Protecting Victoria’s Vulnerable Children Inquiry

The Protecting Victoria’s Vulnerable Children Inquiry Report was tabled in state parliament on 28 February 2012 by the Minister for Community Services, the Hon Mary Wooldridge.

Comprising 90 recommendations, and a further 20 ‘list of findings and matters for attention’, the report is a comprehensive and robust document. It outlines all elements of the child protection and vulnerable children sector, the current state of play, and the changes needed to meet and improve our response as a sector, community and state to the needs of vulnerable children in Victoria.

Upon release of the report, *The Age* newspaper highlighted the growing ‘cost of care’ referred to in the report. The article, detailed below, featuring our own Vice President, Tracey Cocks, clearly illustrated the need for improved funding approaches for foster, kinship and permanent carers in Victoria. We highlight further key recommendations on pages 6 and 7.

*The cost of caring - $65,000 out of pocket*

*Michelle Griffin, The Age, February 29, 2012*

TRACEY Cocks knew it cost her more than she received from the state government to foster four young children, but she didn’t realise just how much until the the state’s inquiry asked her to calculate her out-of-pocket expenses.

"It was $65,000 a year," she says. "After tax, after reimbursement. How are they going to get people to foster children if they realise they're going to be paying for it themselves?"

Ms Cocks and her partner took on their first foster child as a baby 5½ years ago, and now care for her three siblings also, ranging in age from nine to a baby. They share the suburban house with Ms Cocks' own two children and a student whose rent helps offset the

(continued page 2)
Hi All,

As always, it’s been a busy time here at FCAV.

FCAV are generally very pleased with the Protecting Victoria’s Vulnerable Children Inquiry report. It is clear and much appreciated by the FCAV, that the Panel were thorough in their consultation and analysis. It is great that Government are committed to making changes that assist us as a community to protect vulnerable children and young people including children and young people residing in foster care.

As always the devil is in the detail and while FCAV believe all the issues facing foster carers are analysed, we still need to keep focusing on what makes the role of fostering Victoria’s vulnerable children a supported and adequately resourced role.

Pages 6 and 7 of this month’s newsletter provide a more detailed look at the key recommendations affecting foster care and foster carers - I encourage you to take a look

Our thanks to the Department of Premier and Cabinet again this year for their generous provision of invitations to the Formula 1 Qantas Australian Grand Prix. On page 4. we have provided some of the feedback we received from the children and carers who were lucky enough to attend.

Conference planning is coming along and details of registration and pricing will be available soon, so keep an eye on the website, www.fcav.org.au, the newsletter and eNews for further information.

Speaking of registrations, our free FCAV Training and Celebration Lunch is scheduled for 24 May, 2012. Registration opened on 10 April 2012, so check out the website or complete the enclosed registration form. This event will book out fast, so make sure you get in early!!

Also, don’t forget to check out our seminar training giveaway, on page 11, carer family book pack competition on page 4, ice hockey tickets on page 8 and Fostering Hope training opportunities on page 11.

Wow! It’s just as well the kids are back at school, or you would never have time to read all this great information in your FCAV newsletter!!

Enjoy the autumn months, and the cooler weather.

Regards, Katie

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The Cost of Caring (continued)

costs of swimming lessons, gymnastics, ballet, school fees, food, clothing and petrol.

Each child’s daily needs are noted on a wall chart; each child’s medical documentation, case work, access visit reports and permission requests are filed in the diary. Every time Ms Cocks needs to give a child paracetamol, she needs permission. All babysitters, from grandma to neighbours, need police checks and working-with-children certificates.

The state subsidises the financial and administrative burden of caring for these children to the tune of $110 a week per child. Ms Cocks, who is vice-president of the Foster Carer Association of Victoria, welcomed the Cummins report's call to consider making foster care a profession.

"If you're required to manage very difficult cases or not to have a job ... that's really appropriate," she said. "It would attract more carers, and carers who had qualifications and experience."

The number of foster carers halved in the past decade, Community Services Minister Mary Wooldridge said, while the number of children in the care of the state grew by 45 per cent.
In Brief

February FCAV Book Pack Competition Winner
Congratulations to Carole Smith and family - our first Book Pack prize winners for 2012. We hope you enjoyed the selection of books we sent out - Happy Reading!!

February FCAV Seminar Ticket Winner
Congratulations to Lindy Fergeus - you’re off to the ’Just Borderline - Why the Prefix’ seminar, hosted by the ACT Group and conducted by Bryan Jeffrey on 20 April 2012. Enjoy!!

The Nest website is now live
The purpose of The Nest is to deliver a national plan for coordinated action – a resource for the community, non-government organisations and state and federal governments. The Nest will build on existing frameworks and programs, and bridge the critical gaps between them. It will be a stock take of what works when it comes to investing in the future of our children and young people, and will include the views of young Australians and their families. You can help build The Nest by:

• Registering your interest in participating in building The Nest, or in simply supporting the intent of The Nest;
• Taking the online survey, asking children, young people, parents and carers to share their experiences, needs and aspirations;
• Sharing the link to the website with your networks, family and friends
• Downloading the resource toolkit with activities to help you consult with children, young people, and/or families on what is needed in The Nest.

You can also learn more about the comprehensive evidence review to identify and highlight what works to improve outcomes for children and young people by going to www.thenestproject.org.au.

Parenting Again
Run by Anchor Kinship Care in Eastern Region, Parenting Again is a 6-7 week program aimed at Kinship Carers.

Content focuses on – the complexities of the Kinship role; the impact of trauma on brain development; strategies for managing behaviour and trauma based learning deficits – working with schools; grief and loss for carers and children; self-care; DHS processes and legal implications. The course aims to develop support networks and friendships between participants.

Courses usually take place on a Thursday morning for 2 hrs, however due to popular demand we have run courses in the evening. Please call Anchor Kinship Care for upcoming dates and further information on 8820 0021 or email Abigail Ankers at abigail.ankers@anchor.org.au.

Edmund Rice Camps Inc. Victoria
Edmund Rice Camps inc. Victoria run camps, day programs and other recreational activities for children aged 8-15 years, and families, who are socially or financially disadvantaged, including foster families.

For further information about the services offered through Edmund Rice Camps Victoria and any associated costs, check out the website at www.ercvic.com or call Edmund Rice Camps Vic on 9439 6142 or 0416 105 345.

Kwik Kopy Coburg - Our Sincere Thanks!
We are very excited in the office at FCAV, as this month’s newsletter is out first ‘in-house printed’ newsletter! That’s right - we are now producing the entire newsletter in house, and better still, we have been able to include a little colour!!

While we are very pleased with this advancement, it is with heavy hearts and many thanks that we acknowledge the wonderful work and assistance provided to us over the last few years by Kelvin, and his amazing team at Kwik Kopy in Coburg.

Kelvin and the guys have been there for us through think and thin, not to mention some close deadlines and they have never let us down.

So, to Kelvin and the team, our sincere thanks for all you hard work and for your wonderful support of FCAV - we think you guys rock!!
Carer Competition Page

We have more books to give away this month thanks to the Office of the Child Safety Commissioner’s 2011 Christmas Book Drive.

We know that carers love to read and we know that reading in a household can be contagious - one person sits down to read a book and before you know it everyone wants to get in on the story. So, with plenty of books on offer, we are continuing our book pack competition for children, young people and carers!

Carers, simply nominate the age of the children in your care, along with an idea as to what types of books they like to read and we will do our best to deliver age and interest-appropriate books for the kids. Also, remember, carers will receive a book from the ACT Group range of publications, focusing on caring for children and young people who have experienced childhood trauma.

To enter this month’s competition, email us at competition@fcav.org.au and include your name, address and phone number or call us on 9489 9770 before 4 May 2012, making sure to tell us the number of children, their ages, and any particular interest they might have. We will then do our best to send one lucky family a great ‘Happy Reading’ prize.  Good Luck!!

A Day at the 2012 Formula 1 Qantas Australian Grand Prix

The Department of Premier and Cabinet once again invited foster children and their carers to attend ‘Children’s Day’ at the 2012 Formula 1 Qantas Australian Grand Prix, and judging by the feedback we have had, the day was enjoyed by both carers and kids alike! Here’s some of what our lucky guest had to say...

“The best day I have ever had, I wanted to go to the Grand Prix for a long time, and now I finally got to go. I saw the Crusty Demons and they autographed my arms, I saw them ride the bikes in the globe of death, it was really cool! I got to go into the pits where I saw the F1 cars up real close. I even got to touch one. It was exciting to watch the cars on the race track, they went really fast. Maybe one day I can be a race car driver, but I will have to learn to drive a car first I guess. Tony the Magician was really cool too he had so many tricks, and he had a guinea pig like me but I have got two”.

Liam, Aged 8

“It was the best day of my life. I had the best day because I went to the Grand Prix and there was a bunny that went to sleep. We saw motorbikes. The cars looked like they were going to crash but they didn’t. I got to go down the pits and got signatures. Thank you Paul for picking me. I was very happy you did. The roulettes were very high and I loved it. I made friends with Liam. It was the best watching the cars go very fast. They went over 300 kmh. I want to go again next year.”

Sam, Aged 7

“We were invited into the actual pit area by one of the Mercedes pit crew and got to spend 5 minutes taking pictures and looking closely at the cars, especially Michael Schumacher’s car, to the envy of other patrons who we heard commenting “how come they get to go in there”. Maybe it had something to do with our passes to the Victoria Suite but I’m not sure”.

Roger and Latoya
An update from PPSS/FCAV Carer Information & Support Service

Increasingly, the Carer Information and Support Service (CISS), finds itself supporting carers during the frustrating and often, devastating process that is a Quality of Care investigation.

The isolation and fear for carers during this time can be significant, particularly when information regarding the allegations and the processes to be followed can sometimes be unclear.

I would urge carers to contact CISS as soon as they are informed that an allegation has been made. In addition to talking to you over the phone, we can be with you during meetings and interviews as a support and as a note-taker to ensure you have a record of what was said in any discussions. We can help to inform you of the process and explain next steps, as well as advocate on your behalf should timeframes for the investigation and subsequent process become protracted.

Should the initial investigation present a finding of ‘substantiated’, CISS can help you to lodge an appeal of the decision, and again, we can be with you every step of the way in subsequent meetings.

CISS does not replace your agency or agency supports during this time, but we can provide additional independent support and information at a time when you may not know who else to turn to.

The feedback we continue to have from carers who we have supported during a quality of care investigation is that they felt tremendously supported and comforted by our involvement.

Recently, CISS supported a carer whose substantiated quality of care investigation lead to a referral of her case to the Suitability Panel. The stress and the significantly protracted timeframes associated with the case left the carer exhausted and overwhelmed.

When the Suitability Panel finally determined to uphold the carer’s foster care accreditation, the carer had this to say to CISS:

"I am thrilled with the outcome and so grateful and appreciative of the support you have given me - I only wish I had called you when they first told me about the allegations. I was initially too ashamed to call you because of what had happened, but if I could say anything to other carers, it would be to tell them to join FCAV and to use CISS as a resource for support and information. Thank you for everything."

So, if you find yourself in the turmoil of a quality of care investigation, or you know of a carer who is going through this, please contact CISS and see what we can do to assist. We can remain in contact during the investigation, and any subsequent appeals for as long as you need us to. We can take notes at meetings, help draft letters of appeal and provide information and support throughout.

Tips for the Carer Information and Support Service

At one time or another, we will all find ourselves in a situation where we are not getting along with our worker as well as we could. While the reasons for this will vary enormously from case to case, the core reality is the same - if we are going to be able to work together to get great outcomes for the kids in our care, then we have to work as a team.

The CISS Information Sheet, Building and Maintaining Effective Working Relationships is a great resource to help get those core relationships back on track. For a copy, simply go to the website www.fcav.org.au and look at Carer Resources/Information Sheets, or call the office on 9489 9770.

For further information or support, please call CISS on 9489 9770.

An update from CREATE Foundation

Here’s a look at what’s happening at CREATE...

Carn the Kids  North Melbourne Vs Western Bulldogs, Sunday 13 May form 1pm at Etihad Stadium

Youth Advisory Group - Saturday 4 May, from 10am to 4pm & Saturday 2 June from 10am to 4pm

Check out ClubCREATE on the website at www.create.org.au.

Spaces are limited so please book in early by calling CREATE on 1800 655 105.
Chapter 9:

Meeting the needs of children & young people in the statutory system

Recommendation 19 calls for greater cohesion and collaboration between statutory child protection intake services and Child FIRST and family support services. The report calls for increased focus, particularly with common clients, including greater joint decision making about risks presenting to vulnerable children and young people.

FCAV is supportive of the report’s recommendation that the long term goal in this area be for a consolidated intake model where Child FIRST and statutory child protection intake processes are combined.

Recommendation 20 calls for the immediate introduction of two differentiated pathways involving first-time contact families and the use of multidisciplinary centres to respond to child sexual abuse victims, followed by two additional pathways to address the needs of families that have repeated contact with the Department of Human services and families experiencing chronic and entrenched vulnerability.

FCAV sees this initiative as a first step in introducing proactive early intervention for families who require DHS intervention. It is hoped this would see a decline in the number of children and young people entering the statutory system for the first time.

Recommendation 21 asks that DHS “simplify case planning process and improve collaboration and pathways between statutory child protection services and other services”.

FCAV hope that this recommendation includes work on respecting the role of the foster carer in the care team and case planning process, and takes steps to ensure that the foster carer is supported (via offer of babysitting costs and consultation regarding scheduling of the meeting) to enable attendance at meetings relating to the child in their care.

Recommendation 22 recommends that DHS “should simplify practice guidance and instructions for child protection practitioners”.

FCAV hope that this will lead to less red tape and faster processes which would enable foster carers to forward plan and be better able to meet the needs of the children. It is also hoped that the process for getting consent for medical needs would be quicker and that documents such as Medicare card numbers, birth certificates, immunisation records and school enrolments would then come with the child.

Recommendation 23 states:

“The Department of Human Services should identify and remove barriers to achieving the most appropriate and timely form of permanent placements for children unable to be reunited with their biological family or to be permanently placed with suitable members of the extended family by:

- Seeking parental consent to adoption, and where given, placing the child in a suitable adoptive family;
- Pursuing legal action to seek the dispensation of parental consent to adoption for children whose circumstances make them eligible under section 43 of the Adoption Act 1984;
- Resolving the inconsistency between practical requirements for child protection practitioners to simultaneously plan for reunification while contemplating permanent care arrangements; and
- Reviewing the situation of every child in care who is approaching the stability timeframes as outlined in the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005, to determine whether an application for a permanent care order should be made. Where it is deemed not appropriate to do so (for example, where a child’s stable foster placement would be disrupted), the decision not to make application for a permanent care order should be endorsed at a senior level”.

The FCAV recognises that further discussion with members needs to occur prior to us expressing an opinion in support of or against this recommendation. We will keep you apprised of any developments in this regard.
Chapter 10:

Meeting the needs of children & young people in out-of-home care

Recommendation 24 calls for the continued support by the Department of Human Services and community services organisations for the ‘Who Am I Project’ on out-of-home care record-keeping to enable children and young people to access all records of relevance, and as appropriate, be provided with a personal record when leaving care.

FCAV is fully supportive of this recommendation and endorses the importance of relevant and accurate record-keeping for children and young people in care.

Recommendation 25 relates to establishing “a comprehensive five year plan for Victoria’s out-of-home care system”. It is FCAV’s hope that such a plan would include:

- A professional carer model that ensures the respect for the role of carer and is recompensed and supported comprehensively;
- As well as significant investment in the funding and support arrangements for foster carers, such as increased reimbursement, clarification of entitlements such as what DHS or the foster care agency cover – medical, educational, recreational, placement establishment/support expenses.
- The statement, “All children in out-of-home care receive appropriate therapeutic care, education and other services;” is vital and FCAV fully support this being comprehensively actioned and implemented.

Recommendation 26 states:

“To provide for the clear and transparent development of a client-based funding, the Government should request the Essential Services Commission to advise on:

- The design of a client-based funding approach for out-of-home care in Victoria; and
- The unit funding of services for children and young people placed in care”.

FCAV remains steadfast in it’s call for increased funding for carers and placements. Evidence collected by the Carer Information and Support Service continues to highlight the correlation between adequate funding and service provision and the success of placements. A client-based funding approach will ensure this balance can be achieved in an increased number of cases.

Recommendation 27 states:

“The Victorian Government should, as a matter of priority, give further detailed consideration to the professional carer model and associated arrangements and request that the Commonwealth Government address and resolve, as a matter of priority, significant national barriers associated with establishing this new category of worker including industrial relations and taxation arrangements”.

FCAV participated in a working group with the Department of Human Services and other service providers in 2011, and we are aware of the complexities involved in introducing a professional carer model. Having said this, we do not believe these challenges are insurmountable.

FCAV remains hopeful the Commonwealth Government can work with the state-based out-of-home care sectors to strengthen supports for carers. Initiatives such as workable professional carer models, the scraping of means testing for carers when applying for Commonwealth entitlements for the children in their care and other such measures will go a long way to achieving better supports and acknowledgement of carers both in Victoria and across the country.
Ice Hockey Tickets!!

The very wonderful Bryan Jeffrey has secured two free passes to the Melbourne Mustangs Ice Hockey games for use by FCAV carers for the 2012 season!! The passes can be collected from the Medibank Icehouse, 105 Pearl River Road, Docklands, 30-45 minutes prior to the game, and will need to be returned after the game to ensure availability for the following week.

So if you want to check out all the action at The Icehouse, email FCAV making sure to include your name, address and phone number, and preferred matched to competition@fcav.org.au or call FCAV on 9489 9770 to arrange your free passes!

**2012 GAMES FIXTURE:**

**MAY**

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<td>17-May - Melbourne Ice</td>
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<td>3-Jun - Sydney Ice Dogs</td>
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<td>16-Jun - Gold Coast Blue Tongues</td>
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**AUGUST**

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<td>9-Aug - Melbourne Ice</td>
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<td>18-Aug - Adelaide Adrenaline</td>
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To ensure the passes do not go unused, please confirm your interest to attend at least one week prior to the scheduled game and we will make arrangements for you to attend. In instances where we do not have anyone wanting the tickets by this time, we will contact Bryan and make arrangements for him to re-allocate the tickets elsewhere, so make sure you let us know if you are interested.

Our sincere thanks to Bryan, MOAT Mental Health Training and the Melbourne Mustangs Ice Hockey Club for this fantastic opportunity for carers. **Go Mustangs!!**

**Carers Recognition Bill 2012**

The Victorian Government introduced the **Carers Recognition Bill 2012** into Parliament on 7 February this year, which together with the Carer Card helps to support and recognise the work of Carers in Victoria. The Bill follows an election commitment to recognise, promote and value the role of carers.

The purpose of this Bill is to recognise, promote and value the role of carers and people in care relationships and to raise the community’s awareness of the need to give consideration and support to carers.

The legislation sets out clear expectations for organisations that engage with people in care relationships about how they should be treated. It requires all government departments, local government and public service care agencies to consider the care relationship principles in the Bill when developing policies and providing services. Organisations must report on their compliance with the principles in the Act in their annual reports.


Unpaid primary carers in Victoria are already eligible to receive the Carer Card, which allows carers to enjoy discounts, benefits and savings from over 1400 Victorian businesses and venues. The card is available to Carer Payment and Carer Allowance recipients, foster, respite and kinship carers.

For more information visit the Carer Card website [www.carercard.vic.gov.au](http://www.carercard.vic.gov.au) or contact the Carer Card on 1800 901 958.
Inside Story Headline

The FCAV Regional Roadshow featuring Bryan Jeffrey continues in the coming months - check out if we are coming to a venue near you!

17 May 2012 - Bendigo

Kids Get Sad & Worried Too
Free to all St Luke’s carers and care teams.
Other attendees - $55.00 (GST inclusive)
Long Gully Community Centre, 23-29 Havilah Rd, Long Gully
RSVP by 26 April 2012 to Michelle Peebles at 5440 1100 or m.peebles@stlikes.org.au

24 May 2012 - Melbourne

Networking - It’s not all about Facebook & FCAV 20 Year Anniversary Celebratory Lunch
Free to all foster and kinship carers and agency staff
Darebin Arts & Entertainment Centre, Cnr Bell St and St Georges Rd, Preston
Register by 16 May 2012 at www.cvent.com/d/bcq0tf or return the enclosed registration form to FCAV, 48 High St, Northcote, 3070.

1 June 2012 - Shepparton

Kids Get Sad & Worried Too
Free to all Berry Street carers and care teams
Goulburn Valley Hotel, 223 High St, Shepparton
RSVP by 25 May 2012 to Annette Larkin at 5822 8100 or alarkin@berrystreet.org.au

21 June 2012 - Wangaratta

Kids Get Sad & Lonely Too
Final details for this event are still to come.
Watch the FCAV website at www.fcav.org.au for further details

Research to track young Victorians leaving care

Victorian Community Services Minister the Hon Mary Wooldridge announced on 2 February, a $1 million longitudinal research study on young people transitioning from state care.

About 400 young Victorians between 16 and 18 years of age leave child protection out-of-home care every year. They are a highly vulnerable and disadvantaged population who often lack any form of family or social support mechanisms.

A range of government-funded services is available to assist with the transition from care but for many young people it is a challenging time and they can struggle to attain and maintain housing, education and employment.

The Victorian Coalition Government has committed $1 million to fund a research project that will track a cohort of young people in out-of-home care over a period of four years to better understand the difficulties these young people face, the life outcomes resulting from time in out-of-home care, and how these young people can be better supported and assisted.

“This research will be the first of its kind in Victoria and will provide an empirical evidence base that will be invaluable for policy-makers and service providers in Victoria and across the country,” Ms Wooldridge said.

“The research will be conducted independently and supported by a project reference group comprising representatives of government, the community sector and young care-leavers.”

Out-of-home care includes kinship care, foster care and residential care. On any given day there are around 6,000 children and young people living in out-of-home care in Victoria.

**An update for the Department of Human Services**

**Major reform for the Department of Human Services**
The Department of Human Services recently announced a major reform to deliver more integrated, family-centred services for vulnerable Victorians.

Major changes to the department’s structure will include organising the department’s operations into 17 local areas and consolidating the department’s central office to remove program silos, reduce duplication and increase efficiency.

Implementation of the reform agenda will occur over the next 12 to 18 months. Further information will be posted on the department's website at [http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au) as it becomes available.

**Protecting Victoria’s Vulnerable Children Inquiry report**

The government has committed to the development of a Vulnerable Children and Families Strategy, to respond to the report. Immediate action areas include the commitment of $61.4m in funding towards; the recruitment of 42 additional child protection practitioners; the expansion of Child FIRST and family support services in areas of extreme demand; and the establishment of three new multidisciplinary centres to respond to child sexual abuse. The government’s full response to the report will be released in due course.

**Working with Children Check – are your details up to date?**
Victorians who have passed or apply for a Working with Children (WWC) Check are being urged to update any change of details via the online facility or risk committing an offence with financial penalties, the card expiring or being invalidated.

Since the scheme began in 2006, 1 in every 4 Victorians have passed the WWC Check but many cardholders are not aware they have ongoing responsibilities with the Check.

Of critical importance is cardholders’ responsibility to inform the Department of Justice of any changes to personal details such as address, phone number and employers or voluntary organisations where they perform ‘child-related work’. Keeping personal details up to date is important as it means cardholders can be notified of a change in the status of your card and when it is due for renewal.

It is also a legal obligation under the Working with Children Act 2005 for cardholders to inform the Department of Justice within 21 days every time they change employers or voluntary organisation.

The WWC Check is a mandatory screening requirement for any Victorian who undertakes ‘child-related work’ described in the Working with Children Act 2005. It is an offence to begin or continue to perform ‘child-related work’ without holding a current Working with Children card or application receipt.

Cardholders can ensure they comply with the Act at all times, by informing the Department of Justice of:

- changes in employer or voluntary organisation within 21 days
- new relevant charges, offences and findings against them within 7 days

Cardholders can be confident of being informed about changes in the status of their card and being able to renew their card before it expires by:

- keeping their address and phone numbers up-to-date with the Department
- obtaining a replacement card for a lost or damaged one

**Cardholders and applicants can update their details online at the WWC Check website:** [https://online.justice.vic.gov.au/wwccu](https://online.justice.vic.gov.au/wwccu) or call the WWCC Information Line: 1300 652 879.

Upcoming Events - Fostering Hope Training

27, 28 April & 5 May from 10am to 4pm: Century Inn, 5 Airfield Rd, Princes Hwy, Traralgon. Register online at www.childhood.org.au or call the Australian Childhood Foundation on 1800 176 453.

8, 9 & 10 May from 10am to 3pm: Proudfots on the River, 2 Simpson St, Warrnambool. RSVP to Ian Cairns at Brophy Family and Youth Services on 5561 8888.

22, 23 & 29 May from 10am to 4pm: Hotel Ibis 297 Springvale Rd, Glen Waverley. Register online at www.childhood.org.au or call the Australian Childhood Foundation on 1800 176 453.

6, 7 & 14 June from 10am to 4pm: Treacy Centre, 126 The Avenue, Parkville. Register online at www.childhood.org.au or call the Australian Childhood Foundation on 1800 176 453.

Check out the FCAV website at www.fcv.org.au for further information and details of later training dates.

Upcoming Events - ACT Seminar Ticket Offers

Mad, Bad or Sad? Foundation Training 2 Free Tickets Available!
27 April 2012 from 10am to 4pm (registration from 9.30am) at the Edgar Lynch Training & Meeting Rooms, 3 St David Street, Fitzroy. Speaker: Gregory Nicolau (Please contact FCAV on 20 Apr to attend this event)

Punishment Vs Discipline 2 Free Tickets Available!
25 May 2012 from 10am to 1pm (registration form 9.30am) at the Edgar Lynch Training & Meeting Rooms, 3 St David Street, Fitzroy. Speaker: Gregory Nicolau

Take a Walk on the Wild Side 1 Free Ticket Available!
1 June 2012 from 10am to 1pm (registration form 9.30am) at the Edgar Lynch Training & Meeting Rooms, 3 St David Street, Fitzroy. Speaker: Gregory Nicolau

Dangerous Liaisons 1 Free Ticket Available!
13 June 2012 from 10am to 4pm (registration form 9.30am) at the Edgar Lynch Training & Meeting Rooms, 3 St David Street, Fitzroy. Speaker: Gregory Nicolau

Register your interest to attend these events via email (including a current phone number) to competition@fcav.org.au or call 9489 9770 by close of business 18 May 2012. The successful carers will be notified 21 May 2012.

2012 National Foster & Kinship Care Conference

20 & 21 October 2012, Sebel Albert Park, Melbourne

Planning is now well underway for this exciting event, with the final program content almost nailed down!

Final details are also being put in place for the pricing, registration, sponsorship and all the other odds and ends that go in to making a great event.

So, keep an eye on both the FCAV website www.fcv.org.au and the conference website www.strengtheningcare2012.com.au for all the latest information, and look out for the conference registration booklet coming your way in June 2012.
Foster Care Association of Victoria Inc
48 High Street, Northcote, Vic 3070
P: (03) 9489 9770
F: (03) 9489 9119
E: admin@fcav.org.au
W: www.fcav.org.au
ABN: 30 747 010 099

Join FCAV or amend your membership details online at:
www.fcav.org.au

Foster Care Association
Celebrating 20 years of supporting Victorian carers

FCAV Vision
To provide information, support and advocacy to carers that ensures they can offer children and young people in their care a healing environment which assists the child or young person to reach their full potential.

FCAV Statement of Purpose
❖ Advocate for foster carers, their families and the children in their care to ensure all voices are heard;
❖ Work in partnership with agencies and the sector to provide an improved foster care system;
❖ Provide support and learning for carers directly, through various forums, or in partnership with agencies;
❖ Build FCAV intelligence in order to be identified as a recognised and viable authority in the sector;
❖ Promote the awareness of foster caring to assist in public understanding of the role and agency recruitment of carers;

The FCAV/PPSS Carer Information and Support Service is a joint venture operated by the Foster Care Association of Victoria Inc. and the Post Placement Support Service (Vic) Inc. The service operates in addition to the supports and advocacy offered to statutory foster, kinship and permanent carers through their funded care agencies, thus providing carers with an independent referral and assistance point should they need one.

The FCAV/PPSS Carer Information and Support Service has four main aims:
❖ Provision of accurate and clear information via phone calls, both organisations' websites, newsletters and information sheets;
❖ Referrals to appropriate agencies for specialised and targeted support and assistance;
❖ Phone conversations, one on one meetings and (occasional) attendance at meetings for support;
❖ Advocacy with CSOs and Government on themes and serious issues impacting carers, children and young people in home based care.

If you need assistance or advocacy on an issue impacting you as a carer, please call the:

Carer Information and Support Service on (03) 9489 9770

Monday - Thursday: 9:00am - 5:00pm,
Friday: 9:00am - 4:00pm
This service is not open on public holidays.
After-hours Online Enquiries can be made via email on our contacts page. Emails will be responded to as soon as we can.

FCAV and PPSS have also developed a number of Information Sheets that may assist you. Visit Carer Resources on the FCAV website www.fcav.org.au for more information.