

April 2007



P O Box 729
NORTHCOTE
Vic 3070

48 HIGH ST
NORTHCOTE

PH 03 9489 9770
FAX 03 9489 9119
EMAIL ADMIN@FCAV.ORG
HTTP://WWW.FCAV.ORG

**FCAV
Committee of Management
2006 – 2007**

President
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Gippsland Region

Vice President
John Woolcock
South East Region

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North West Metro

Janet Elefsiniotis
North West Metro

Christine Peterson
North West Metro

Carers wishing to contact a
Committee Member or an
interim Helpline volunteer,
please phone the
FCAV Office on
03 948 99770

FCAV Staff

Executive Officer
Julien Leith

Office Coordinator
Jenny Clayfield

**NATIONAL
FOSTER CARE
CONFERENCE
2007**

5th - 7th October 2007

**Telstra Dome,
Melbourne
Docklands**

Our theme
“Fostering Change”

**DEADLINE
FOR
JUNE NEWSLETTER
CLOSE OF BUSINESS
16th MAY, 2007**

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Dare to Care - Foster Care
ABN 30 747 010 099

Items/articles in this newsletter are not necessarily those expressed by the FCAV Committee of Management.
Information has been obtained from sources deemed reliable

A FEW WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT



In our February newsletter I said that I didn't want to be "completely submerged in our lack of funding", but I think the background to our funding problems needs some explanation.

The increased funding provided to the FCAV in 2004 enabling an office to be established and staff employed was based on an indicative budget only. The real costs are considerably higher. For example a recent rental increase for our office of 35% sent us into a state of panic.

At our Planning meeting earlier this year the committee of management decided that our decisions would be based on the following principals: -

- We would be fair and responsible employers.
- We would ensure appropriate remuneration of staff and re-imburement of expenses for our volunteers
- We wish to make participation in FCAV possible for everyone, including carers from regional and rural areas.

From a financial point of view we have been able to manage these costs from funds carried forward as a result of the establishment of the office and employment of staff being delayed by 6 months. *However as of June 30th, 2007 any carry forward funds will have been expended.*

We have advised the Department of Human Services of our serious financial position and are currently having discussions which we hope will have a favorable result. We are very pleased to announce that DHS has responded to our rental crisis by agreeing to provide an additional \$13,000 pa in recurrent funding to cover increased rent and utility expenses. This has elevated the immediate crisis, but we will still be facing a serious shortfall as of the beginning of the new financial year.

We have received expressions of support from lots and lots of organisations and individuals and hope that our continuing negotiations with the Department of Human Services will succeed in enabling us to both maintain and extend our support for carers in the interests of benefiting the children in your care.

Yours in caring
Sylvia Davey

*“...I believe the children are our future
Teach them well and let them lead the way
Show them all the beauty they possess inside
Give them a sense of pride to make it easier
Let the children's laughter remind us how we used to be”...*

“Greatest Love of All” (Whitney Houston)
From the IFCO Informer Issue 1/2007

2007 NATIONAL FOSTER CARE CONFERENCE

Friday 5th - Sunday 7th October 2007

Telstra Dome, Melbourne, Docklands

Plans are well underway for this exciting conference - on our own doorstep!

The MC will be Julie McCrossin. For those who attended the Resilience Congress, you will remember her humour and skill. Others may remember her as a host on Radio National or in the television show "Good News Week".

So far there are workshop proposals from every state and territory and many carers from all over Australia have expressed an interest in attending.

We aim that the conference will provide a creative, constructive and enjoyable learning forum. We want all involved in the foster care sector to share experiences and learning, both formally and informally.

The conference is aimed at foster, permanent and kinship carers. CSO workers, departmental workers, academics and researchers and any others in the field will be warmly welcomed.

Carers - please speak to your agencies about how you can be supported to attend the conference - this could be payment of the registration fees, arranging child-care, helping with transport/accommodation costs etc.

******* PUT IT IN YOUR DIARIES NOW *******

SUPPORT THE FCAV

Your donation of \$15 (individual) or \$60 organisation) assists us to produce this bimonthly newsletter.

If you have not made your donation for 2007 as yet, we would be most grateful to receive it.



Payments can be made payable to the Foster Care Association of Victoria Inc. as a Newsletter Donation.

Donations can be made by completing the form on the back of this newsletter.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FOSTER CARE CONFERENCE - NEW ZEALAND 2007



The conference was an inspirational experience, great learning opportunity, excellent networking opportunity and also most enjoyable! The influence of Maori people and their culture added an exciting dimension to the event. This influence went much deeper than just the traditional welcome, hangi (feast) and farewell. Each guest speaker was included in a Maori song at the conclusion of their presentation. By the end of the conference we are all singing along.

There was also a good representation of indigenous presenters with Maori culture and oral tradition prevalent throughout the conference. Particular reference was made to this when key note speaker Judge Brown (Maori) described how Family Group Conferencing had been included in the legislation following the Maori oral tradition rather than the more British paper based court approach.

A key note speakers of particular interest was Donna Meehan, an Aboriginal woman from NSW who spoke in 'love and truth' of her devastating experience as one of the 'stolen generation' of Aboriginal children and her courageous journey of healing enabling her now to help her people. Donna paid a poignant tribute to her loving white foster/adoptive parents who as migrants to Australia had a first hand experience of the pain of racism which helped Donna survive the many hurtful experiences she encountered as an Aboriginal child growing up in a white community with none of her people around her and no knowledge of her Aboriginal culture.

Donna's moving description of reconnection with her tribe and culture as a 28 year old was a moving experience. The love, care and faith that helped Donna survive and the recovery she achieved through her own hard work, commitment, faith, the reconnection with her tribe and the love and support of her white mother, husband and her children were awe inspiring. There was not a dry eye in the house!

I recommend Donna's book "It's No Secret" as an in depth portrayal and analysis of the effect of Australia's extraordinary, peculiar and misguided policy of removing children from their families and culture together with an understanding of the time, effort, love and care that is needed to both survive and recover.

It was interesting to note that worldwide (in the more developed countries) the key issues confronting the sector are Kinship Care, Professionalization of Foster Carers and Allegations. The contrast of the issues of the more developed countries with the issues confronting the poorer countries who are looking at embryonic foster/kinship care programs as an alternative to institutionalization was salutary.

Professor Emily-Jean McFadden from USA – foster parent, kinship carer and grandmother of 10 gave a stirring portrayal of 'midnight grannies' - those stalwart souls who respond to calls from protective workers or police and take in the offspring of their children and then find themselves committed beyond their capacity with little support. She spoke of the important role of grandparents in speaking out on behalf of their grandchildren.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FOSTER CARE CONFERENCE - NEW ZEALAND

Professor McFadden also spoke of “Making the Child part of the Beloved Community” in your home and neighbourhood. She spoke of the importance of giving them a cause, a cultural group. She observed that if children and young people do good for others and get honest feedback on their efforts, then self esteem grows. Self esteem comes from doing.



There were several additional presentations focusing on the needs of kinship carers and how they can be utilized as wonderful family supports. The UK Fostering Network gave an excellent presentation on “Kinship Care – A Family Support Service or Foster Care Service?” As we are too painfully aware, kinship carers need to be adequately supported financially, including a fee for service if the carer is unable to work because of the needs of the child e.g. disability. The need for relevant and appropriate training to be available and accessible was also emphasized.

The need for a common assessment for kinship and foster carers regarding safety and capacity to care was suggested. However the next level of assessment was seen as needing to be different as kinship care assessments would be in relation to a particular child and birth family, the foster care assessment would be likely to be more generic and involve a different level of quality of care. There was a view that there should be generic ongoing training and support groups available with the capacity for specialized training at times and options to form separate support groups as required.

Sweden gave a very polished presentation of their salaried foster care program and reported that recruitment of carers is not a problem; in fact they have more carers than children needing care; enabling agencies to match children with suitable carers rather than placing children with whoever is available and moving them when a better match is available, a longer placement is available or the placement breaks down.

Paying carers a salary was valued as enabling people to do the work they love to do without being prevented from undertaking it by the necessity to engage in less personally satisfying work in order to maintain the family. It was suggested that the pressures upon families to have a double income and for females to be part of the work force mean that it is increasingly difficult for carers to provide foster care on a voluntary basis.

Pat Walker from New South Wales powerfully pointed out the importance of workers treating carers as professionals i.e. with respect as having the expert knowledge based on 24/7 contact with children and generally many years of parenting and fostering experience. This opinion occasioned loud applause from the audience.

The New Zealand Family and Foster Care Federation gave a presentation of great relevance to Victoria outlining the project they have developed to support carers facing allegations. The federation obtained funding to run a 1 year pilot project aimed at retaining carers who experience unsubstantiated allegations.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FOSTER CARE CONFERENCE - NEW ZEALAND



The funding enabled them to employ a Coordinator to train, supervise, support and resource 30 volunteers to provide telephone support to carers facing allegations. This project was positively evaluated and ongoing funding achieved.

This supports the FCAV's contention that our Help Line will serve as an important retention tool which is vitally important given that 40% of carers leave the system within 2 years of commencing as foster parents.

The FCAV was funded to establish a Help Line to provide independent carer to carer support for a wide variety of issues, including allegations. The ground work has been done, policies and processes developed, 7 volunteers trained and a resource manual nearly completed. This has enabled us to establish an interim Help Line but we need additional funding to fully implement the Help Line as a Coordinator is urgently required to support, supervise, resource and volunteers. Employment of a Coordinator is not possible without additional funding.

FCAV representatives are endeavouring to obtain funding from DHS to enable our current interim help line to be properly resourced and respond comprehensively, effectively and promptly to the many calls upon us for independent support. It is of great concern that we are not always able to provide the immediate and intensive support requested of us, particularly to carers facing allegations. We are also very concerned to ensure our service is of high quality, responsible and effective. Therefore we need to be able to provide appropriate training, supervision, support and resourcing.

A presentation of particular interest to carers was the West Australian research on the "Impact of Fostering on the biological children of foster carers. This was conducted by the University of Western Australia at the instigation of the W.A. Foster Care Association.

The study clearly demonstrated that fostering has a major impact on family dynamics. Key findings of the study were:

- Loss of parental attention due to parents being so preoccupied with the demands of fostering
- Children of all ages are actively assisting their parents in the fostering process
- Younger children experience loss of privacy, damage to their property and loss of belongings
- Older teenage and adult children complain about agency decision making. They are protective of their parents and act as self appointed advocates for their parents and/or foster children
- The role of children who foster is often not recognized by workers and see themselves as having more knowledge about the foster children than anyone else
- Children who foster develop a 'Noble Resilience' which is a coping mechanism whereby children sometimes find fostering care challenging but are prepared to be long suffering and will persevere

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FOSTER CARE CONFERENCE - NEW ZEALAND 2007

Recommendations emanating from the research included:

- Establishment and implementation of a Charter of Rights for Children who Foster
- Negotiate to implement the 'Best practice Framework' for Children Who Foster
- Develop training information for the children of carers.

Another high light of the conference was Rosemary Garbarino from the USA who gave a stirring and challenging presentation on how agencies and carers could be more proactive in involving birth families in the lives of their children who are in care.

The finale of the conference was a presentation from young people who had participated in an activities and discussion program. Those attending found the experience very rewarding and felt they had formed an international family amongst participants which they intend to keep going via the internet.

Their chief concern centred around leaving care. They believe there is not enough preparation for independent living and not enough provision for after care needs. They value training for carers and see it as an important tool for identifying carers who are not suited to the challenges. They recommended research to ensure training provided is effective. They stated that the only things they see as constants are time and change. Time doesn't wait and change keeps coming. What a great way of expressing it!

The young people entered a plea to involve them and invest in them as leaders. They would like to be more actively engaged in conferences alongside adults rather than having an entirely separate program. Those few adults who had included young people as participants in their presentation commented that this had added richness to their presentation.

It was great to see some Victorian agencies supporting carers and workers attendance at the conference. Congratulations to New Zealand on successfully organizing and staging their 2nd IFCO conference. As Coleen Clare said "New Zealand has always punched beyond its Weight". Thankyou New Zealand and IFCO.

If anyone who attended the IFCO conference would like to write about their conference experience we would love to hear from you.

Julien Leith

FCAV
Executive Officer



Quality of Care Concerns



Following widespread concerns about the implementation of the 'Guidelines for Investigating Abuse in Care', we are very pleased to advise that the Department of Human Services has engaged Allen Consulting Group to assist in the development of Procedures for Managing Quality of Care Concerns in Out of Home Care.

An Advisory Group and working groups have been established on foster, kinship and residential care to work with Allen Consulting Group and hopefully create a more satisfactory process that will ensure the safety and well being of children and also provide good, fair and transparent process, with attention to natural justice, for carers and staff.

The FCAV is represented on the Advisory Group and the Foster Care Working Group and is keen to hear of views carers would like to ensure are considered. It is heartening to see that the terminology now used is Quality of Care Concerns which encompass both allegations of abuse as well as concerns around quality of care.

Other areas that have been stressed by the FCAV on behalf of carers are:

- the importance of time lines being met
- ensuring that carers are continually informed about the stage and process of investigations and receive agency support throughout the process
- access to the facts upon which a decision is based and the reasons for the Decision
- independent and objective process including a separation of the roles associated with investigation and decision making
- independent review/appeal process
- ensuring removals are not made which are against the best interests of the child
- natural justice is accorded to children, parents and carers
- carers are not treated as 'guilty until proven innocent'
- processes for decision making and recording are clear and consistent within and across regions
- Workers conducting investigations receive training in conducting investigations. These courses are available through universities and TAFE colleges
- Carers have access to independent support and consultation including legal representation

If you have any ideas or views that you would like the FCAV to convey to the working group, please email admin@fcav.org or phone the office on 9489 9770 or write to the FCAV at P.O. Box 729, Northcote, 3070

A Foster Carer's Challenge

I have been a foster care parent for about 8 years and have had over 30 young people stay at my place for various periods of time. Paul (not his real name) has been my longest charge, coming to me at age 14 and only recently moving, not far away, after 7 years. We developed, I think a good relationship and I still see him regularly, although he has moved into his own rented premises which are handy for his work and is now paying his own bills.



We have had some happy and fun times over the years. When he first came to my house Paul was already an avid Adelaide Football Club fan and played football himself. Over several seasons I became involved as a goal umpire for his team and was even persuaded to attend some Adelaide games with him. His other passion was watching the Survivor Series on TV and turning my backyard into a Survivor games set. He would pounce as soon as I came home from work "Come and play Survivor, I've set up some new tests". One I remember was a race to fill a bucket with water, one glass full at a time, to counterbalance a see-saw made with bricks on a plank. These games persisted for several nights a week for over three years. Computer games and Playstation eventually took his interest and saved my weary bones.

Another major interest of Paul's has been small boat sailing and for seven years Paul has participated in the State trailer sailor championships coming second overall on a couple of occasions.

While things have by no means been easy for Paul, he persevered with year 12 and passed, the first member of his family to do so. We really enjoyed our two week holiday in New Zealand – his graduation present: highlights for him being a parachute jump (with instructor) and a jump off the highest building in Auckland.

Getting and keeping a job has also been a challenge, but Paul has now held his current job for over 12 months. He is now meeting more people of his own age and learning first hand more of life's experiences. When he turned 18 and left the After Care Program, I put aside \$50 a fortnight from his board to provide some savings (for bond, advance rent, whitegoods, connection of phone and computer etc) for his eventual move to his own place. As it was 3 years before he decided to move out, these 'savings' provided him with \$3,000 - substantial assistance in setting up to live independently. \$1000 to help with independent living was also provided by the Tilla Fund. This money enabled Paul to buy a fridge for \$560 and a washing machine for \$550.

The \$3,000 I saved on Paul's behalf enabled him to pay \$2,000 out for 4 weeks rent in advance plus a bond, sofa \$600, Microwave \$200, kitchen table and chairs \$200, a toaster \$40, plus a TV table, linen and towels. I also taught Paul the value of checking out the "hard treasures" left on the street. He was very pleased with the cane chairs & matching sofa he managed to salvage in this way.

I have been asked by the office to details how I went about helping Paul get organized to live independently to give ideas to other carers who may be in the same situation. Paul is one example of the satisfaction that can come from fostering and helping young people develop. I am looking forward to the next young man and the next challenge.

GREAT SUPPORT IDEAS



ANNUAL FOSTER CARE CAMP Berry Street Victoria Hume Region

The Annual Foster Care Camp held at Camp Wilkin, January 14th –19th 2007 was attended by 230 staff, volunteers, carers, children and young people.

The weather was kind, permitting planned activities to proceed.

Each morning campers gathered to embark with their groups to activities such as rock climbing, abseiling, high ropes course, swimming, cultural activities, surfing, visiting the Adventure Park and 'Kids Runamuck', a centre for younger children.

Staff and volunteers gave of their time to ensure that each child and young person had an opportunity to achieve success in the camp activities.

Training for carers was available to enhance and further equip them to care for the many children that live as part of their families whilst in out of home care. This year carers were trained in helping children and young people develop social skills as well as completing two modules of "Money Minded" from a financial literacy training program.

Wednesday saw past carers, staff and young people gathering together with camp participants to celebrate our twentieth annual camp. There was fun for all involved with the morning people seeing move around activities such as beading, eating a doughnut tied on to a string, face painting, mini golf, pot painting, bookmark making and volleyball.

After some formalities which included a presentation to regional Director Anita Pell, for her organisation of the camps for the last twenty years a spit lunch was enjoyed by all before playing games such as a three legged race, tunnel ball, wheelbarrow race and many more from times past.

Carers were also able to shop and enjoy lunch in Melbourne or participate on a fishing trip as a thankyou for the many hours service they give.

Overall, our carers enjoyed the 'camp experience'. Wendy, who has been a BSV care giver for 16 years, has attended all camps. Wendy said that "attending camp has given her the opportunity to talk with other carer givers'. Desley, who is also a caregiver, commented that "the children love attending camp as there are plenty of fun outdoor activities".

Friendships again were renewed and new ones formed improving social skills for the young people.

The camp concert was again a highlight with all children and young people participating in acts ranging from singing, dancing, skits, group, family and solo acts.

The concert is an opportunity for children to perform for peers without the fear of a negative response.

FOSTER CHILDREN & SCHOOL

What have been your experiences?

We're currently developing materials for the Department of Education's website. This will be available to all teachers, so that they can better support children and young people in care. We'd like to include a range of brief case studies exploring the experiences of foster children in school, particularly focussing on ways in which schools have been able to support the learning and engagement of kids in care. If you've got a story to tell, or ideas about how schools can improve their work, please call Ian on 0419326115 or email me on ian.seal@rch.org.au

HELP LINE

Part of the increased funding provided by DHS in 2004 was to establish a Help Line to provide independent support and information to carers. FCAV in partnership with the Post Placement Support Service has completed the establishment phase. Policies and procedures have been established in consultation with DHS and CSOs, a resource manual is nearing completion and a small team of volunteers have been trained who are providing an interim service.



In order to operate a responsibly resourced Help Line we need to employ a Help Line Coordinator to provide ongoing training, supervision, support and coordinate data collection. However we are not able to do so at present due to our funding constraints. Discussions are continuing with DHS.

Once again we ask for your patience as we continue to try to respond to the many calls we receive from carers seeking independent support. Our interim help line and the office are very busy with an increasing number of calls seeking support in often quite complex matters. The main areas where calls are increasing currently are in relation to stability and permanent care, kinship care, quality of care concerns and welfare to work issues.

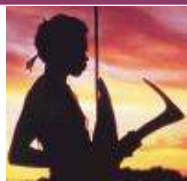
"The greatest tragedy in the world isn't the brutality of the bad, but the silence of the good"

Dr. Martin Luther King

Quoted by Donna Meehan, IFCO Conference, New Zealand

Thank You

**This Newsletter was kindly packed by Bill & Ron,
our very faithful volunteers.
We are very grateful for their continued support.**



RIGHTING THEIR MINDS



One day while working down a busy street
 An inquisitive gubba I happened to meet
 I was wearing my colors
 Black, yellow and red
 My t/shirt said LAND RIGHTS
 My hair natty dread
 He asked "Are you Maltese?" and I said "NO"
 Well maybe Maori or part Eskimo

 I said " I'm a Murri, I'm Koori, I'm black"
 And with my answer he was taken aback
 He said "But your fair – a shade darker than me
 So we began to yarn and he soon began to see
 That Black is not just the color of skin
 It's a spiritual feeling that comes from within
 It's sensing and knowing theres' a place to belong
 to be black is to proud and fearless and strong
 Not power of might with a blow of the hand
 but proud of our spirit
 and proud of our land
 WE HAVE SURVIVED

Written by Bundjalung Man, 1995

The Challenging Behaviours Consultancy, Connections
is facilitating a peer support group open to all foster and permanent
carers in the southern region

Carers

Meet other people who work as hard as you do!

Share your experience, Air your concerns
In a confidential group

Get new ideas
Be stimulated

Morning tea will be served

The next meeting is
 Tuesday, 17th April, 2007
 10.30 - 12
 Connections Dandenong
 56 Robinson Street, Dandenong
www.connections.org.au

for more information and to book in contact
 Phillipa Castle on 8792 8999

CHILDREN OF PRISONERS – the human face of policy failure

This is Part 2 of a series of VACRO articles exploring the issues, needs and policies associated with children of prisoners and the people who care for them while parental prison terms are served.



By Terry Hammond, Senior Researcher

Children: Unintended victims of Legal Process

VACRO (Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders)

Victoria is not alone in its lack of policy and services for the children of prisoners and those that care for them. The situation exists in every other Australian jurisdiction and in every other Western country investigated, without exception. The Discussion Paper *Children: Unintended Victims of Legal Process*^{*} explored the impact of the policy vacuum through interviews with mothers in prison and post-release, arresting police officers, solicitors, judges, and 'interim carers'. Very briefly, the research found for 15 mothers and their 35 children:

- * Mothers were removed (arrested) without their children or anyone else being Informed
- * Four children were 'abandoned' as a result of their mothers' sentences, and a further four were abandoned during their mother's sentence. In two of the former cases both police and DHS knew the children were without alternative carers.
- * Three out of eight teenagers left school and ten children changed schools as a direct result of their mother's incarceration; in addition, four children started school, two children transitioned to high school and a further three will start at high school – all without their mothers' support
- * Five of the eight family and one of the two friend interim carers ceased or down-graded jobs as a consequence of taking on children of prisoners.
- * Four mothers saw their children three times or less during sentences of up to 18 months, due to a lack of adults who were able or willing to bring children to prison to visit.

One judge interviewed described the effects of the adult criminal justice system as akin to the tsunami, except that it was happening every day. The research also found that the current lack of policy – and lack of awareness about the lack of policy – had negative impacts on police officers, solicitors, judges, and most particularly on those that cared for children during sentences.

In response to these findings, VACRO distributed the Discussion Paper across a wide range of government departments, community agencies and individuals, inviting participation in a series of consultation forums. The results of these forums will be summarized in the next article.

FCAV SUB COMMITTEES

Finance Subcommittee	Peter Van de Burgt, Dora Kontaratos, Adam McCann & Julien Leith
Policy & Procedures	Sylvia Davey, John Woolcock, Helen Falconer, John Hulskamp, Julien Leith - Offers Invited

WORKING GROUPS – FCAV REPRESENTATIVES

Office of the Child Safety Commissioner	Helen Falconer & Julien Leith
AFCA	Lucie Kearney & Bev Pumpa
Child Protection & Family Services Advisory Group	Sylvia Davey & Julien Leith
DHS Liaison	Sylvia Davey & Julien Leith
Face-to-Face	Claire Brunner
Foster Care Advisory Group	John Woolcock
Foster Care Communication & Recruitment Strategy Reference Group	Sylvia Davey & Julien Leith
North West Region Home Based Committee	Chris Peterson
Interim Help Line	Lyn Bicknell , Helen Falconer & Committee Members
Kinship Care State Wide Network & Advisory Group	Chris Peterson
Leaving Care	Ian Seal
Looking after Children	Sylvia Davey
Carer Reimbursement Group	Sandra Creaner, Julien Leith & John Woolcock
Email Response Group	Claire Brunner, Sylvia Davey, Helen Falconer & Cheryl Whitehead
Therapeutic Foster Care Program Development Advisory Group	Claire Brunner & Sylvia Davey
Including Children Advisory Committee in Decision Making	Chris Peterson
Quality of Care Concerns Advisory Group	Sylvia Davey & Julien Leith
Quality of Care concerns Foster Care Working Group	Sandra Creaner & Julien Leith



FOSTER CARE ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC

Vision

“For all children in care to be cherished, connected and treated with compassion”

Mission

“To strengthen foster families and enhance the wellbeing of the children in their care”.

MEMBERSHIP FORM FOSTER CARE ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC

The FCAV Committee of Management encourage you to become a FCAV Member. **In order to advocate for optimum care of children in the out of home care system and improved support for carers, we need your support.** By joining the FCAV you strengthen us as a representative body of carers which increases our effectiveness in pursuing our vision and mission. Membership also enables you allow you to vote at the AGM and at any Special Meetings.

As a FCAV Member you will automatically receive the bimonthly newsletter.

I, (name) _____

Post Code

of (address) _____

desire to formally become a Member of the Foster Care Association of Victoria Inc.

I am a (please circle)

FOSTER

PERMANENT

KINSHIP CARER

OTHER (please state interest in joining) _____

with (name of agency) _____

I have been an accredited Carer since (date) _____

Telephone: Home _____ Work _____ Mobile _____ Fax _____

Email address: _____

Occupation _____

I agree to be bound by the Rules of the Foster Care Association of Victoria Inc as in force from time to time.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date / /

Please return to: **FCAV Inc** or by fax to **9489 9119**
PO Box 729
Northcote, 3070

The FCAV advises that all the above details will be treated with confidentiality and, as promised in the past, none of the above information will be passed on to a third party.

**Foster Care Association of Victoria Inc.
RENEWED VISION, MISSION AND PURPOSE**

The FCAV has identified four core values that underpin its existence and operations now and into the future. The four values were enunciated by Adjunct Professor Jan Carter at the FCAV 2003 State Conference and strongly resonated with the organisation and its members. They are "*cherishment*", "*connectedness*", "*community*" and "*civility*". These values articulate a vision for the children in home-based care, the system to which they have entered and in which the FCAV and others operate.

Vision : *For all children in care to be cherished, connected and treated with compassion.*

Mission: *To strengthen foster families and enhance the wellbeing of the children in their care.*

Statement of purposes

To advance a compassionate and effective foster care system that ensures the nurturing and protection of foster children; supports the needs of foster families and acknowledges the role of the biological family.

To promote a foster care system in which foster carers and their families can effectively help, nurture and care for foster children.

To promote a foster care system that prevents any on-going abuse to, or by, the children and protects the foster family unit.

FCAV seeks to achieve these purposes by, but not limited to

- (a) providing and facilitating information and support networks, counselling, advice, referrals, and any other means of support and assistance for the foster carers*
- (b) research, collection and dissemination of information on or relating to foster care for carers, agencies, and other interested participants*
- (c) promoting and encouraging foster carers and the recognition of the important role they and their families play in the foster care system*
- (d) assisting all participants in the foster care system to develop policies and guidelines to enhance the nurturing and protection of the foster children and that support the needs of the foster families*
- (e) promoting and facilitating effective training and on-going development for foster carers.*

**FOSTER CARE ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC
NEWSLETTER RENEWAL**

(Please tick appropriate box)

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Approved Foster Carer | <input type="checkbox"/> | Donation of \$15 per annum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Interested in making a donation | <input type="checkbox"/> | (Nominate amount) \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Organisation/Agency | \$60 per annum to receive newsletter (inc GST) | |

Name of Foster Care Agency _____

Name of Foster Family _____

Address _____

Telephone: Home _____ Work _____

Email _____ Mobile _____ Fax _____

Please make cheques payable to FCAV Inc and mail to: **FCAV**

**PO Box 729
Northcote
VIC 3070**