



Email Newsletter – July 2008

Dear all,

Welcome to the July edition of our electronic newsletter, and a special welcome to all our new members! In this newsletter, you will find details about;

- The [PPSS Committee of Management](#)
- The [Australian Adoption Conference](#)
- [National Child Protection Framework](#)
- The [Young Eagles Program](#)
- [Upcoming PPSS workshops](#)
- A range of helpful [resources](#)

PPSS COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

Following the recent resignation of long-standing committee member, Gail Scowcroft, PPSS are seeking expressions of interest for new committee members. Given the skill set and backgrounds already represented within the management of PPSS and the current priorities of the organisation, PPSS are particularly interested in applicants with a strong connection to kinship care, foster care and/or the education sector. Interested parties are encouraged to contact PPSS president, Christine Cook, on 1300 760 566 for more details.

We'd also like to take this opportunity to formally acknowledge Gail for her dedication and commitment to PPSS, express our gratitude in her continued support of the organisation in a less formal capacity, and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

AUSTRALIAN ADOPTION CONFERENCE

This year's Australian Adoption Conference, 'Connecting Past, Securing Future', is being held in Sydney from 2nd-5th September 2008. The full program consists of both local and international speakers and provides a mix of key note sessions and interactive workshops. For full event details and registration, refer to the below website:

<http://www.australianadoptionconference.com/>

NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION FRAMEWORK

The Australian Government is taking the lead with State and Territory Governments and the community sector to develop and implement a national [framework for protecting Australia's children](#). They are consulting widely to ensure the framework is practical, action-focused and takes an holistic approach to child safety and wellbeing. To help with these consultations, a discussion paper has been developed with input from key stakeholders, including State and Territory Governments and other experts and practitioners in child protection-related fields.

The invitation to have your say on this important work closed on 30th June 2008, but focused comments were invited under the following topics, and will be considered as the government continue their work on developing the framework:

1. Stronger prevention focus (preventing child abuse and neglect)
2. Better collaboration between services (all parties working together better to protect children)
3. Improving responses for children in care and young people leaving care (e.g. foster care and other out-of-home care)
4. Improving responses to Indigenous children
5. Attracting and retaining the right workforce (the child protection and child welfare workforce)
6. Improving child protection systems (there are eight different state and territory systems)

It is intended that the framework will be ready at the end of the year. Action agreed in the framework will then be progressed by governments and the community sector. Implementation of the framework is expected to be completed by the end of 2009.

Other Questions and Answers

Q. What does the discussion paper do?

The discussion paper seeks to canvass options from experts in the field and the broader community on how Australian children might be better protected. This will inform a framework which sets out actions by the Australian Government and others.

Q. What is a child protection framework?

The framework will clarify the Australian Government's role and will be a practical working document outlining concrete actions to be undertaken by governments and other groups. Some are already being implemented; others would require a change in approach or new commitment.

Q. How will the framework help children?

Action will focus on stronger prevention strategies to tackle social disadvantage and promote social inclusion and wellbeing. Better collaboration within and between governments will also be a priority. Closing the gap between Indigenous children and other children will be a chief aim of the national framework.

Q. Why is the Australian Government concerned about child protection?

Child protection systems are dealing with more cases of child abuse and neglect than ever before. Of particular concern are:

- 58,563 findings of children either being or likely to be harmed, abused or neglected per year
- the prevalence of abuse and neglect five times higher among Indigenous children than other children
- 65 per cent of children in the child protection system under the age of 10
- the largest proportion of children admitted to care and protection orders aged between one and four

Q. Who helped to develop the discussion paper?

The Australian Government put the discussion paper together through consultation with our state and territory colleagues, and other experts in child protection and related sectors.

Q. Will I be able to provide comment after 30 June 2008?

There are always opportunities to contribute to Government policy development but to ensure measures to better protect children are progressed and implemented as soon as possible, a time limit to receive your comments is needed.

For a copy of the discussion paper, please visit

http://www.facsia.gov.au/family/child_protection_discussion_paper/



Young Eagles is an initiative of the Royal Victorian Aero Club. It provides an introduction to aviation for teenagers (aged 12 to 17, males & females). It is free to the participants. Being free, it does not generate revenue for the RVAC so commercial advertising of the program is not possible; we rely on word-of-mouth advertising.

When a teenager hears about Young Eagles, they visit the website and download the registration form. A parent or guardian must sign it and send it to the RVAC. They will then receive a letter inviting them to attend on a particular Sunday. They must wait for the invitation because we need to coordinate aeroplane bookings and our volunteer pilots to meet the demand.

On the day, two or three dozen teenagers attend the RVAC at Moorabbin Airport with their parents. We provide a 45 minute presentation including topics such as how aeroplanes work, how to get a pilot's licence and career opportunities in the aviation industry. Guest speakers include Qantas or Virgin Blue pilots, air traffic controllers & Defence Force recruiters.

We then give each teenager a Young Eagles cap, take a group photo and then send them flying! Our pilots are volunteer Club members; each has at least 200 flying hours and has been approved by the Chief Flying Instructor. They also have working with children accreditation. The pilots are paying for the cost of the flights that they conduct but, as private pilots who are passionate about flying, they are happy to do so.

Parents are invited to go along on the flight but they sit in the back; the Young Eagle is in the front so that they can see everything that occurs. The aeroplane flies from Moorabbin Airport, around the City, out to the Police Academy at Glen Waverley and back to Moorabbin. The flight takes about half an hour.

On their return the Young Eagles visit the Control Tower and then receive an information showbag and a certificate to commemorate the occasion.

Each teenager attends once only. We hold a Young Eagles day once per month, with a different group each time. Our experience over the four years that the program has been running is that 5% of Young Eagles return to take flying lessons. Some more may come back in a few decades. Most merely have a lovely day and that's fine with us. We are promoting aviation but there is no follow up after a Young Eagles day. Those teenagers who have the passion for aviation ignited will return of their own accord.

We have received feedback from parents of past Young Eagles who have begun flying that their children have become more focussed at school, particularly in Maths & Science subjects, and they become more goal-oriented, taking part-time jobs to fund their lessons. The most rewarding Young Eagle that I personally flew was a foster-care child, a 14 year old boy, whose social worker reported that he became much more interested in school and confirmed in his desire to be an airline pilot - and realised that it was actually possible for him.

Visit www.rvac.com.au/young-eagles for more information & the registration form.

UPCOMING PPSS WORKSHOPS

- **Sexuality & Identity Issues – Friday 29th August**

Audience: Facilitated by George Habib, this workshop will explore sexual and gender identity issues for children raised in out-of-home care. Refer to attached flyer for full session details.

For more information or to register for this session, please contact Georgina Butler (PPSS Training Coordinator): 0447 055 123 or at info@ppss.org.au

- **'Great Expectations' (ongoing)**

Audience: Primary & secondary school teachers

In partnership with Ian Seal, PPSS continue to offer valuable professional development for teachers and schools. If you are interested in helping us to promote this fantastic package, you are encouraged to do so either by speaking directly to your children's educational institution(s) about the availability of the training, or by contacting PPSS to discuss how you can be of assistance in marketing the initiative. The training is supported by the Office of Child Safety and the Danks Trust, and is available to schools state-wide.

For more information or to book, please contact Georgina Butler (PPSS Training Coordinator): 0447 055 123 or at info@ppss.org.au

RESOURCES

NEW:

- *ICASN Newsboard* - This resource is updated on an ongoing basis so check it regularly to keep abreast of Inter-Country Adoption news and information
<http://www.icasn.org/newsboard.html>

PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED:

- *ICASN Perspective Paper - Search & Reunion with Natural family*
<http://www.icasn.org/perspectives/ICASN%20Perspectives%20-%20Search%20and%20Reunion.pdf>
- *Australian Government Inter-country Adoption Strategic Plan 2007*
For more information go to <http://www.ag.gov.au> and follow the links to Families >> Children >> Inter-country Adoption >> What's New
- *Transitioning from the state care system: the impacts of in-care experiences on the post-care outcomes for young people leaving care.*
http://www.sprc.unsw.edu.au/ASPC2007/papers/Mendes_9.pdf

- *Educational outcomes of children on guardianship or custody orders.*
http://www.sprc.unsw.edu.au/ASPC2007/papers/Hunter_148.pdf
- PPSS Referral List – we provide a list of counsellors who have been recommended to us by at least one person or family (although we don't formally recommend any counsellor as an organisation). Contact us if you would like a copy of this.
- Adoption Play Shops – Contact Gail Scowcroft on 0419 390 852
- Child Parenting Skills - educational support services to prospective parents forming their families through adoption, fostering, permanent care, surrogacy and biological birth children. <http://www.childparentingskills.com.au/>
- Medicare subsidised counselling from psychologists – if you would like to find out more about this, the link on the Australian Psychological Society website (www.psychology.org.au) is: http://www.psychology.org.au/medicare/fact_sheet/
- Ruth Kelly from Ireland has been involved in a study on Inter-country Adoption undertaken by the Children's Research Centre (Trinity College) and the Adoption Board in Ireland. The research, which interviewed 180 families and nearly 100 children, is now complete and available as a PDF file from: www.tcd.ie/childrensresearchcentre and www.adoptionboard.ie
- Costs of raising children in Australia - based on research commissioned by the Ministerial Taskforce on Child Support and published through the Australian Government Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, this occasional paper (# 18) presents a collection of three reports on the costs of children in Australian families namely:
 - The estimated costs of children in Australian families in 2005–06
 - Updated costs of children using Australian budget standards
 - Costs of children and equivalence scales: a review of methodological issues and Australian estimates

A copy of the paper is available at:

<http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/research/ops-ops18.htm>

- British Association for Adoption and Foster Care (www.baaf.org.uk) - books on adoption and foster care. BAAF books can also be obtained in Australia from St Luke's Innovative Resources in Bendigo (www.stlukes.org.au).
- Permanent Care and Adoption - Teachers and Parents in Partnership - an information sheet for families to give to their children's teachers
<http://www.office-for-children.vic.gov.au/adoption-permanent-care/library/publications/teachers-parents>

- Permanent Care and Adoption of older Children - Information for Relatives and Friends - an information sheet for families to give to relatives and friends
<http://www.office-for-children.vic.gov.au/adoption-permanent-care/library/publications/older-children>
- Foster Care Association of Victoria website and newsletters (lots of interesting information) <http://www.fcav.org/newsletter.htm>
- Paediatric Policy – *Health Care for Children in ‘Out-of-Home’ Placements*
www.racp.edu.au/hpu/paed/outofHome.pdf

INTERSTATE ORGANISATIONS OFFERING SUPPORT TO PARENTS & CARERS

- Post Adoption Resource Centre, Sydney, NSW. www.bensoc.org.au/parc/index.cfm. Information and counselling for anyone affected by adoption.
Email: parc@bensoc.org.au
- Post Adoption Support Services, Relationships Australia, South Australia.
www.relationships.com.au/what-we-do/services/post-adoption-support-service
Tel: 08 8245 8100. Nikki Hartmann, Coordinator. Email: n.hartmann@rasa.org.au
- Adoption Research and Counselling Service WA. www.adoptionwa.org.au
Counselling, support and outreach service for anyone separated from birth family, adoption, foster care, step family etc. Email: arcs@adoptionwa.org.au

WEBSITES/EMAIL LISTS

- Educational support services to prospective parents forming their families through adoption. www.childparentingskills.com.au
- Australian information on attachment – www.attachmentresources.com.au
- Information and news on a wide range of inter-country adoption issues - contact Lynelle Beveridge on: lynelleb@au1.ibm.com
- Advice, search and support services for the adoption triangle, care leavers and donor conception - VANISH - www.vanish.org.au
- Inter-country Adoption Service (new website addresses) - www.dhs.vic.gov.au/icas and office-for-children.vic.gov.au/placement-support/intercountry-adoption