everyone is on track for an amazing year and look forward to catching up with you soon.

Best wishes from

Ann Owen & the Team at FKCA

Recent updates for Carers

The right to be respected

The Charter of Rights states Carer's have the right to "Be Respected". This means you have the right to respectful and courteous communication. We ask our team be afforded this same right as well. Though we understand every Carer face challenges that can prove frustrating, we ask members to be mindful of where this frustration is directed and to treat our staff with the same courtesy that you would expect to be treated with. We have a new and dynamic team who are already moving the organization into a new and exciting era. To continue driving this momentum our team are busier than ever exploring new and fresh ways to deliver support services to our members.

If you require a meeting with an Advocate we recommend providing 24-48 hour's notice as advocacy appointments do fill up quickly particularly with the introduction of virtual advocacy appointments.

New Carer Handbook

FKCA have significantly contributed to the development of the new Foster and Kinship Carer Handbook released early this year. The handbook was rewritten in consultation with Territory Families, CREATE Foundation NT and other key stakeholders to provide Carers with a more comprehensive as well as friendly and welcoming guide for Foster and Kinship Carers.

The handbook has been updated to ensure Carers are receiving the best information and resources to help them prepare for, and welcome, children into their homes and to create a loving and supportive environment where children feel safe, secure and have every opportunity to thrive. It includes a range of

important and useful information from your rights as a Carer through to decision making advice, cultural and reunification information as well as tips to manage day to day issues you may face in your caring journey.

Our next virtual advocacy session with Monalisa will be reviewing the new handbook so don't forget to join the discussion and raise any questions you may have. **Download a copy of [the handbook here](#).**



Advocate Update

Northern Region Advocate Update

Wednesday 27 February 2019 marked a history making moment for FKCA with our first ever Facebook Live Stream Advocacy Session! The video has been viewed **146** times and reached **261** people. This is an exciting time for us to move into as it marks a new era of connection between FKCA and our members, particularly our regional and remote members. The next Facebook Live Stream will be held Wednesday 27 March 2019 where we will be discussing the newly updated Foster and Kinship Carer Handbook. We will particularly focus on the section 'Financial Assistance'.

In addition to our Facebook Live Stream service, FKCA will also be introducing Virtual Advocacy appointments. This service allows Carers to arrange online

appointments with Monalisa Fungalei especially when they do not have the capacity to meet in any other way. This will prove particularly valuable for our regional, remote and interstate based members as well as members who work outside standard business hours.

Like our [Facebook page here](#)

Southern Region Advocate Update

Update regarding reimbursements from Territory Families.

From time to time carers may have a query related to reimbursement from Territory Families for items that they have purchased on behalf of a child or young person in their care. All approvals for reimbursements of items *must* be gained from Territory Families prior to purchase otherwise the Financial Management Act is breached.

I have been advised that there is now a Finance Team at Territory Families office in Alice Springs and approvals are in general processed quickly if needed.

New meditation apps to help with trauma and mental health issues in Aboriginal communities.

“Smiling Mind” is a new mindfulness app in Aboriginal language. This is a positive collaboration between the women from Central Australia’s NPY Women’s Council and Smiling Mind. The project is called Uti Kulintjaku which translates to “think and understand clearly”. Working with interpreters combines the skills of Ngangkari or traditional healers with western medicine to improve understanding of mental health and wellbeing. The app is currently being trialled in schools in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara lands.

This exciting new free app aims to address mental health and trauma issues in Aboriginal communities especially amongst young people. The app featuring recorded meditations has been produced in Kriol, Pitjantjatjara and

Ngaanyatjarra language.

Smiling Mind has a range of meditations in English also developed for various age groups from adults to children and young people. Have a look and give it a try!

Search in the Apple or Android store for 'Smiling Mind' the app for free

Carer Advisory Group

The Carer Advisory Group is already proving highly valuable in the Out of Home Care Sector with Territory Families and Alice Springs based Aboriginal organisation Tangentyere approaching FKCA to utilise The Carer Advisory Group as a consultation group.

Tangentyere are undertaking a project to develop a comprehensive and culturally safe Aboriginal kinship care service model which will provide a blueprint for implementation throughout the Northern Territory. As well as engaging with our Carer Advisor Group (CAG) members, our members will be inviting an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group to participate and provide feedback on the proposed model.

The Education and Training division of Territory Families are developing a new Carer training framework and have requested our members to review the framework. CAG members will be asked to provide advice regarding the type of support and training they feel Carers need to support them in their Caring role.

As well as preparing for the consultation meetings, the Carer Advisory Group have a busy few months ahead as they play an integral role in progressing two pieces of systemic advocacy. The first systemic matter is the development of a

new policy for the rights and participation of carers and their families during transition from placement. Carers stories are being collated and will be presented to the Territory Families Executive Leadership Group in the coming weeks.

If you have a negative experience through a transition of a child from your care to another placement, please call our office so we may capture these critical experiences and empower change for all.

Anyone can become a member of the Carer Advisory Group and contribute to raise issues and participate in improving the care system.

If you are interested in joining the Carer Advisory Group please contact Monalisa on 1300 030 928 or info@fkca.org.au



Support Services

How much do you know about My Health Record?

This online system provides all available information on individuals' medical history, hospital and medication records. As a foster or kinship carer of a child or young person, you will not automatically be given access to the My Health Record of those in your care. Under the legal care of Territory Families, Team

Leaders and Managers will be nominated as a child or young person's 'Authorised Representatives', with full permissions and controls in managing a child's health information.

As a foster or kinship carer, you can be added as a 'Nominated Representative' to a child's My Health Record. This may be particularly important should the child in your care have ongoing medical needs or in another appropriate situation. All carers should discuss this with the child's Case Manager where appropriate and look at adding this into the care plan if appropriate.

Did you know that at the age of 14 years old, a child will become solely responsible for managing their own My Health Record?

At 13 years and 9 months, each young person will be advised by the Australian Government that they are able to take control of their own My Health Record. Upon turning 14 years old, 'Authorised Representatives' listed on a young person's record will be automatically removed, unless written request is received from the young person prior to their birthday. If appropriate, the young person can nominate other suitable people in their life to manage this record with them. This is a great opportunity for carers to have a discussion with young people about their ongoing medical and health needs to ensure that where appropriate, each young people will continue to be supported in managing their My Health Record. [Read more here](#)

Fun Bus is moving outside!

From March 25th, City of Darwin's Fun Bus is moving back out to parks from 9:30am to 11:30am every week day. All parents and carers with children up to 5 years of age are invited! Bring along hat, appropriate clothing and a piece of fruit per family to share for morning tea. Head along to one new you!

Monday: **Bagot Community**, Bagot Road, Ludmilla

Tuesday: **Wanguri Park**, Wanguri Terrace, Wanguri

Wednesday: **Water Gardens**, Freshwater Road, Jingili

Thursday: **Yanyula Park** (behind Anula Shops), Yanyula Drive, Anula

Friday: **Civic Park**, Smith Street, Darwin



Upcoming Training and Events

Coming up in March/April 2019:

In February, Foster and Kinship Carers Association ran information sessions in Alice Springs and Darwin on “Understanding Your Teenager” in collaboration with Relationship Australia. We had a great turn out to training in both Darwin and Alice Springs. Carers had an opportunity to discuss some of the biggest challenges involved in raising teenagers, including what teenagers experience and what transition feels like for them. Carers had the opportunity to take away strategies in managing issues and supporting their teens at home.

If you want some more information or resources from this training, contact our office on 1300 030 928.



Upcoming events:

Please note bookings are essential for all FKCA trainings and events. Follow the links below to book.

Australia wide events

Wed 27th March

[Virtual Advocacy Facebook Live](#)

Wed 24th April

[Virtual Advocacy Facebook Live](#)

Darwin events

Wed 20th March

Know your child know yourself - SOLD OUT

Wed 27th March

[Carer/Parent Group](#) Palmerston 9am - 10:30am

Thur 28th March

Henbury School PossABILITIES expo

Wed 10th April

[Carer/Parent Group](#) Palmerston 9am - 10:30am

Wed 24th April

[Carer/Parent Group](#) Palmerston 9am - 10:30am

Alice Springs events

Wed 17th April

Carers morning tea, [Kungas Cafe 10am](#)

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

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TERRITORY FAMILIES AFTER HOURS & CHILD PROTECTION HOTLINE

1 800 700 250



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