

# Annual Report 2021-2022

## Annual Report July 2021 - June 2022

The Foster Care Association of Victoria presents a year in review. As the peak body for foster carers, the Foster Care Association of Victoria's mission is to build Victoria's recognition, respect and resources for foster carers, the volunteers who every day and night make a difference in the lives of Victoria's children and young people. We advocate for the value of carers.



*Celebrating*  
**30**  
*Years*  
*Of Support to Foster Care*





This year 2022, the Foster Care Association of Victoria celebrates 30 years as the peak body for Victorian foster carers. Established in 1992 by a small and passionate group of foster carers, FCAV is a not-for-profit organisation working towards the best possible support for foster carers and the children and young people in their care.

Foster care comes in at the backbone of the Victorian response to protective intervention for children and young people at risk. Foster carers are the volunteers providing a home, family life and care to children and young people who are unable to live with their birth family or kin for a variety of reasons. Many of these children have suffered traumatic events and the role of our foster carers is critical and complex in providing a safe and healing environment for children and young people to reach their full potential.

The Foster Care Association is here to provide information, support and advocacy directly to all Victorian foster carers and families. Our work directly impacts the care provided to the thousands of Victorian children and young people in foster care by providing:

**Carer Information & Support Service** - free, independent advice and support to foster carers.

**Advocating** on behalf of foster carers to government, their agencies and in the community.

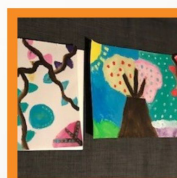
**Community building** - as the only centralised body for all foster carers in the state; providing forums and carer events.

Providing **carer news** and updated **information** through our comprehensive website, regular newsletters and social media sites.

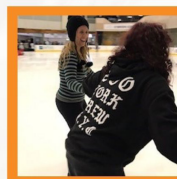
**State-wide learning & development** opportunities for carers throughout Victoria through Carer KaFÉ.

The Foster Care Association represents all foster carers across Victoria. In tandem with the support we provide to individual foster carers, our role as a membership Association is to advocate for vital improvements to the foster care system. Our current member base consists of over 5,500 carers and the wider sector and community.

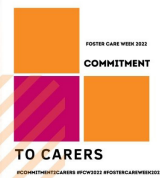
The Foster Care Association of Victoria aims to strengthen Victoria's investment, respect and resources for foster carers, the volunteers who every day and every night make a difference in the lives of children and young people in care.



Miah's young person did these gorgeous paintings while staying at her place



Miah with her young person ice skating



Miah

"I became accredited in 2020 and started looking after little people in 2021. Becoming a foster carer is one of the most satisfying things I've done in my life. Seeing a little person smile, open up, feel proud of themselves, be willing to take on new challenges, grow and flourish - it's incredibly rewarding.

I have started as a respite and emergency carer which has really worked for me, as I can settle into foster care and learn more about foster parenting before I become a long-term foster carer. I would highly recommend that all carers connect into FCAV and connect with each other to share learnings and challenges.

I have also learnt a lot about myself, my reactions and how I process things, through being a carer. I've learned that foster children come with a variety of different backgrounds - I have become friends with the mother of one of the foster children I've provided respite for, and one of the highlights was taking her and her mother to a wildlife sanctuary where they could both hand-feed kangaroos and wallabies. Both overcame their initial fear to feed these gorgeous animals, and loved it.

FCAV has been a fantastic support. I cannot speak highly enough of their work. The regular emails are informative and helpful. Questions sent to FCAV and the Carer KaFÉ are always answered promptly. I always feel that FCAV listen to, and support carers. I would encourage all agencies to promote FCAV and the Carer KaFÉ in their carer recruitment as I think it would help attract new carers.



Josh and Sarah have been foster carers for 4 years. Over that time they've taken up opportunities to meet and share experiences with other carers through FCAV events, Carer KaFÉ training and their agency.

"These opportunities have provided real life stories and knowledge sharing in the foster community to inspire confidence in our own journey. We have cared for \*Lily, (now 12yrs), for the last 4 years. When \*Lily first came into our care she felt abandoned, rejected, and had no focus or interests. For the first 12 months we were called to her primary school daily in relation to behavioural and social issues.

Through hard work by the care team, understanding, routine and perseverance, \*Lily began to feel calm and settled and discovered an interest that blossomed into a passion for AFL. Through this passion, \*Lily has developed motor skills, coordination, social connections, friendships and above all self-esteem and confidence. This has had a significant impact on her sense of community and inclusion locally. It has also allowed her to bond and make a connection with her biological father through a common and shared interest. This passion has been so strong and focused that \*Lily has earned herself an accelerated sporting scholarship for high school next year, providing opportunity for direct future pathways to an AFLW career."



### Acknowledgement of Country

The Foster Care Association of Victoria acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we work, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation and that these lands have never been ceded. We recognise First Nations' connection to the land, water and culture. We pay our respect to Elders past and present and the young people emerging as tomorrow's leaders.

# President & CEO Report

**Tori Smith**

President of the Board of Directors

**Samantha Hauge**

Chief Executive Officer



2022 marks the 30th Anniversary of the incorporation of the Foster Care Association of Victoria (FCAV) and gives reason for us to reflect on the past year within the context of FCAV's 30 year existence. The association came into being when a handful of carers recognised that they shared many challenges while caring for traumatised children and young people within a complex child protection system. Their vision was to support other carers and advocate for systemic change in order to improve the experience of the young people and carers. FCAV as it is today, stands on their shoulders.

Over the years FCAV has grown to a membership of over 5700 and now has paid staff, working within the governance of a volunteer board, the majority of whom must be foster carers. The scope of FCAV's work has also grown from the provision of a Carer Information and Support Service phone line to: a website, podcasts and information sheets, support groups, a full training calendar run by Carer Kafe including career retreats (which is also available to kinship and permanent carers), therapeutic support as part of our Carer Assistance Program (also available to permanent carers), and various member engagement initiatives like morning tea with our CEO, newsletters and prize giveaways.

In addition to supporting carers, we advocate tirelessly for improvements that can assist carers and the children in our care. Unfortunately, too many of the challenges that carers experienced historically still exist to varying degrees. However, we have also contributed to numerous improvements over our 30 year history. FCAV has fed into the development of Child, Youth and Family legislation, the establishment of the Commission to Children and Young People, Carer Advisory Groups and the Carer Strategy as well as numerous policy changes and reviews. Amongst other important changes we have supported: the tightening of timelines around permanency planning,

implementation of the partnership agreement with the Department of Education to make schools more trauma informed, case management for Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) children transitioning to Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations, and extending care for young people up to the age of 21.

This year our advocacy has led to systemic improvements including:

- Establishment of the DFFH Care Help Desk so that all carers have a point of contact in DFFH who are responsible for obtaining essential documents and supports for their placement.
- Enhanced and renamed Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser Line at Services Australia so that carers have easy access to support and advice for Centrelink payments.
- Development of the draft Victorian Statement of Commitment for Foster Carers.
- Expansion of the FCAV Carer Assistance Program (CAP).
- A new streamlined and simplified process for obtaining Medicare registration.
- A new streamlined and simplified birth registration process and addressing registration backlog.

The FCAV has a right to be proud of its heritage, its current work and collective voice. Happy Anniversary FCAV!

We'd like to thank:

- All members of the FCAV as your membership gives support to our joint advocacy
- Past and current FCAV CEOs, staff and volunteers who have made it their business to support foster carers through our frustrations and joys
- Past and current board members for your thoughtful guidance, daring vision, commitment, and good governance
- Our partners and supporters within the Department of Families Fairness and Housing (DFFH), Community Service Organisations, Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations and sister peak bodies
- Our financial supports, including the Australian Communities Foundation and the DFFH.

Above all, we sincerely thank our wonderful carers who open their hearts and homes to provide a safe, stable and nurturing environment for children and young people who deserve the best.



# With Gratitude

By investing in the FCAV, donors provide the organisation with the resources that are not covered by our modest core funding. We like to say to the FCAV punches above its weight in many ways. According to latest data, the FCAV supported over **30%** more carers than we are funded for and added to our suite of services to support, inform and advocate on behalf of nearly **2000** foster carer households across Victoria.

This work directly impacts the care provided to the thousands of Victorian children and young people in foster care. It stands to reason that the better the carer is supported, the better care they can provide for the child, thus improving their quality of life now and into the future. We rely on donations and fundraising to continue to offer and expand our services and opportunities to carers in Victoria so that those benefits of support reach all carers and the children and young people in their care.

## Our Agency Subscribers

Thank you to our Community Service Organisations and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations who formed our subscription base for 2021/2022.

- **Anchor Foster Care**
- **Anglicare Victoria**
- **Baptcare Family Services**
- **Barwon Child, Youth & Family**
- **Berry Street**
- **Brophy Family & Youth Services Inc,**
- **Child and Family Services Ballarat**
- **Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative**
- **Key Assets**
- **Life Without Barriers**
- **MacKillop Family Services**
- **Mallee Accommodation & Support Program**
- **Mallee District Aboriginal Services**
- **Mallee Family Care**
- **OzChild**
- **Quantum Support Services Inc**
- **Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-Op**
- **Uniting Care**
- **Upper Murray Family Care**
- **Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency**
- **Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-Operative**

## Carer Assistance Program



The FCAV is grateful to the Australian Communities Foundation, RO Sub-Fund for the seeding grant, without which the FCAV would not have had the resources to

continue to advocate for the ongoing development of the Carer Assistance Program. This grant enabled FCAV to continue to identify carer support needs during COVID-19 and continue to refine the program model to enhance carer well-being and support, and to seek further funding to continue to operate the program. The FCAV also thanks the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) which provided funding to run the CAP program for the year.

## Financial Donors

Thank you to these supporters who made significant monetary donations to the FCAV throughout the financial year:

- **Australian Communities Foundation, RO Sub-Fund**
- **Eddie's Backpacks**
- **Simon Castle**
- **Jazmin Hall**
- **Julia Heagerty**
- **Claire McDonald**
- **Tim McClelland**
- **Leon Mugavin (The Leaf Store)**
- **Heath Nourse**
- **Prashant Sehgal**
- **Joan Ozanne-Smith**

Find out about making a donation on the FCAV website:

[www.fcav.org.au/get-involved/donate-now](http://www.fcav.org.au/get-involved/donate-now)



The Foster Care Association of Victoria is funded through the state government of Victoria, agency subscribers, foundation grants, fundraising campaign donors and the generous volunteer support of individuals and organisations.



With thanks to Jen and Muna who both raised over \$200 each with a birthday fundraiser via Facebook. Please consider nominating FCAV as your charity for a birthday fundraiser when Facebook offers that opportunity close to your birthday.



## Supporters

Kate Gray - Professional Proof reading services



The FCAV extends sincere thanks to Baker & McKenzie Lawyers for professional pro-bono legal assistance to both FCAV and the carers who seek our assistance. Carers benefit from their legal expertise via the CISS program.



Thank you to **Michael Scrusse** from **Mity Digital** who provides ongoing service and pro bono support to our digital capacity and website.



A special thanks to **Russell Kennedy Lawyers** who provided many hours advice and support.

## FCAV TEAM 2021/2022

### Board of Directors 2021/2022

Tori Smith, President  
Luke Sapwell, Vice President  
Sue Segar, Secretary  
Zoe Sredovic, Treasurer  
Megan Sadlier  
Kym Phillips, IT Consultant  
Mathew Fredricks  
Alexis King, HR Consultant (Co-opted)  
Morgan Smithe, Employment Law consultant (co-opted)

### FCAV and Carer KaFÉ Staff 2021/2022

Chief Executive Officer - Samantha Hauge  
Office Manager - Bronwyn Hume  
Officer Manager – Jennifer Galea exit December 2021  
Finance Officer – Rebecca Butterworth  
Jennifer Williamson - exit February 2022

#### Carer Information and Support Service Team

Team Leader - Tessa Hughes  
Carer Assistance Program - Tonya Bavaro  
Carer Assistance Program (PCAF) - Nicole Masuku  
Program Coordinator - Deb Collard  
Carer Support Worker - Biba Dickson  
Carer Support Worker - Leigh Hillman

#### Engagement and Advocacy Team

Communications Manager - Anna Viola  
Member Relations Coordinator - Claire Mance  
Policy Specialist - Rowan Pulford Policy Analyst

#### Carer KaFÉ Team

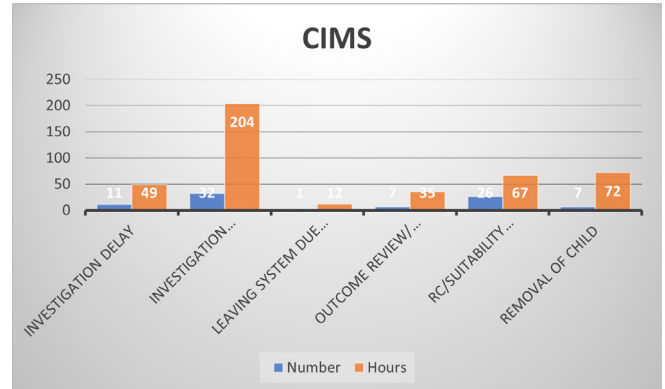
Program Manager - Paula White  
Program Officer - Laura Hunter  
Program Administrator – Loretta Ierardo



# Carer Information and Support Service Report

The 2021/22 year has seen the Carer Information and Support Service assisting over 600 inquiries, of which 579 related to foster care, including the Carer Assistance Program, and delivering 1276 hours of service. Despite the continued professional challenges associated with the Covid pandemic, the CISS team has ensured that carers receive quality advice, support and advocacy as needed throughout the past year.

CISS support in assisting carers to resolve queries, concerns, or complaints with their agencies and / or DFFH has remained a consistent feature of the FCAV's work over the past twelve months. Carers have reported a range of challenging issues within these relationships, including communication, planning and support; policies and procedures; requests for review of child protection case decisions; and placement changes (planned and unexpected removals) of children in their care.



taken up to six months or longer, during which time carers cannot be advised of the allegation details. Whilst the FCAV appreciates that demands upon Victoria Police are extensive, the current system causes enormous distress for carers with profound impacts upon their emotional wellbeing, personal relationships and even their employment.

For many carers, poor experiences through the investigation process result in their eventual withdrawal from the Out of Home Care sector even in circumstances where allegations are not substantiated. Whilst all carers supported by CISS acknowledge the need for allegations to be investigated, they consider future foster caring to be untenable, given the effects of investigations upon themselves and their families, particularly their own children.

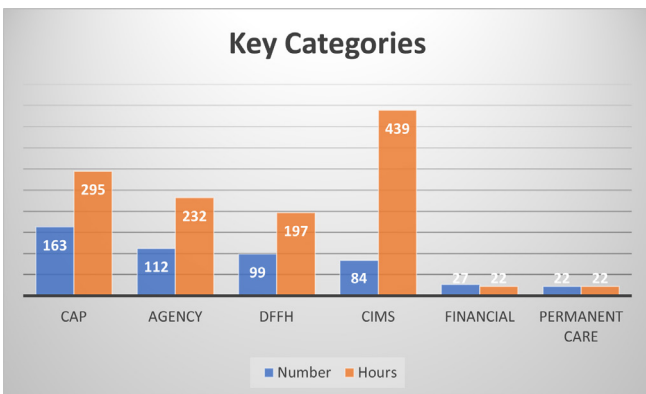
## Outcomes

CISS advocacy has remained the primary element of the FCAV'S support to carers over the past year, principally in relation to carer difficulties during CIMS investigations, complaints to DFFH and resolution of issues with carer agencies.

As reported in last year's Annual Report, "Advocacy is a significant component of the work provided to carers, evidence of a reduced confidence in working with their agencies and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH). Often relationships with professionals are broken and FCAV is mediating on behalf of carers and advising them of their rights in the out of home care (OOHC) system".

The past 12 months have seen little difference in the needs presented, and support required, by carers from the CISS Team. Within a bigger picture, the issues addressed by CISS on behalf of individual carers continue to indicate a lack of respect towards carers and, in many circumstances, a failure to value their importance as key members of a child or young person's Care Team.

The CISS Team will undoubtedly continue to support carers individually but, just as importantly, we will ensure the issues that are identified in our work are addressed with agencies and DFFH as thematic concerns requiring systems wide resolution.



Pleasingly, in its first full year of operation, the Carer Assistance Program has gone from strength to strength in providing foster carers with a therapeutic space in which they can canvas the emotional impacts of caring across a range of situations. This has enabled the CISS team to focus on practical resolutions of carers' issues whilst ensuring carers can access emotional support required during challenging events.

Unsurprisingly, most support provided to foster carers has been in relation to CIMS investigations - from initial carer inquiries re investigation processes to CISS attendance as support during carers' investigation interviews, and advocacy to agencies and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing on behalf of these carers. The Carer Assistance Program has been an invaluable resource in supporting carers through these processes, complementing CISS advocacy on behalf of these carers.

However, the FCAV remains concerned by sector inconsistency in investigation and carer interview processes, and extensive delays in the completion of investigations (CIMS, Section 81 and Suitability Panel Hearings). Carers subject to police assessment / investigation of allegations have regularly reported extensive delays between the time they are informed that allegations have been made and finally being advised of police involvement and / or being interviewed by SOCIT. Such delays have, in CISS' experience,

# Carer Assistance Program



The Carer Assistance Program (CAP) has continued to provide two days a week of direct service to foster carers with 163 individual referrals/contacts delivering 295 hours of service to carers.

The FCAV first piloted the CAP in September 2020 in recognition of the additional stressors within carer households as a result of the pandemic. Delivering targeted therapeutic support to foster carers has however, long been identified as a priority for the FCAV, as foster carers have consistently reported the need for sector specific therapeutic support. The significant gaps in support services and the only options available delivered by providers not positioned in the sector, has been an ongoing source of frustration for foster carers.

## Who can access the CAP?

All accredited foster carers across the state of Victoria can access the CAP support, via phone or online/video platform. As demonstrated in its initial year of implementation, this has increased the CAP's accessibility for all carers, with a significant number of CAP referrals from regional and outer metro areas of Victoria.

The model of service delivery is based on targeted, short term therapeutic intervention (1-3 confidential counselling sessions), with the option for further support, as assessed. Support is also provided for referrals to external providers, where a need for ongoing, specialist therapeutic input is identified.

## Identified Themes and Issues

- Delivering the CAP to foster carers in 2021/2022 has further magnified issues previously identified in its pilot year. Consistent themes impacting carer wellbeing relate largely to:
- Grief and loss experienced by carers when child/ren and/or young people are suddenly removed, transitioned to another placement and/or a placement breakdown;
- Escalating mental health concerns experienced by foster carers eg anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation;
- The complexities and challenges of managing child/ren/young people's behaviours and its impact on the mental health and wellbeing of the carer and carer household;
- The challenges of the system and feelings of powerlessness and sense of being devalued;
- CIMS investigations and its associated trauma.

The significance of CAP support continues to be validated by the numbers of carers accessing the service. They include:

- Carers from metro and regional areas in Victoria, given its accessibility;
- Jointly, as carer couples have engaged support

### CARER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CAP)

Tonya was an extraordinary support today - the opportunity to debrief with her, and to have someone who understood the system inside and out made a huge difference. Thank you, Tonya.

### CARER FEEDBACK

to explore the impact of their caring role on their relationships, as well as navigating the challenges of different commitments to remaining in the care system, particularly following a critical event;

- Male carers reaching out to access individual support related to their wellbeing.

Evaluation data shows, among other things, 91% of respondents state that the CAP would assist with carer retention. Of importance is that the overwhelming majority of foster carers self-reported, at the time of referral/initial contact, that they had considered exiting the care system.

## Summary of the benefits of the CAP

- The accessibility and flexibility of the service – ALL Victorian foster carers have been able to readily access a therapeutic service to support their psychological/emotional needs, regardless of location.
- The efficacy of providing therapeutic support with sector knowledge and expertise is proven.
- Most carers have accessed the program for one to three sessions, in line with the therapeutic model of short term, targeted support, whilst maintaining flexibility for carers requiring further sessions.
- A significant number of regional carers continue to access the CAP service.
- Male carers have sought CAP support where traditionally males may have been loathe to engage in therapeutic support.
- The willingness of couples to engage in support via the CAP provides opportunity to support more members of the carer household.

Carers have stated they believe the CAP support could assist with retaining carers in the system. Carer retention continues to be a significant issue within the sector and carers themselves report that access to support, as well as early identification of carers needing support, is likely to improve outcomes and increase retention in the sector.

The interface between the FCAV's CISS program and the CAP program has provided an opportunity for integrated support to meet the needs of carers with complex issues, particularly as they relate to CIMS investigations.

The CAP continues to be a cost-effective program to implement and deliver when considering the costs of other mental health services, as well as the associated comparative costs of recruiting new carers within the sector.

The sector continues their commitment in supporting the CAP, promoting foster carers to access its support, referring carers directly and giving positive feedback as to enhanced outcomes for carers.

The FCAV welcomes its partnership with Permanent Care and Adoptive families (PCA Families) in extending the CAP support to its carer cohort in 2022/2023.



# Our Members



"Katrina has been a foster carer for almost 10 years.

"We have cared for a complex young man for almost five years on a long-term placement. During his 6th grade at primary school, we were given permission to take him on a 3 month holiday around Australia, just like we did with our biological daughters when they were at the end of their primary school years.

We have always tried to treat him like we did our biological children. He had the opportunity to visit Uluru, learn about and meet Indigenous people, swim with a whale shark, see tons of crocodiles in the wild and do some extreme four-wheel driving.

He absolutely loved it all. He said that it was the best year of his life and felt genuinely included, as a family member."



Meet busy foster carer, Bree, to hear about her household's experience a 14 day quarantine period and how she managed caring for four children and continuing her job as a teacher.

If you are notified that you or your household has been exposed to COVID and need to enter a quarantine period

with the children and young people in your care, please do not hesitate to contact the FCAV immediately for support.

<https://www.fcav.org.au/news/caring-through-quarantine-a-carer-story>



Deborah and Andrew

"My husband Andrew and I have been foster parents for 7 years. We have had lots of positive experiences whilst fostering.

One that stands out to me is when we had a young First Nations boy who was on the spectrum and meant to be staying for one night. He came to our home terrified and was very difficult to engage with that first night. He went to school the following day not knowing where he would be sleeping that night. At school he attempted self-harm and wound up at the hospital. The agency called me in the afternoon and asked if he could stay with us again. I said yes, he could.

I had two pet birds at the time and when he came back home, I told him that the birds had missed him and that we were all glad he came back to stay with us. So, from that moment this young man felt a sense of being wanted and belonging and he settled nicely. He stayed with us for about 18 months.

Just knowing that you are welcome and wanted in a home is enough for these kids."



TO CARERS

#COMMITMENT2CARERS #FCW2022 #FOSTERCAREWEEK2022

about the caring part of a carer's role... that is, the children...

So I thought, why not ask them what they felt was a positive experience in their lives? After a slow start, not because there weren't many experiences, but because picking the most positive one was such a challenge, they said they couldn't pick one... there were too many.

Well, after an initial moment, where I felt like saying 'hey come on, you've got to help me out here...' I realised that I'd just been given yet another incredible experience - that what they were really saying is that they viewed almost every day in their lives as a positive thing! Could we, as carers, ever ask for more than that?

Here is a photo of their 'short list' of positive experiences they wanted to share."



TO CARERS

#COMMITMENT2CARERS #FCW2022 #FOSTERCAREWEEK2022

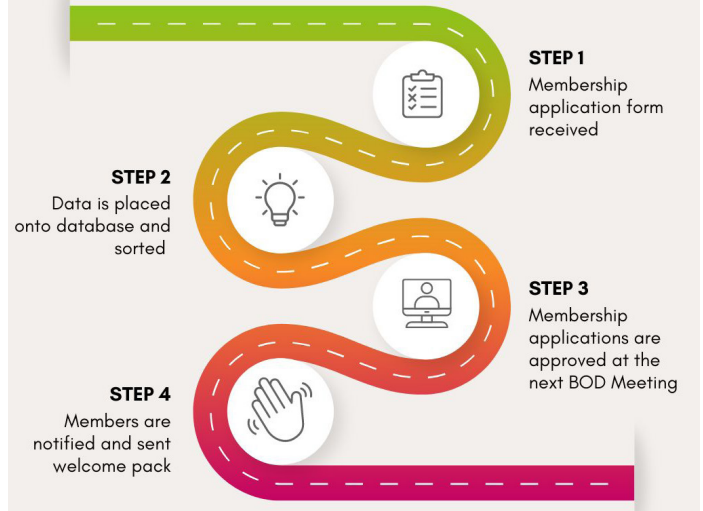
# Membership Report

The Foster Care Association of Victoria was pleased to welcome **401** new full members and **60** new associate members to the organisation who have joined in the past year, bringing our total membership database to **5245** full members and **506** associate members.

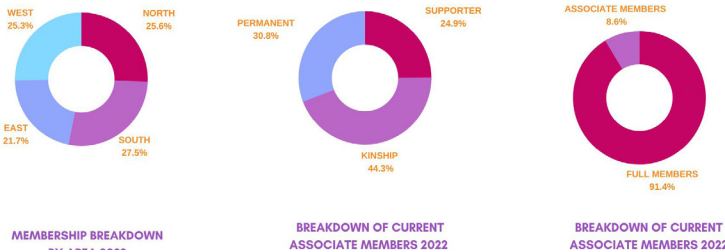
Associate members can include kinship and permanent carers, supporters and sector colleagues.

This increase in membership is significant considering the continuing issues of attrition facing the foster care sector. As membership grows, the FCAV is broadened in its scope, enhancing our understanding of the range of issues impacting Victorian carers. It is this understanding that feeds into focusing and strengthening our capacity for advocacy within the sector. We regularly seek our members feedback on their care experiences and how the FCAV can support them further and advocate.

## FCAV New Members Process

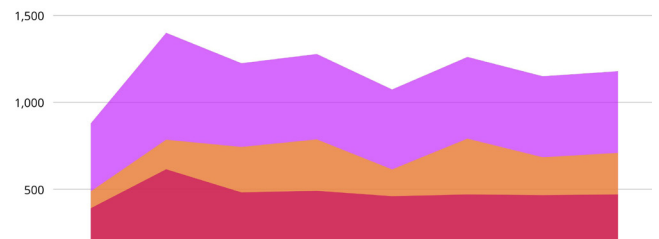


## 2022 MEMBERSHIP BREAKDOWN



## FCAV

Membership numbers over the years



## Carer Snapshot Report 2022

The Foster Care Association of Victoria conducts an annual review of the state of foster care in Victoria. Community Service Organisations (CSOs) including Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) provide the data based on the carer households affiliated with each of its offices. Typically, data is collected within a two-week timeframe in March.

The 2022 report shows an ongoing decline in the number of new foster carers and an increase in the number of inactive carers which points to the need for a comprehensive Government approach to improved carer support and retention to stabilise numbers.

The number of carers exiting the system increased by 22% in 2021/22 while the number of newly accredited carers declined by 18%.

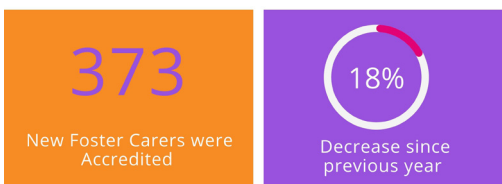
Read the full report via the link below.

[www.fcav.org.au/images/Carer\\_Snapshot\\_Report\\_2022.pdf](http://www.fcav.org.au/images/Carer_Snapshot_Report_2022.pdf)

## 2022 FOSTER CARER SNAPSHOT REPORT

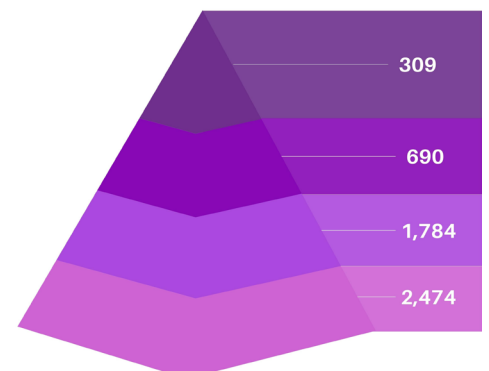


Decrease in the number of accredited since previous year



## 2022 CARER POOL - CARER SNAPSHOT REPORT

- IN ACCREDITATION**
  - Has Started the accreditation training and assessment process
- NON ACTIVE**
  - On a break or on hold
- ACTIVE**
  - Has a current placement or is available for placement referral
- ACTIVE & NON ACTIVE**
  - Combined figures



# Engagement

 [www.linkedin.com/company/foster-care-association-of-victoria](https://www.linkedin.com/company/foster-care-association-of-victoria)

 [twitter.com/vicfostercare](https://twitter.com/vicfostercare)

 [www.instagram.com/fostercarevic](https://www.instagram.com/fostercarevic)

 [www.facebook.com/fostercarevictoria](https://www.facebook.com/fostercarevictoria)

## Research Partnerships

The FCAV is pleased to partner with leading researchers in the field of child protection and home-based care research. This year, we facilitated carer involvement in:

- July 2021 – Victorian Carer Census: Strong Carers, stronger children – Victorian Carer Strategy Findings of the Home-based carer census Final Report to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
- August 2021 - Charles Sturt University: Trauma Informed Care Scale for foster/kinship/adoptive carers and residential youth workers.
- August 2021 – Murdoch Children’s Research Institute - MCRI: Impacts of Covid-19 on health access for young people.
- September 2021- University of South Australia: How Australian foster carers supported their foster children during the COVID-19 restrictions.
- October 2021 - Murdoch Children’s Research Institute – MCRI. Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare: National Standards for children living in out of home care - Victoria access to health services.
- October 2021 - The Centre For Excellence In Child And Family Welfare - The experiences of families accessing services for their child/ren in care in the years before they start school.
- June 2022 - Systemic Inquiry Education and Young People in care: Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP)

## Sector Partnerships

We’ve been honoured to work closely with counterparts across the sector on several important projects in the 12 months.

- National Peak Collective for foster and kinship care organisations around Australia.
- Permanent Care and Adoptive Families.
- Victorian Council of Community Services (VCOSS).
- CREATE Foundation - Peak body for young people with a care experience.
- Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP).

## Website

In the 12 months, there were over **26,000** visits to the FCAV website, with around **32,000** page views. Of these users, **85%** were new visitors and **15%** returning visitors.



## Social Media

Online interaction with and, for carers, has continued to be an important engagement mechanism as restrictions imposed by COVID-19 continued for much of this financial year. We have adapted learnings from lockdowns into our continuing provision of online forums, meetings, training and digital options across the board, which increases accessibility to FCAV outputs especially for rural and remote carers.

Our Facebook page continued to grow in reach and influence, with page another **100** new followers post reach of over **7000** per post.

The activity of the page has remained an important information and feedback portal for our stakeholders especially in relation to information sharing and the advocacy voice.

The FCAV Twitter account has **922** followers. The FCAV Instagram account has risen to over **400** followers. The FCAV LinkedIn account has **353** followers.

## Newsletters

The FCAV produced and distributed 10 newsletters and several supplementary communications, comprising foster care news, updates, legislation changes, events, training and carer giveaways in the 12 months. Back issues available here: [www.fcav.org.au/newsletters](https://www.fcav.org.au/newsletters)

## Carer Gifts and Giveaways

- September 3 x Spotlight vouchers
- October Giftpay Vouchers
- January Deadly Calendars and Wooden Toys
- February 6 x Care Packages
- March Adam Goodes childrens books
- Easter Baking Package
- May Luxury Linen Giveaway
- June Mystery package

## Carer Voices ~ Commitment Awards

As a proactive showcase of what great carer support means to our carer members, the FCAV inaugurated the Commitment to Supporting Carers Awards in September 2021.

Foster carers were able to nominate any professional staff from their Agency or care team, who provided them exceptional and consistent support as they provided complex care to the children and young people, stabilising placements and ensuring carers remain as volunteers. The awards were a great success with over **70** nominations, **7** shortlisting and **2** overall winners. FCAV will continue to run the awards annually.



**TO CARERS**





FOSTER CARE WEEK  
12-18 SEPTEMBER 2021

Adaptability...  
Caring through Covid



## Foster Care Week - September 2021

The theme for Foster Care Week 2021 was Adaptability... caring through covid.

### Foster Care Week highlights:

The Calendar of events was full of virtual events to celebrate carers. There was great sector wide engagement and acknowledgement of Foster Care Week, including Agency events, news articles, TV feature stories and social media.

The FCAV Carer Celebration and AGM was online in 2021 however carers and supporters valued the speeches and enjoyed the opportunity to reflect on the value of carers. The event is also a time to outline the critical support needs that FCAV advocates for on carer's behalf throughout the year.

We had **213** registrations for the event, **152** of those were carers represented well across all Victorian Foster Care Agencies, as well as Agency, sector and DFFH staff.

You Retweeted

Liana Buchanan  
@BuchananLiana

Most carers are paying for foster children's expenses, says CEO of @FCAV at this year's #FosterCareWeek Carer's Celebration. We cannot afford to lose more foster carers; so important that we fix supports for carers - for children's sakes.

11:15 am · 17/9/21 · Twitter Web App

## SPEAKERS



**DR KAREN MCLEAN**  
Is a clinician-researcher from the Centre for Community Child Health at the Royal Children's Hospital and Murdoch Children's Research Institute.



**LUKE DONNELLAN MP**  
Is Minister for Child Protection, Disability, Ageing and Carers in the Victorian Labor Government led by Premier Daniel Andrews.



**THE HONOURABLE JENNIFER COATE AO**  
Is the Former Judge of the Family Court of Australia, Royal Commissioner and Officer of the Order of Australia.

## Feedback

*"Thank you for advocating to improve processes so carers are supported and equipped to keep on going. I've felt like giving up at times due to the weekly drain of doing admin & chasing up things we should have been given already."*

*"Thank you FCAV for such a warm and inspiring AGM and thank you for your continued advocacy and support for carers. Jennifer Coate AO ... "Quite frankly, the child protection system could not function without foster carers' the true value of carers must be recognised and rewarded."*

*"Justice Jennifer Coate's presentation was so incredibly moving. Thank you to Sam, Tori, the staff and Board for organising and delivering a truly engaging AGM. A very professional slick operation."*

If you couldn't make it, you can see a recording of the 2021 Carer Celebration & AGM via the FCAV website.

<https://fcav.org.au/news/foster-care-week-2021-wrap-up>



Celebrating 30 years of carer advocacy, support and information, FCAV alumni and current staff and board have highlighted the early goals to improve support for foster carers and the children in their care through the decades in early 2022.

<https://www.fcav.org.au/news/30-years-of-fcav-alumni-stories>

The FCAV would like to thank The Honourable Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria, for hosting foster carers, FCAV members and foster care allies, including the then Minister for Child Protection and Carers - Anthony Carabines MP, Commission for Children & Young People, Liana Buchanan, Victorian Council of Social Service CEO Emma King, Anglicare Victoria CEO, Paul McDonald, to mark this significant milestone for the organisation.



The speeches and discussions, recognised the advocacy, as well as the dedicated care provided by volunteer foster carers, which has built the FCAV into the comprehensive support service it now provides. Thanks went to those carers who continue to commit their energy towards improving the systems and supports around foster care that positively impact the lives of children and young people in care.

Thank you to those who joined the Governor at Government House that morning.

Hear President Tori Smith celebrating the 30 year Anniversary of the Foster Care Association of Victoria with foster carers, members and sector allies at Government House, Wednesday 23 March 2022, by invitation of the Honourable Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria and Mr Anthony Howard AM QC.

<https://youtu.be/dDZhOls3Kmo>

[https://www.governor.vic.gov.au/all-speeches/foster-care-association-victoria-30th-anniversary?fbclid=IwAR3MtMIgscNSCAvFj2JQnUwB-hETunpTQTGBYXoLhOun\\_Z6DMv7ljZrUXE4](https://www.governor.vic.gov.au/all-speeches/foster-care-association-victoria-30th-anniversary?fbclid=IwAR3MtMIgscNSCAvFj2JQnUwB-hETunpTQTGBYXoLhOun_Z6DMv7ljZrUXE4)

# Being Heard

## FCAV's Advocacy Program

The FCAV advocacy program is built around a number of core domains which seek to enhance carer support and well being through the following:

- Improvement in service delivery;
- Proposing changes to address carer systemic issues; and
- Promoting corporate and sector culture to improve carer inclusion and respect.

Key programs and projects that achieve these goals include:

### Birth Certificates and birth registrations

The Department undertook an audit of identified children in out of home care to determine if they had a registered birth or a birth certificate following advocacy from the FCAV. The Australian newspaper reported on 13 June 2022 that thousands of Victorian children in out of home care could be without proof of life documentation and that the audit was part of a data matching exercise with the registry of Births Deaths and Marriages.

The FCAV has prioritised advocacy on this issue because of the high number of children in care without a registered birth or an accessible birth certificate and because the lack of a proof of life document it can prevent access to essential services such as childcare, Medicare and Centrelink services. Carers report that where a birth certificate is unavailable, they often fund access to these services out of their own pocket and struggle to get reimbursed from Child Protection for payment of these services.

### Services Australia

- **Centrelink—Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Advisor Line**

The FCAV has successfully engaged with Centrelink to review the Grandparents adviser service to make it inclusive of both foster and kinship carers. Following FCAV advocacy the service was reviewed and relaunched under the new name of the Grandparents, Foster and Kinship Carer Advisor Line.

The new Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser Line went live on 1 July 2022 and Services Australia and can be accessed at <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparent-foster-and-kinship-carer-resources-for-community-groups?context=21> or on 1800 245 965.

- **Medicare**

The FCAV is currently working with Services Australia to review current proof of life document requirements for Medicare registration. Under current arrangements a Court Order and a letter from Child Protection plus one identified proof of life document is required for Medicare registration. The difficulty is that there is a high number of children in care who do not have a registered birth (one of the key proof of life documents) and who may also not be able to access of the proof of life documents such as a doctors or mid-wife's certificate.

Carers have identified obtaining a Medicare number as a key challenge because it can prevent access to essential medical services for the children in their care and because carers often fund access to medical services out of their own pocket when a Medicare number is not available.

### Carer Help Desk



The FCAV advocated for the establishment of a Carer Help Desk to assist both carers and Agencies obtain essential documents and supports such as birth certificates and Medicare numbers for a placement. It is envisaged that the Help Desk will provide a contact point for

both carers and Agencies to obtain essential documents and undertake monitoring to identify children where the provision of essential documentation is outstanding. DFFH is yet to consult carers or the sector on the structure of the Help Desk.

### National Foster and Kinship Care Collective

The FCAV is a foundation member of the National Foster and Kinship Care Collective (the Collective). The Collective has been established by state based carer member groups to develop a national agenda and advocacy to advance the interests of foster, kinship and permanent carers. FCAV advocacy with both Centrelink and Medicare has been supported by the Collective.



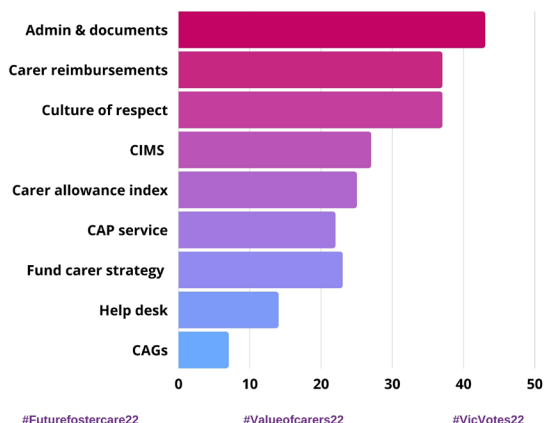
### KPMG report on Care Allowance Review

DFFH commissioned KPMG to conduct a review of the Care Allowance in November 2021. The Care Allowance was not increased in the 2022/23 State budget following provision of the report and it has not been publicly released. The FCAV has lodged a Freedom of Information (FoI) with DFFH to get a copy of the KPMG report.

### Carer Strategy

The Department has reactivated its Carer Strategy following its suspension during 2020 because of the pandemic. Following its reactivation, the Department has reviewed its priorities and action plan in consultation with working group members. The new action plan has now been approved by the RIMAG. The FCAV is currently co-chairing the Carer Strategy Working group.

### Carer priorities for reform: percentage of responses critical (I may cease foster care due to this issue).



## Statement of Commitment

The Statement of Commitment is a carer-led initiative brought to the FCAV direct from carers, where we formed a working group of carers, and self-nominated representatives from CSOs and ACCOs. The FCAV has been working with the DFFH to seek endorsement of the Statement of Commitment to foster carers within the sector with the aim of embedding a set of guiding principles for best practise support to carers, respect and care team relationships. The Statement is comprised of five key principles with a commitment to carers being: informed, supported, involved, valued and respected. A consultation and engagement plan is underway.

The Foster Care Association of Victoria (FCAV) asked the Victorian Government to target foster care in the May 2022 Budget. Foster care is a critically underfunded and under-resourced area of child welfare and volunteer foster carers have borne some of the highest health, wellbeing, educational, social and economic costs during the pandemic.

The FCAV asked all of its 5100 members to complete a priority issues survey - Carer Priorities Survey Report | Foster Care Association of Victoria (fcav.org.au)

This gave us the highest priority needs of volunteer carers of our state's children and young people in care and identify vital reforms for their support. Victoria again had the highest number of carers (596) exit the foster care system in Australia during 2019-20[1] and proportionally fewest commencing foster care (354). This represents a net loss of 242 carers for the state.

The FCAV has previously welcomed better support for carers including:

a short-term extension of the Carer Assistance Program (CAP) that provided therapeutic support to foster carers, universal access to the Better Futures/Home Stretch that

## Practice advocacy

In line with practice advocacy goals of FCAV Advocacy work with the sector, we communicated with workers and carers by initiating:

- The inaugural Sector Newsletter - Sector Newsletter ~ news and information for the foster care sector, 09 November 2021 – sent to over 2000 workers and supporters.
- The inaugural Commitment to Supporting Carers Awards, September 2021 – foster carers nominate workers from Agency or the DFFH to acknowledge exceptional support to carers.



The FCAV conducted a survey of members to ascertain priority issues for carers in FCAV's budget submission ahead of budget delivery this year.

Respondents assist FCAV to prioritise advocacy and identify vital reforms for carer support.

Whilst we welcome the announcement of the Carer Help Desk in the budget, and anticipate that the implementation will ease some of the administrative delays for carers, it is disappointing that other critical priorities were neglected; feeding carer attrition rates and instability for foster care households, including the children and young people in their care. Read Carer Snapshot Report 2022 here.

Of note, carers' experience of the sector and the need for a culture of respect ranked as a critical issue causing carers to question their willingness to continue volunteering as a foster carer.

The FCAV now has a strong mandate ahead of the state election and the next budget round 2022-2023.

This report shows the highest priority issues for the volunteer carers of our state's children and young people in foster care.

Full report here: <https://www.fcav.org.au/news/carers-priorities-survey-report>

Inaugurated the Commitment to Supporting Carers Awards. Instances of great carer support are golden in a complex system. They can make or break a positive placement for foster carers and the children and young people in their homes.

Therefore, the FCAV would like to give carers the opportunity to acknowledge a time when they've received great support. Have you experienced an instance of great support from your DFFH Worker and/or Agency worker?

Submissions close at 5pm on the 31st August 2021.

[All nominating carers will go into the draw and be randomly selected to win one of three \\$50 Kmart vouchers just for nominating! Worker award winners in both categories will be](#)



## Kinship and Foster Care Education

Carer KaFÉ has achieved a remarkable performance amid pandemic challenges with the highest number of participants since inception in 2017 with **1,494** attending one of the **98** sessions offered by the program in the 2021-2022 financial year.

Pleasingly the vast majority – 92% were our funded carer cohort – Statutory Kinship, Accredited Foster & Permanent carers. Carer KaFÉ welcomed the extension to permanent carers in this financial year with the new funding agreement announced in May 2021.

Carer KaFÉ significantly increased the engagement of Aboriginal carers with 85 recorded attendances compared to the previous financial year with 45. This growth is replicated for carers of Aboriginal children with this segment representing over 40% of carer attendance (30% in 2020-2021).

Carer KaFÉ delivered on average 2 sessions a week with most – 73 out of the 98, conducted as interactive online sessions as Covid-19 continues to impact the ability to deliver face to face sessions. Of note were the major lockdown periods during 2021 – 2022 totalling ninety days (15 July to 27 July 2021 & 5 August to 21 October 2021).

The pandemic has permanently transformed the practises of Carer KaFÉ with the interactive online session ie facilitated live by a presenter, to continue as a key future delivery approach. Carers have embraced this platform as an important channel for learning and development with the advantages it offers such as overcoming geographic barriers / time / childcare issues. Carer competence with this technology has notably grown over the past few years.

### Key achievements for Carer KaFÉ

#### 1. The introduction of new presenters to the program

Carer KaFÉ introduced new industry experts to the online platform with overwhelming success as evidenced by attendance data and feedback from carers

4 x sessions with Nathan Wallis (New Zealand Neuroscience educator) - 167 attendees

2 x sessions with Karen Young (Hey Sigmund) – 93 attendees

6 x sessions with Chris Daicos – 91 attendees

3 x sessions with Professor Pam Snow (LaTrobe University) – 43 attendees

#### 2. Access to recorded interactive online sessions

A new initiative introduced by Carer KaFÉ was to make available recordings of the interactive online sessions were possible. Some limitations with this functionality are training providers protecting their intellectual property and carer privacy.

Carer KaFÉ was able to implement this for the sessions delivered interactively by Nathan Wallis. These recordings were available for only a 2-week period. This extra service reached a further 96 carers and the flexibility to view the

sessions at a more convenient time was greatly appreciated by our time-challenged carers. We will continue to develop this avenue for future suitable online sessions for enhanced accessibility for carers.

#### 3. New dedicated online self-study / resources

There has been considerable growth in the usage / viewing of CK online resources Whilst the lockdown climate would have played some part – Carer KaFÉ has been active in this domain implementing new initiatives for carers such as our 'useful links' resources and 'themed' resources timed to specific events e.g., science week / school holidays. Carer KaFÉ also funded the creation of new podcasts on topics relevant to the caring experience which have been well received by carers based on the number of page visits.



HEALing Matters program was developed on extensive end-user and stakeholder engagement by health and psychology researchers at the Health and Social Care

Unit, Monash University. The online training package and knowledge exchange platform was initially developed for residential workers and then extended for use by carers. There are 6 core modules - Attunement, Shaping Routines, Food for Thought, Physical Activity for Thought, Health Literacy, Self-Care.

#### 4. How to Thrive program for carer wellbeing.

“

*“We crawled in here and now we're walking.”*

Statutory Kinship carer

”

In April 2022 Carer KaFÉ launched 'How to Thrive' - an 8-week evidence-based yet practical program dedicated to supporting the health and wellbeing of carers. The program is underpinned by the BEACON framework which brings together the latest science on wellbeing under the 6 pillars of what makes us well. We have been blown-away by the difference in the carers who have completed the program with the quote below summing up how many of the participants felt.

#### 5. Focus on outdoor venues during pandemic

In response to pandemic health advice of limiting indoor gatherings Carer KaFÉ sourced appropriate outdoor venues where carers could participate in a more Covid-safe manner such as the Cultural education series held in January school holidays for carers and children. In April the Royal Botanical Gardens Melbourne provided a perfect venue for a cultural experience for over 30 carers and 25 children and young people.

## Carer retreats / conferences

Carer KaFÉ held 2 carer retreats - The Permanent Carers retreat was held on 6 & 7 November 2021 when Victoria came out of lockdown (after being rescheduled 3 times!) and the Foster/ Kinship carer retreat on 25 & 26 June 2022. We had many regional carers attend travelling from Mildura, Wodonga, Shepparton, Hamilton & Warrnambool.

“  
*“We travelled from Mildura, but it was worth it, I loved walking through the gorgeous gardens and taking time out for myself and my wife after being carers for so long and not making time for this”*  
 ”  
 Permanent Carer, Mildura

“  
*“It was amazing to meet others like us – who have had similar struggles (with caring) – and share ideas together. We have often felt so alone on this journey. Thank you!”*  
 ”  
 Permanent Carer, Regional Victoria

Carer KaFÉ supported carers at two online conferences: Create Voices in Action conference May 2022 and Therapeutic Life Story Work conference - speaker Richard Rose in June 2022.

“  
*“The TLSW Conference was brilliant. I learnt so much and can see how it makes such a positive difference to the lives of children and young people who are living in care. It was very professional and at the same time personal and real.”*  
 ”  
 Foster Carer, Regional Victoria

“  
*“This saved my placement! It reminded me of the challenges the child faces.”*  
 ”  
 Statutory Kinship Carer Regional Victoria

“  
*“Was great to be surrounded by others who understand exactly what I'm going through. It was helpful topics and great resources to add to my 'pantry'.*  
 ”  
 Foster Carer Melbourne

| 2018-2019*                | 2019-2020 | 2020-2021 | 2021-2022 |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1338                      | 882       | 1102      | 1494      |
| *Non-Pandemic environment |           |           |           |

**Above:** Carer participation in training sessions through Carer KaFÉ figures year on year

## VPCA Shortlisting

Carer KaFÉ was proudly announced as a shortlisted finalist in the Education Initiative category of the 2021 Victorian Protecting Children Awards (VPCA) in recognition of their focused work and commitment to towards improving the lives of children and young people across Victoria.



Carer KaFÉ was nominated by FCAV amongst an incredible quality of nominations, reflecting the adaptations made by so many during the pandemic, with innovative and high-quality practice a common theme amongst submissions.

The nominations for these awards were impressive at a time where the awards also saw a record-breaking number of submissions - the highest number in the awards history. Carer KaFÉ was humbled to be recognised amongst them.



**Above:** Paula White, Program Manager, accepting the VPCA shortlisting award on behalf of Carer KaFÉ



# Treasurer's Report

Zoe Sredovic

Treasurer



[The following information is based on the audited financial statements of FCAV and should be read in conjunction with those financial statements.](#)

[The Foster Care Association of Victoria \(FCAV\) ended the fiscal year with Net Assets of \\$534,057 which is an increase of \\$267,245 from the previous year.](#)

[FCAV total Income was \\$2,383,427, \(2021: \\$1,738,996.\) Sources of funding include State Government funding \\$2,261,555 and Other Income of \\$121,872 from Carer Subscriptions, Donations and Fundraising activities.](#)

[Expenditure for the financial year to 30 June 2022 was \\$2,116,182 which was an increase of \\$413,393 on last year due to an increase in expenditures relating to the delivery of learning and development programs for carers.](#)



Katherine

"I have been foster carer for 4 years. We currently have 2 children in our home. To see the difference we are making in their lives is why we love what we do.

My best tip for other carers is to establish a routine so that the children know what is expected and they feel secure. Attend as many training sessions as you can to be able to obtain as much information as possible. The training offered by Carer KaFE is fantastic and has helped me understand how to be able to manage challenging behaviours and connect with other carers who have been through similar situations.

Don't be afraid to reach out and ask for help! FCAV has been an amazing support. Having a network of people that understands what you are going through and can help provide answers, support, training and information."





# Financial Report

(Full financial report available on the FCAV website)

## Profit and Loss

### Foster Care Association of Victoria Inc

#### Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

|   | Note | 2021<br>\$    | 2020<br>\$     |
|---|------|---------------|----------------|
| Revenue   | 4    | 1,738,996     | 1,967,639      |
| Employee benefits expense                             | 5    | (1,053,900)   | (858,943)      |
| Depreciation and amortisation expense                 | 5    | (62,725)      | (45,544)       |
| Consultancy fees                                      |      | (429,794)     | (707,054)      |
| Administrative expenses                               |      | (15,112)      | (41,859)       |
| Carer and event expenses                              |      | (19,309)      | (47,650)       |
| Office expenses                                       |      | (53,687)      | (45,244)       |
| Occupancy expenses                                    |      | (20,381)      | (54,170)       |
| Operating expenses                                    |      | (45,103)      | (35,355)       |
| Finance costs   |      | (2,778)       | (4,561)        |
| <b>Surplus before income tax</b>                      |      | <b>36,207</b> | <b>127,259</b> |
| Income tax expense                                    |      | -             | -              |
| <b>Surplus for the year</b>                           |      | <b>36,207</b> | <b>127,259</b> |
| <b>Other comprehensive income, net of income tax</b>  |      | <b>-</b>      | <b>-</b>       |
| Revaluation changes for property, plant and equipment |      | -             | -              |
| <b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>        |      | <b>36,207</b> | <b>127,259</b> |

## Balance Sheet

### Foster Care Association of Victoria Inc

#### Statement of Financial Position

As At 30 June 2021

|                                      | Note | 2021<br>\$       | 2020<br>\$     |
|--------------------------------------|------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>ASSETS</b>                        |      |                  |                |
| <b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>                |      |                  |                |
| Cash and cash equivalents            | 6    | 1,348,063        | 621,184        |
| Trade and other receivables          | 7    | 45,421           | 70,857         |
| Prepayments                          |      | -                | 1,603          |
| <b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>          |      | <b>1,393,484</b> | <b>693,644</b> |
| <b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>            |      |                  |                |
| Property, plant and equipment        | 8    | -                | 6,583          |
| Right-of-use assets                  | 11   | 78,718           | 56,526         |
| <b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>      |      | <b>78,718</b>    | <b>63,109</b>  |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>                  |      | <b>1,472,202</b> | <b>756,753</b> |
| <b>LIABILITIES</b>                   |      |                  |                |
| <b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>           |      |                  |                |
| Trade and other payables             | 9    | 1,044,073        | 429,885        |
| Lease liabilities                    | 11   | 51,087           | 46,031         |
| Employee benefits                    | 10   | 58,457           | 37,234         |
| <b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>     |      | <b>1,153,617</b> | <b>513,150</b> |
| <b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>       |      |                  |                |
| Lease liabilities                    | 11   | 31,366           | 10,977         |
| Employee benefits                    | 10   | 20,407           | 2,021          |
| <b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b> |      | <b>51,773</b>    | <b>12,998</b>  |
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>             |      | <b>1,205,390</b> | <b>526,148</b> |
| <b>NET ASSETS</b>                    |      | <b>266,812</b>   | <b>230,605</b> |
| <b>EQUITY</b>                        |      |                  |                |
| Retained earnings                    |      | 266,812          | 230,605        |
| <b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>                  |      | <b>266,812</b>   | <b>230,605</b> |

# Auditor's Report



Katherine

"I have been foster carer for 4 years. We currently have 2 children in our home. To see the difference we are making in their lives is why we love what we do.

My best tip for other carers is to establish a routine so that the children know what is expected and they feel secure. Attend as many training sessions as you can to be able to obtain as much information as possible. The training offered by Carer KaFE is fantastic and has helped me understand how to be able to manage challenging behaviours and connect with other carers who have been through similar situations.

Don't be afraid to reach out and ask for help! FCAV has been an amazing support. Having a network of people that understands what you are going through and can help provide answers, support, training and information."



# Statement by the Board of Directors

# Reconciliation Action Plan

## Our Vision for Reconciliation

The Foster Care Association of Victoria's (FCAV) vision for reconciliation is a nation that acknowledges historic truths and their current impacts and where First Nations' cultures are recognised, understood and celebrated by all, as part of our community and country's identity.

The FCAV advocates for a Child Protection system that ensures Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are safe and connected to their family, culture and community. We support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination in all areas of the care of children and young people.

## Our RAP

## Activities and Events

The FCAV completed several activities & events as part of our Reconciliation Action Plan 'Innovate' that was completed in May 2022.

June 2021 we hosted an Internal movie screening for staff during National Reconciliation Week. We watched *The Final Quarter*, a 2019 Australian documentary, about the final stages of the Australian football career of Adam Goodes and as a team, reflected on the confronting and the inspiring topics raised.

July 2021 we celebrated NAIDOC Week with our members and staff signed up to participate in the Clothing the Gap Walk event as part of NAIDOC week.

August 2021, in recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day, we had fun giveaways including Children's Day bags produced by SNAIIC and 3 x \$30 Gift Vouchers to Magabala Books, Australia's leading Indigenous publishing house.

May 2022, the FCAV co-hosted a cultural event with VACCA at the Melbourne Botanical Gardens. Over 30 carers and 25 children and young people attended Friday 22nd April in partnership with the Northern team at VACCA and funded by Carer KaFÉ.

The Aboriginal Cultural training was led by Lenka and Jacobi, Indigenous learning facilitators from the Learning Program at the Gardens. Participants were taken through the gardens, learning local Indigenous language terms for the plants and flora, their traditional uses such as bush food and medicinal needs.

Lucy, Owen and Victory from VACCA were wonderful support to the learning and assisted in all aspects of the excursion. Attendees participated in cultural art and craft activities including sand art, colouring in native animals, making beautiful jewellery and both younger and older children joined in or took away some of the activities.

Participants from all over Victoria took away a backpack kindly donated by the students at Parade College.

"I loved the round robin type walk through the gardens, where we stopped off at different activities and learned about something different along the way. Great way to do it! Kept the kids engaged."

"The friendliness and knowledge of the staff showing us around. The little one loved interacting along the walk and was totally into the water play & art area."

Look out for opportunities to join in our Cultural Days in upcoming newsletters and at Carer KaFÉ: Learning & Development for Carers ([carerkafe.org.au](http://carerkafe.org.au))

In September 2021 we did our own cultural training for FCAV and Care KaFÉ staff.

Cookery

our Mob

Read the



**Above:** Lenka and Jakobi standing in front of the pond at the Observatory Garden



# CARER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

## Feeling overwhelmed? Let's Talk.

Therapeutic phone support

Celebrating  
**30** years  
Of Support to Foster Care



Need support in your foster care role?  
Visit the FCAV website or call the Carer Information & Support Service for support, information, news & events.

## carer • KAFÉ

**Kinship, Foster & Permanent Care Education**

Learning & development opportunities  
**FREE** for Victorian kinship, foster & permanent carers.  
Visit [carerkafe.org.au](http://carerkafe.org.au) for session/event information.



The FCAV is a proud signatory to the Embracing Equality Pledge, supporting LGBTIQ+ communities, we pledge to embrace equality and work to end the discrimination experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) people in Victoria.

Visit our information sheet:

<https://www.fcav.org.au/news/support-to-lgbtqi-youth-in-care>

<https://www.embracingequality.com.au>



Contact:

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