

Post Placement Support Service trading as
Permanent Care and Adoptive Families
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**Permanent
Care and
Adoptive
Families**



Information Sheet 2014

Permanent Care and Adoptive Families is a member-based, not-for-profit organisation providing services to deliver better outcomes for children and families in permanent care and adoption. Our services include information and resource sharing, peer support, training for families and professionals, all of which are informed by the lived experience of families.

Information and resource sharing

Newsletter and website

Our website and newsletters provide members with a wide range of current information, resources and event listings. Becoming a member is free and easy; join online or alternatively download a membership form and return it to PCA Families. <http://www.pcafamilies.org.au/membership>

Information Support Service

Permanent Care and Adoptive Families' staff are available to provide information to support your family and connect you to other services or support groups. Please call (03) 9020 1833.

Carer Information Support Service

Permanent Care and Adoptive Families supports the Carer Information Support Service (CISS) through a joint venture with the Foster Care Association of Victoria. CISS provides assistance to those connected with foster care, permanent care, and adoption. To contact the CISS, call (03) 9489 9770.

Specialist Database

Permanent Care and Adoptive Families operates a specialist database of allied health professionals skilled in working with individuals and families with experience of Out of Home Care, permanent care and adoption. This service focusses particularly on appropriately qualified professionals delivering therapeutic counselling to individuals and families. Professionals are registered through recommendation or self-nomination. This is a free service offered to our members.

Specialist Bookstore

Our retail service sells books catering specifically to children and families connected in kinship care, permanent care and adoption.

Our books are sourced locally and internationally and can be ordered through our office, any of our events, or our online store. All items stocked by the service are 'Permanent Care and Adoptive Families recommended'. Our stock list is continually growing. Visit us at <http://shop.pcafamilies.org.au/>

Peer Support

Events and Family Days

Permanent Care and Adoptive Families host events that provide opportunities to connect and network with other families in permanent care and adoption. These topic-based events give members and interested individuals an opportunity to listen to guest speakers talk on issues relevant to home-based care and adoption. Parents and carers are welcome to bring their children to all events.

Family days are hosted annually and provide an opportunity for a fun and free day out for Permanent Care and Adoptive Families' members.

All upcoming events and family days are advertised through the Permanent Care and Adoptive Families newsletter and website, and through email notification.

Journal Club (peer support gatherings)

Journal Club offers members an opportunity to share with other parents and carers the unique experiences of parenting children through home-based care and adoption. Each month, Journal Club discusses an article relevant to parenting in home-based care and adoption. It allows confidential conversations around the challenges of parenting and is facilitated by skilled volunteers with lived experience in raising children through home-based care and adoption.

Playgroups

Playgroups offer parents and carers the opportunity to develop networks and to share information while the children make friendships and have fun.

If you would like to start a Journal Club or Playgroup in your area, Permanent Care and Adoptive Families will provide support and guidance. A small amount of funding is available for start-up costs.

Please check our website for Journal Club and Playgroup venues and dates details.

Training and Workshops

Permanent Care and Adoptive Families' programs are underpinned by our niche expertise in the lived experience and needs of children and families in permanent care and adoption. Our training programs are delivered for parents and carers', and also for professionals who work with individuals and families connected in permanent care and adoption.

For parents and carers

Our programs for parents and carers offer participants skills and information relevant to their everyday lives and ensure that their common lived experiences are woven throughout.

We are currently delivering:

Introducing Siblings through Permanent Care and Adoption

This informative workshop is for families who have recently introduced, or are planning to introduce an additional child into their family. It will provide a professional and parent perspective on:

- Understanding how attachment and trauma experiences impact on children.
- How the behaviour from these experiences impact on all family members.
- Practical takeaway strategies to strengthen families.

Life Story Work

An interactive workshop session in which parents and carers learn the theory and practice behind the development of life story work. This session will take life story work beyond the simple collection of events and timelines. *Life Story Work* will use the events in a child and family's life as a starting point for deeper conversations about and understandings of the child's journey so far and the feelings and questions connected to this journey. A range of child-friendly resources for use by parents, carers and children will also be made available.

Parenting Plus!

The program will help parents develop a therapeutic approach to parenting their children. In a safe and supportive environment, participants will explore some of the underlying reasons for behaviours and reactions our children can have; what these reactions and behaviours can trigger in parents; and tools to restore yourself as parents to facilitate healing in your children.

The course is built around the core challenges of parenting children with early experiences of disrupted attachment and trauma. These core challenges, along with grief and loss, regulation, identity and pervasive shame, often sit beneath the radar of outsiders to the family; they are difficult for families to identify and discuss, yet significantly impact on intimate family relationships. Participants will be invited to join an ongoing peer support group after completing training.

Let's Talk About School: Adoption and Permanent Care

Navigating the education system to get the best for your child can be challenging and at times daunting. This two and a half hour training program provides knowledge and strategies to support permanent care and adoptive parents in:

- Educating school staff and childcare workers about the needs of your child
- Stages of development and children's understanding of adoption and care
- Preparing your child with the knowledge and confidence to answer questions around family
- Resources, tips and tools to share with your child and their school.

Delivered in workshop format, this program provides parents with the opportunity to share past and current challenges and experiences.

Participants can also receive the handbook *Let's Talk: Helping Educators Understand the Implications of Adoption and Permanent Care*, a resource to share with their child's school. This resource provides teachers with an understanding of how the child's loss and pre-placement environment impacts on their time at school; techniques that can help cater to children's needs; respectful adoption and permanent care 'language'; and, available resources.

For children and young people

Tree of Life (Pilot Program)

Designed for children and young people who are connected through adoption and permanent care, this strengths based program uses the metaphor of a tree as a framework to assist children and young people explore and speak about aspects of their lives; both positive and challenging. Delivered over a series of sessions, children are supported by carefully trained facilitators and adults who have the lived experience of adoption or care.

This model has been developed and successfully applied by the Dulwich Centre (SA).

For professionals

Our tailored training for professionals delivers a unique mix of professional expertise combined with experience-based insights into how professional practice impacts on families in kinship care, permanent care and adoption. Structured to facilitate reflective learning, our training enables professionals to develop a greater understanding and confidence in their professional practice as it relates to the specific needs of individuals and families in permanent care and adoption. PCA Families are able to offer training to meet your individual needs – both for professionals and clients. Please contact our Programs Manager to discuss your requirements.

Current training on offer:

Life Story Work for Professionals (4 hours)

This is an interactive workshop in which professionals learn the theory and practice behind the development of life story work. This session explores how to take life story work beyond the simple collection of events and timelines. *Life Story Work* will use the events in a child and family's life as a starting point for deeper conversations about and understandings of the child's journey so far, and the feelings and questions connected to this journey. This session will be accompanied by a range of child-friendly resources for use by parents, carers, workers and children.

Parenting Plus! – Therapeutic Parenting (1 day)

The course is a condensed version of our well regarded Parenting Plus! program. It is built around the core challenges of parenting children with early experiences of disrupted attachment and trauma. These core challenges, along with grief and loss, regulation, identity and pervasive shame, often sit beneath the radar of outsiders to the family; they are difficult for families to identify and discuss, yet significantly impact on intimate family relationships.

Participants will explore some of the underlying reasons for behaviours and reactions children can have; what these reactions and behaviours can trigger in parents; and tools to help restore parents to be able to facilitate healing in their children.

Let's Talk About School: Program for Workers (3 hours)

Tailored to the needs of social workers and other community service workers supporting families in kinship care, permanent care and adoption, this workshop covers:

- Educating school staff and childcare workers about the needs of children affected by pre-placement experiences common to children in kinship care, permanent care and adoption
- Children's understanding of adoption and care and how these impact within the classroom
- Greater knowledge of school support systems to assist children in kinship care, permanent care and adoption
- Skills and strategies navigate the Victorian education system with confidence, in support of parents and carers.

Delivered in workshop format, this session will enhance workers' understanding of the experiences of parents, carers and children in the education system and how to support them to ensure the best educational outcomes for children.

For further information, contact Permanent Care and Adoptive Families during business hours on (03) 9020 1833 or email info@pcfamilies.org.au