



Aboriginal Family Support Services Newsletter

January - February 2016

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... and more!

AFSS Foster
Carers' SA Shorts
holiday prize draw ...
and the winner is
Robert Welsh!
More info in the
next newsletter

Visit the AFSS website
www.afss.com.au

Just 2 deadly!



Above: This year there were 42 Aboriginal students who graduated at the Just 2 Deadly event, held in the Murray Bridge Town Hall on Friday 13 November.

The National Deadly Awards are an annual celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander achievement in music, sport, entertainment, the arts, health, education, training and community.

The first “Deadlys” began in Sydney in 1995 and since 2001 the event has been held at the Sydney Opera House.

The Deadly Awards have been held in schools and communities throughout Adelaide and other parts of SA for several years..

In 2009 a group of local Aboriginal Education Officers in Murray Bridge formed an organising committee and called their local celebration the “Just 2 Deadly” (J2D) Awards for Graduating Year 7 and Year 12 Aboriginal students with the inaugural event commencing in 2010.

The Committee now consists of dedicated Aboriginal Community Education Officers, Aboriginal Secondary Education Transition Officers, other school staff, the Community Education Manager, AFSS Community Development Worker Bronte Warneke and a Parent and Community Engagement Officer who are all committed to celebrating the important milestones of local young community members.

The Committee works hard and strives to continue the J2D in their local community to provide successful and positive role models who value education for the whole community.

There are set criteria that students must meet to be eligible to participate in the J2D Awards.

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A message from the CEO

Once again Christmas is behind us and we have all benefited from the holiday break, spending good times with family and friends.

The children and young people in AFSS care, and the families we work with, also enjoyed the Christmas festivities, and the children were very excited to receive their Christmas gifts.

I would like to make special mention of the wonderful organisations and individuals who contributed a marvellous array of gifts for them all.

Presents were beautifully wrapped and provided for children and young people of all ages. Thank you sincerely for your generosity, and the time and effort you put in to ensure that Christmas was a special time for the children and youth.

You will find details of our generous donors on page 9.

The AFSS team has hit the ground running in 2016 after the Christmas break. Community Safety and Wellbeing is now underway, with the first of its programs, Circle of Security, already being run in Adelaide, Berri, Ceduna, Port Augusta and Port Lincoln.

You will find more details about Circle of Security, and the other programs under the Community Safety and Wellbeing banner, on pages 5 and 6 of this newsletter.

As we move further into the new year, I look forward to the AFSS team rising to all the challenges that 2016 will present us with, to ensure that we continue to provide excellent service to South Australian Aboriginal children and their families.



*Sharron Williams
Chief Executive Officer*

Just 2 deadly!

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This event enables families and the community to celebrate, and be proud of the educational achievements of year 7 and year 12 graduates.

J2D has just celebrated its sixth year (this year is AFSS fourth year), and since its inception over 240 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have graduated in our communities, with around 56 year 12s pursuing further study or employment.

This year there were 42

Aboriginal students who graduated at the event, which was held in the Murray Bridge Town Hall on Friday 13 November.

Schools participating were Mannum Community College, Meningie Area, Murray Bridge South, St Joseph's, Tyndale Christian College, Unity College, Murray Bridge High, Coomandook Area and Murray Bridge North Primary Schools.

This year was the first time previous graduating Year 7 students were graduating in year

12. These students were awarded a special personalised J2D jacket for their second graduation.

The success of this event is due to the generosity and support of the sponsors, AFSS and school backing over the past five years. The Committee is very fortunate to have such outstanding support from local businesses and organisations in Mannum, Murray Bridge and Meningie which contribute to the success of the Just 2 Deadlys.

We hope this support continues into the future!



Metro families Christmas get together at Water World

Out of Home Care – Family Based Care metro team organised the annual Christmas event for foster carers and children to get together and have some fun and a yarn. It was held on 5 December 2015 at Water World Aquatic Centre, Modbury.

The purpose of the day was to acknowledge all the wonderful work the foster carers do volunteering their time to help children and young people in providing a safe, stable and nurturing home environment, when they are not able to live with their birth families for periods of time.

Around 130 foster carers and children enjoyed the day. Although the weather was hot, everyone kept cool by spending time in the water and making the most of the cool drinks and refreshments that were provided for all to enjoy.

The children had the opportunity to meet other children in similar situations to themselves and to socialise in a relaxed informal setting.

Father Christmas made an appearance and gave presents to all the children, who enjoyed seeing him and opening their presents.

Everyone enjoyed the day and responses from those who attended include:

“Thank you for a wonderful day. The children had a great time and due to the weather it was a great place to hold the event.”

“Our family had a wonderful time; it was well catered for and thank you.”

Foster carers all had the opportunity to be part of a raffle with four prizes, which were donated from outside organisations. Prizes were:

1st Prize – Charlesworth Nuts Hamper – Donated



Above: AFSS Board members, Margaret Nelson and Wayne Rigney, relax in the sun with AFSS carer Yvonne Agius and Trish Lacoss, Executive Assistant to Sharron Williams.



Above: Father Christmas was a popular visitor at the Metro Christmas party.

by Charlesworth Nuts in Marion. Congratulations to Michelle and John Hall

2nd Prize – Christmas Food Hamper – Donated by Kiwanis in Glenelg. Congratulations to Lee-Anne and Leon Stanley

3rd prize – Christmas Food Hampers – Donated by Kiwanis in Glenelg. Congratulations to Melanie and Desmond Broadbent.

4th Prize – Toy Hamper – Workskil Indigenous. Congratulations to Ricky Bennett.



Above: A good time was had by all on a hot summer's day for the metro foster carer families and children.



AFSS Aboriginal Gambling Help Service presentation schedule

March 2016

The presentation, *What am I really gambling with?*, looks at the effects of uncontrolled gambling on self and others whilst providing some useful information and tips on how to address this growing problem.

Below is the March schedule for this important and interesting presentation.

If you would like any more information, or if you, your clients, or anyone you know would benefit from attending, please register your interest by calling the AFSS staff member, listed below, at the office where the presentation will take place.



Date and time	Location	Contact
Tuesday 15 March 10.00am -12.00 noon Light morning tea provided	AFSS Training Room 134 Waymouth Street Adelaide	Tony Lawrence Phone 8205 1500
Tuesday 15 March 10.00am - 12.00 noon Light morning tea provided	AFSS training Room 23 Denny Street Berri	Norman Giles Phone 8582 3193
Tuesday 15 March 10.00am – 12.00 noon Light morning tea provided	Bungala Meeting Room 7 Jervois Street Port Augusta	Charles Jackson Phone 8641 0907
Tuesday 15 March 10.00am – 12.00 noon Light morning tea provided	Carers' SA Meeting Room 95 Swanport Road Murray Bridge	Bronte Warneke Phone 0418 499 649

What is the AFSS Aboriginal Gambling Help Service?

AFSS Gambling Help Service recognises the need in the community to support Aboriginal people and their significant others, where gambling has become, or is potentially developing into, a problem.

AFSS also recognises that education and awareness are fundamental in supporting Aboriginal people who have gambling problems by:

1. Building resilience
2. Promoting connectedness
3. Awareness and education.

To find out more, visit the AFSS website, www.afss.com.au or ring Program Coordinator Tony Lawrence on 8205 1500.



Funded through
the Gamblers
Rehabilitation Fund



aha|sa
Australian Hotels Association (AHA)



Government of South Australia
Department for Communities
and Social Inclusion

Community Safety and Wellbeing programs underway

The AFSS Community Safety and Wellbeing (CSW) team has been working hard to ensure that these new AFSS programs meet community needs.

CSW focuses on early intervention and prevention; Central is the emphasis of the Australian Government's and AFSS' focus on schooling, education, employment and community safety outcomes for Aboriginal communities

There are a range of programs being offered:

Circle of Security – Parenting – designed to help parents and carers become more aware of their children's needs and work out if their responses are meeting those needs.

Seasons for Healing – is an awareness and education program that can help you to manage grief and loss.

The program has been specially adapted for Aboriginal participants, in consultation with Good Grief Ltd and the ATSI Healing Foundation.

Through Young Black Eyes – is a family violence program designed for Aboriginal children, young people and families who have experienced or witnessed family violence, child protection issues and their impact on families.

Healthy Homes and Resilient Families – learn about budgeting, nutrition and cooking!

This program aims to give you and your family practical ways to manage money and to make sure you are making healthy food choices.

A Just Future – works with children, young people, men and women who are already involved, or who are at risk of, becoming involved with the criminal justice system.

The new programs are being rolled out, commencing with the Circle of Security – Parenting program, with Healthy Homes and Resilient Families due for rollout in the near future.

Circle of Security – Parenting

Circle of Security – Parenting is an internationally recognised program which draws from 50 years of research into attachment.

What is attachment?

Attachment is an important part of the relationship between a child and a parent/care giver with its purpose being to make a child feel safe, secure and protected. Attachment is separate from other aspects of parenting, such as disciplining, playing with and teaching your child.

Attachment is where the child uses their care giver as a secure base to explore from and, when necessary, as a place where they return for safety and comfort.

The program runs for at least eight weeks and is designed to enhance the bond and sense of security for you and the children in your care by:

– Giving you skills to better understand your children's needs.

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A message from the Independent Gambling Authority Problem gambling – barring and voluntary exclusion

There have been changes to gambling laws about barring.

As part of those changes, the Independent Gambling Authority is writing to all people who have been recorded as barred from the gambling areas of hotels, clubs and the Adelaide Casino, and from betting with Ubet or SA TAB, inviting them to participate in a review of their barrings.

If you want to continue to be barred, or want to vary your barrings, you do not need to wait for a review letter. You can contact the Authority right now to arrange a time.

To make an appointment, call 8226 7233 or email iga@sa.gov.au



Circle of Security – Parenting

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– Inviting you to reflect on your own experiences of being parented and how it impacts on your parenting

– Providing an environment where you can focus on your strengths and challenges, and

– Benefiting from the experience of sharing with other care givers

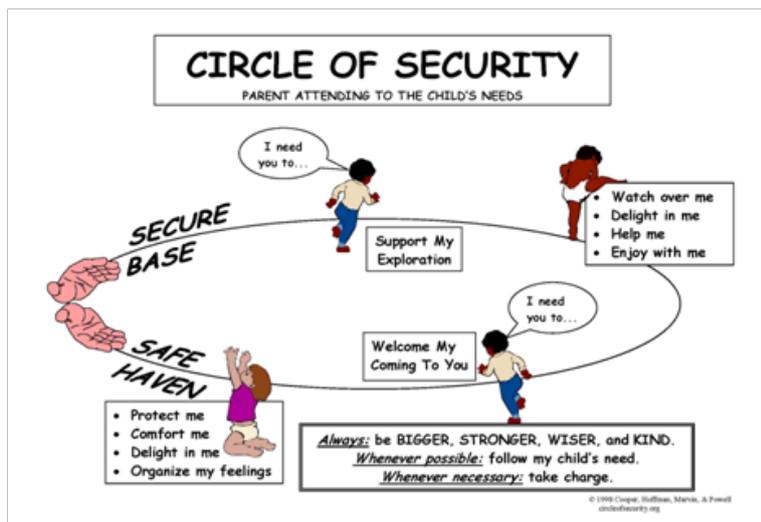
What's in the program?

The program is divided into chapters, which are:

Welcome to Circle of Security
– Parenting

Exploring our Children's Needs All the Way Around the Circle

Being With on the Circle



Being With Infants on the Circle

The Path to Security

Exploring our Struggles

Rupture and Repair in Relationships

Summary and Celebration.

Do you think you could benefit?

If so, why not book into the next program?

In addition agencies are able to refer their clients.

Contact details for the team are shown in the advert on page 9.



Strong children strong community

Stand with us – become a carer

Aboriginal Family Support Services is looking for family based carers who are committed to providing safe and culturally appropriate homes for children in need.

You can be single or a couple, with or without children. And whether you're willing to provide emergency, short term, respite or long term care, we'd love to hear from you!

Contact:

.Adelaide Judy Spooner judy.spooner@afss.com.au (08) 8205 1500

Ceduna Michelle Naylor michelle.naylor@afss.com.au (08) 8625 3466

Cooper Pedy Donna Dixon donna.dixon@afss.com.au (08) 8672 3066

Port Augusta Marie Skipworth marie.skipworth@afss.com.au (08) 8641 0907

Port Lincoln Toni-Lee Miller toni-lee.miller@afss.com.au (08) 8683 1909



Aboriginal Family Support Services Inc
Together with the community



For Our Children *Ngaliak Koorlangka*

In this issue we are pleased to share with you the final in our series of highlights from the SNAICC conference presentations, held in Perth in September last year.

Connecting Kids to Family and Culture –

This was presented by Wanslea Foster Care WA, a mainstream foster care service. The service highlighted a best practice approach on delivering a cultural connection framework for Aboriginal children who are placed with non Aboriginal carers. One of the carers shared how she worked closely with the birth family of a child in her care to ensure that the child's cultural connections were the focus to ensure a sense of belonging was embedded into the child's identity.

Djooraminda – Tony Culbong from CentaCare presented an overview of the Djooraminda model for ensuring Aboriginal children and young people in a family group home setting build identity, resilience and self esteem in a culturally safe environment.

Driving Change in the Justice System

– was a two-pronged presentation firstly by Tammy Solomec (Amnesty International, WA), and secondly, Building Communities not Prisons: Justice Reinvestment Opportunities for Community Driven Change by Ben Schokman (Human Rights Law Centre, Vic). This session illustrated the differences between states in relation to age limits of young children who are placed in detention or held in remand and varying mandatory sentencing and detention laws across Australian jurisdictions.

The high numbers of young people (as low as 12 years old in WA) in detention or remand is not a viable, correct or acceptable method to assist in change in young people's lives and behaviours. Home bail with family or a responsible person under electronic monitoring is considered a far better practice than incarceration and should be a priority for young people coming from dysfunctional families into the justice system.

Statistics of young people held in detention and remand provided a high emotional reaction to the situation, bearing in mind statistics can be made to give different analysis of situations to create subjective reaction value.

It was identified that the 'disadvantaged', whether it be through poor education, poverty, drug and



Above: The Kwarbah Djookian Dancers were a highlight of the SNAICC conference opening ceremony. (Photo courtesy of SNAICC.)

alcohol abuse or other circumstances (including colonisation and racial profiling by Police in many early age instances of involvement with the justice system) resulted in incarceration for many therefore young people are integrated with more seasoned offenders and are exposed to other forms of criminal activity, and on release the cycle commences again with re-entry back into prison.

It was suggested that funding used to increase prison capacity would be far better spent in early intervention, education and in providing diversionary measures and programs for young people rather than a custodial sentence.

This session created a lot of discussion around the juvenile justice systems throughout Australia, where home bail options for young people are not readily available to regional and remote young people. Therefore many of these kids are represented within the prison system unnecessarily, primarily due to funding being spent in the wrong areas and not in ways that could prevent recidivist offending happening at an early age.

Insights on Progressing Indigenous Child Wellbeing in Neo-Liberal Political Climates

(presented jointly by Adjunct Professor Muriel Bamblett and Emma Sydenham (SNAICC) – The problem is that the "equality" of Neo-Liberal ideology fails to properly acknowledge barriers of class and race. We are not all born equal, as much as we would like to believe we are.

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For Our Children *Ngaliak Koorlangka*

Continued from page 7

Though some individuals overcome obstacles of race, poverty and position, the majority may still suffer. Equality is a major component of a free society, but those in power define and dictate the terms of reference. What may be equal to some, such as the right to work, becomes slavery for others. The Neo-Liberal ideology was strongly presented during this session by the presenters and gave a concerning display of a 'them and us model' of Child Protection Policy (CPP) in Australia.

The Child Protection System and the removal of children were described as a money making industry for non-Government agencies to compete to gain increased funding from Government. The audience was told that the Department of Communities and sister agencies represented in all states and territories held absolute power over all Aboriginal communities and did not represent Aboriginal culture or the lore of those communities.

The 'strict father model' (Government) blamed Aboriginal communities for being dysfunctional and implies that families are individually responsible for having children removed. It was pointed out that Aboriginal communities have their own system of child protection and community deals with matters in their own way. The emphasis was to 'get rid of' the welfare system (CPP) and those Aboriginal kids should not be in placed anywhere else other than with an Aboriginal family in community.

The subject of the "Welfare Card" being introduced to Ceduna was construed to be specifically targeted to local Aboriginal communities and this was considered to be a biased Neo-Liberal policy against Aboriginal people despite it being for all welfare recipients in that area.

Although this session produced some debate around child protection for Aboriginal children, solutions seemed a little vague and appeared at times to leave children vulnerable within communities where limited leadership and individual family connections were too strong to take action to protect children. A very thought provoking session.

Summary

Key messages from the 1,000+ delegates is that solutions to the care and protection of Aboriginal children and young people lay with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and Aboriginal specific child care agencies. Delegates were very clear and consistent that funding bodies, mainstream NGOs and others in the child protection arena need to work closely with Aboriginal agencies to develop their capacity to manage the large numbers of Aboriginal children and young people coming into care.

Food for thought

In reflecting on the many presentations and plenary sessions, some lessons for AFSS include:

The need to more fully engage with Aboriginal communities in each of the regions we service to ensure that local communities



Above: One of the lovely young dancers at the SNAICC Conference closing corroboree. (Photo courtesy of SNAICC.)

can assist to find the solutions for the placement of Aboriginal children and young people in their own communities.

To stem a government focus on 'mainstreaming' and to engage in dialogue with DECD and mainstream NGOs with a view for enlisting their support to build the capacity within AFSS to manage the high number of Aboriginal children coming into State care.

A need to challenge the status quo in terms of how the State Government and the NGO sector work generally with Aboriginal communities to focus on a building capacity within communities to manage their own issues.

To find out more about the SNAICC Conference, you can access previous issues of the AFSS Newsletter on the website, www.afss.com.au under the Publications heading.

Thank you from AFSS!

AFSS would sincerely like to thank all who supported us with generous donations and played a major part in making Christmas special for AFSS foster carers and the children and young people in their care. The following people and organisations collected and donated gifts for AFSS children and made other donations to ensure that everyone had a happy festive season:

Lenore Chantrell - Aboriginal Health, Northern Adelaide Local Health Networks

Kay Dowling - Rotary Club member

Donna Robb and team - Dept of Premier and Cabinet

Scharlene Lamont - A/Director and team, Dept Correctional Services

Maringga Turtpandi Aboriginal Health Service

Wongangga Turtpandi Aboriginal Health Service

Integral Leadership Participants – Leadership Institute of SA

SAHMRI team

Gayle Naughton - Access Working Careers SA

Natalie Lynch - Apprenticeship Broker

Di Hart

Don Kennealy

Sister Kenise Neil and the Sisters of St Joseph

Charlesworth Nuts, Marion

Kiwanis, Glenelg

Kiwanis, Rostrevor-Campbelltown

Kiwanis, Mitcham

Workskil Indigenous

Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia Incorporated

City of Norwood Payneham and St Peters

Hungry Jacks

McDonalds Para Hills

Adelaide Football Club

Adelaide United A-League Football Club

Coles Unley

Kmart Stores

Target Stores

Westfield

Rydges

Arnotts

Making Apprenticeships Simple

Perrymans Bakery

Variety SA

Good Guys Hectorville

AGL

Officeworks.



Aboriginal Family Support Services
Together with the community

AFSS Community Safety and Wellbeing team is pleased to offer

Circle of Security – Parenting

Do you ever wonder ...

- Why your kids act up?
- How to make your relationship with your kids better?

Then maybe Circle of Security – Parenting is for you!

Circle of Security – Parenting focuses on attachment, which is what makes a child feel safe, secure and protected.

The program is flexible and runs for at least eight weeks. You'll learn about:

- The natural connection between parents, caregivers and children
- Feelings – and understanding your children's struggles with theirs
- How not to blame ... and much more!

Do you feel like you can benefit?

You are welcome to attend a Circle of Security – Parenting program, or you may be referred to AFSS by another agency.

AFSS' Community Safety and Wellbeing Facilitators run the program and provide a culturally safe and confidential environment for all participants across South Australia.

To find out more, or if you would like to take part in the program, please email csw@afss.com.au or contact AFSS CS&W team at:

Smithfield
39A Anderson Walk
Phone (08) 8254 1077

Port Augusta
1st Floor, 47 Commercial Rd
Phone (08) 8641 0907

Port Lincoln
3 Gloucester Tce
Phone (08) 8683 1909





tips and info for foster carers

bits 'n pieces is designed with our foster carers in mind!

Here you'll find some useful information and news that will help you in your vital role as a carer. We hope you find it interesting and informative.

Dealing with children's behaviours

Behaviours we see in children are really coping mechanisms that children have developed to manage their emotions and the distress that they feel inside. In this and upcoming issues of the AFSS Newsletter we'll look at some of these behaviours, explain why they are occurring and provide you with tips and information to cope with them. The material is taken from the "Iceberg Model" fact sheets, Families SA.

Stealing

The child may repeatedly take things that don't belong to them at home, school or from shops. Often these items are of little monetary value (e.g. pens, paper) although money and valuable items may also be targeted. Sometimes these items may be hidden in the child's room, and sometimes they will be discarded. Their stealing behaviour may be confined to only one place or may occur in many situations.

Underneath the surface

Some children may steal for the material gains they receive (eg goods) but children with histories of deprivation may steal because they believe that no-one will meet their needs, or because they believe that the world is an unfair place. Stealing may also make them feel like they are part of the group, or provide a point of connection with specific individuals (eg when they steal with peers).

However, children with trauma histories are more likely to steal in an attempt to physically calm and soothe themselves. Children who have grown up in violent, fearful, and neglectful environments have generally not had a parent around to teach them how to soothe themselves during times of stress. Therefore they have not learnt effective strategies from a reliable adult to calm themselves down when they feel frightened, sad anxious etc. Consequently, they have developed maladaptive ways of calming such as stealing which is similar to other addictive behaviours like smoking and

alcoholism. The body reacts at a physiological level when stealing, allowing physical regulation. For a hyper (over) aroused child, the act of stealing is similar to taking a suppressant such as heroin, calming the body down. For a hypo (under) aroused child, the stealing acts as a stimulant (like cocaine) giving the body a "rush" which alerts the child. The act of stealing is related to the physiological payoff rather than the material value of the item. Stealing is a coping mechanism which assists children to deal with states of stress and anxiety. However, the regulatory (calming or stimulant) effect of stealing quickly declines, creating more stress, and leading to repetitive stealing in an attempt to self regulate. In essence, stealing becomes a trained response to a state of stress. For some children it may be that school is experienced as an overwhelming and stressful place, where even the thought of school is enough to trigger them into a dysregulated state and consequently they begin stealing.

Strategies

Gather contextual information and look for triggers. Look at the circumstances in which the child has exhibited stealing behaviour and ask yourself what was happening for the child at that time. Are they stealing because they have learnt that stealing is an effective way of getting what they want? Is stealing a way to meet socialisation needs (eg peers, admiration, and peer connection)? Are they stealing because they feel deprived? Or are they stealing when stressed as a means to

regulate their emotions? The way you understand the stealing behaviour will impact on the way you choose to manage it.

Asking questions. Make the shift from asking the question “what is this child doing to me?” to asking “what is this child trying to say to me?” For example if a child is stealing does this mean that he is angry? Gradually add to this the question of “How can I help this child ‘do it’ differently?”

Make sense of the behaviour for the child. Help the child understand why they steal, eg “Billy, when you get anxious and you get scared you have a tendency to take things that don’t belong to you. I wonder if you do this is because when you take something that is not yours it makes you feel better by calming you down?”

Offer help. Pre-empt and address stealing behaviour proactively. Make it clear to the child that they will not be punished for telling you that they feel like they need to steal, eg “When you feel anxious and scared you can come to me and I will help. When you take other people’s things it hurts them and they get angry with you. I will help you find some other ways of dealing with your stress.”

Provide alternatives. Explore options with the child (eg go for a walk, talk to each other, read a book, do some artwork, listen to music, play video games). These options should preferably involve both yourself and the child, as the aim is to teach children to regulate through safe relationships with others. If the child is stealing to meet socialisation needs, explore other

options with them that involve engaging with peers in a more positive way.

Address stealing as a coping mechanism. This includes responding to incidents of stealing sensitively. It is likely that the child will deny having stolen the item if confronted. Don’t engage in lengthy discussions about whether they have stolen the item, but instead address what needs to be done (eg item returned, paid back out of pocket money etc). If necessary, assist the child to make reparation (eg return the item for them). Be careful not to shame the child when addressing the behaviour. Using logical consequences (those that follow naturally from the behaviour or are connected to it) are most appropriate (e.g., if money is taken, then the child may need to work at a chore to repay it).

Increase safety in situations where stealing occurs.

If a child steals in specific circumstances, efforts to reduce the amount of stress they experience in those circumstances would be appropriate. For example, if a child habitually takes things from school, the school may need to put measures in place to decrease stealing incidences. This may include providing the child with a safety plan where they can leave the room if they are feeling stressed, or signal to the teacher that they feel like they need to steal.

Contain the child. Help the child succeed in situations in which they are likely to steal. This may include going with them to the shop, keeping items locked away, closing the doors to bedrooms, and keeping the child near you in times of high stress.



Let the child know you believe in them. When you feel the child is ready, ask them to make small purchases for you (eg, going to the shops to get milk). This can increase when you feel the child is ready. This demonstrates that you trust the child and provides them with tangible evidence of their ability to use more adaptive coping methods. If failures occur, they can be viewed as demonstrating that the child needs more practice.

We want to hear from you!

Share your news!

If you have any ideas or information that you’d like to share with other carers on these pages, such as things that you’ve found helpful, special events or activities that have worked well, we’d love to hear from you and publish your story (your identity will be kept confidential if you wish).

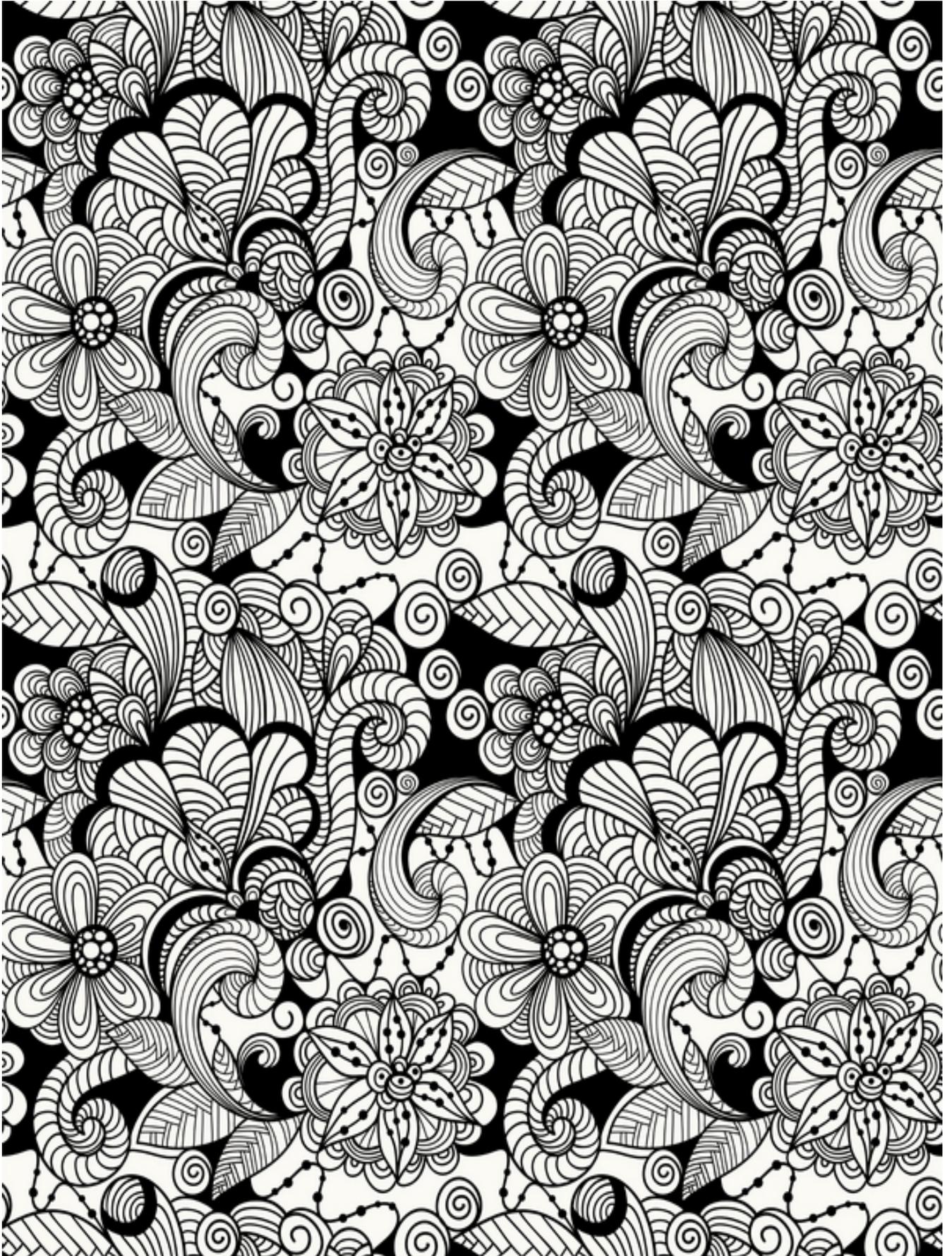
Simply write to Grace Nelligan, AFSS, 134 Waymouth Street, Adelaide SA 5000 or email grace.nelligan@afss.com.au.

We look forward to hearing from you!



Colouring time!

Everybody's colouring pictures, so why not get out your crayons or coloured pencils and colour in this pattern? Then you can cut it out and put it on your wall, or give it to someone special!



Welcome to the AFSS team!



Hi everyone, my name is Ish Gunasekara. I am the new Youth Development worker at AFSS Coober Pedy. I moved to Australia from Sri Lanka in 2008 as an international student. In 2012 I moved to Coober Pedy from Melbourne with my wife. From an early age, wherever I have lived I have volunteered with youth activities. In 2012 I joined SA Ambulance, working as a volunteer ambulance officer for last three years with Coober Pedy community. I gained lots of experience and appreciation assisting with different cultures, including working with Aboriginal people and understanding what their culture is.

I have completed Certificate IV in Health Care (Ambulance Officer), Certificate IV in Retail Management and Diploma of Information Technology. I am currently in my last semester of studying Diploma of Computer Networking.

I am very grateful to AFSS for giving me the opportunity to help Aboriginal youth in Coober Pedy, and I understand the challenges of working with youth in small communities. The social, emotional and physical benefit of a supportive family

life makes good foundations for young leaders to have a better future. All youth need to live in a society that has good role models they can emulate. I am looking forward to giving positive guidelines to Aboriginal youth in Coober Pedy to empower their future.



Hi everyone! My name is Joy Makepeace and I am the latest addition to the Community Safety and Wellbeing Program at the Smithfield Office. I am a Kamilaroi woman who has lived in Adelaide for the past 30 years. I have a three beautiful children and a loving partner. I have always worked within Aboriginal Communities in both Aboriginal education and health. I have completed my Masters in Social Science – Counselling, Graduate Diploma in Education and Bachelor of Applied Science, so basically I can help to teach anything to grow and make it feel good at the same time. My passion is with my people and helping to bring out the best in everyone. When I saw this position advertised I knew that this is somewhere that I needed and wanted to be. All of the programs that we are delivering fit completely with my own

values. I am excited about the future and the potential to have an impact on other people's lives.

In my spare time I love being with friends and family, exploring, gardening and reading, reading and more reading about personal growth, health and wellbeing. I am also an emerging contemporary Aboriginal abstract artist and have sold most of my paintings and photography in various exhibitions and art fairs. I am also a qualified beauty, massage and reflexology therapist. Looking forward to meeting each and every one of you.



Hello my name is Lily Stuart and I work within the Northern and Western regions of Adelaide.

URBAN Youth Services is a joint project led by Uniting Care Wesley Port Adelaide (UCWPA) working in partnership with AFSS and Re-Engage Youth Services. We support young Aboriginal people aged between 10-25 years who need a variety of support and/or assistance.

URBAN Youth Services works within an integrated service to strengthen the competencies, skills and capacities of vulnerable and at risk Aboriginal young people. The coordinated provisions of brief intervention services include case

management, group programs and community events to achieve better outcomes for our clients. Prior to working for URBAN Youth Services, I worked for AFSS in the foster care team for 12 months as a support worker. I previously worked as a case manager, at Northern Domestic Violence Service. I also have experience working as a social worker at Centrelink and Families SA.



Hi, my name is Kim Key and I am the new Case Manager for Stronger Families at AFSS Coober Pedy. I have just come back to work after being on maternity leave for 16 months with my daughter, which was a lovely experience, and I am now ready to get back into the working world. I have a degree in Social Work and Social Planning and over the past seven years have enjoyed working in Housing SA, Crisis Response Unit (Families SA), Disability Services and Families SA. My last role in Families SA was as a Senior Practitioner with the Coober Pedy and Far North Team delivering services to children and families based in Coober Pedy, Oodnadatta and the APY Lands. I am Melbourne born, Adelaide raised, and have been in Coober Pedy for the past two years. I am passionate about the rights of children to be brought up in a

safe and secure family network and am excited to be given the opportunity to work with the families here in Coober Pedy.



Hi All, my name is Jessica Backman and I am the new Family Based Care Support Worker for AFSS Port Lincoln.

I grew up in the Clare Valley region and moved to the beautiful Eyre Peninsula 12 months ago with my two-and-a-half year old daughter to establish our own roots here and make our own future.

I look forward to meeting and working with you all in the future.



My name is Andy McArdle and I have joined the URBAN Youth Services team, working across the metropolitan Adelaide with young Aboriginal people, aged 10-25 in providing case management and holistic support. Prior to joining AFSS I have had a wide variety of experience and roles, from youth work and mentoring, Centrelink

customer service to being a Social Worker for Centrelink in the remote team going out to remote Aboriginal communities in Central Australia. I am passionate about working with Aboriginal communities and in particular with young people and their families. I see this role as a great opportunity and am really excited to be a part of it.



Hello, my name is Joanne Else. I have been employed by AFSS in the role of Cultural Consultant since January 2016, and I am Ngarrindjeri through my maternal grandmother.

Prior to commencing my role with AFSS I have spent many years working in Aboriginal Primary Health Care as well as the Community Services sector in a variety of Aboriginal case management roles within Problem Gambling and Employment support programs, as well as being an Advocate for Aboriginal people and community.

As well as being part of the Aboriginal workforce I am involved with Aboriginal boards and committees that include Aboriginal Social Justice, Arts and Culture, and look forward to bringing my experience and knowledge to the Cultural Consultancy Program.

Nukkan! Joanne.





Where to find us

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Berri

23 Denny Street
Berri SA 5343
Phone (08) 8582 3192

Smithfield

39a Anderson Walk,
Smithfield SA 5114
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Ceduna

28 Poynton Street
Ceduna SA 5690
Phone: (08) 8625 3466

Cooper Pedy

Lot 1991 Aylett Street
Cooper Pedy SA 5723
Phone (08) 8672 3066

Murray Bridge

C/- ALRM Inc
27 Beatty Terrace
Murray Bridge SA 5254
Phone 0418 499 649

Port Augusta

1st Floor
47 Commercial Road
Port Augusta SA 5700
Phone (08) 8641 0907

Port Lincoln

3 Gloucester Terrace
Port Lincoln SA 5606
Phone (08) 8683 1909



Dancing her way to success



Above: Kathleen has excelled as a dancer, as you can see from the array of ribbons and trophies that she has won.

Kathleen is 10 years old and one of the beautiful children in AFSS foster care.

She has been dancing since she was four with the Elite Academy of Dance. She works really hard to be a great dancer, training four times a week and practising every day at home.

When she was asked what she loved about dancing she said “It makes me feel free.”

“She started dancing after her Mum passed away and it has really helped her with the grieving,” says Kathleen’s Grandmother.

There are two major dance competitions each year – one in Norwood in June and the other at Christies Beach in September. Kathleen excelled at this most recent competition winning:

1st Duo - Song and Tap, 2nd Solo - Jazz, Duo - tap - Jazz and she received an honourable mention for contemporary dance in both the solo and duo sections.

Since she started dancing Kathleen has become a leader

and inspiration to other young Aboriginal children, and five are now following in her footsteps.

Kathleen has big plans for herself, aiming to become a part of the Bangarra Dance Troupe.

We hope that she achieves her dreams and wish her well for the future.



Thanks from AFSS

AFSS would like to offer sincere appreciation and thanks for the financial support of Eoin Loftus with the accommodation, which has helped contribute to Kathleen’s success.

Eoin has generously provided support for five Aboriginal children in AFSS’ care.

Thank you Eoin.