



*Centre for Excellence
in Child and Family Welfare Inc.*

Annual Report 2015 - 2016

Acknowledgements

We respectfully acknowledge that we work on the traditional land of the Kulin Nation and we acknowledge the Wurundjeri people who are the traditional custodians of this land. We pay respects to community members and elders past and present.

We appreciate and celebrate diversity in all its forms. We believe diversity of all kinds makes our teams, services and organisation stronger and more effective.



Our Vision

Victorian children, young people and families are safe, happy and connected, with access to support when they need it.

Our Purpose

Policy and Ideas Develop, influence and advocate for public policies that advance the rights and wellbeing of children, young people and families and address the social, economic and cultural barriers to improving their lives.

Research and Practice Lead and share research to support innovation and evidence-informed practice.

Capacity Building Strengthen the capacity of organisations to provide services that best suit the needs of vulnerable families and children.

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Chair's Report

2015-16 was a busy and exciting time for the Centre and the sector more broadly, with the Government committing significant funding and effort towards tackling family violence and reforming the social services sector more broadly.

This has significant implications for our sector and the Centre has been working hard to keep abreast of the fast-paced changes underway and ensure the best interests of children, young people and families are being served throughout the reform process.

In 2015-16, the Centre looked to build its membership base – both at an organisational and individual level – to ensure we have a strong collective voice for advocating on behalf of children and families, but also to ensure we have a strong network for sharing knowledge and expertise and collective problem-solving.

The Centre took on important projects in 2015-16, including managing the *Fostering Connections* project on behalf of the sector to recruit more foster carers for children in need, as well as the *Raising Expectations* project aimed at encouraging more young people leaving care into higher education.

Deb Tsorbaris should be acknowledged for her tireless advocacy on behalf of the Centre, the sector and the people that we serve – her commitment to creating a better society for all Victorians has helped to build the Centre's reputation as a credible, reliable, collaborative organisation.

In November 2015, we welcomed new board members Athina Georgiou, CEO of QEC; Lisa J. Griffiths, CEO of OzChild; Fran O'Toole, Deputy CEO of Berry Street and Kelly Stanton, General Manager of Child, Youth and Community Services at Wesley Mission Victoria. The board's expertise and passion for better outcomes has helped to drive excellence across the sector and the Centre.

I would also like to acknowledge my predecessor, Angela Forbes, who provided strong leadership as Chair of the Centre's Board from 2011 until 2015 and who made significant contributions as a board member for many years before that. I would also like to thank past board members Marita Scott, Ailsa Carr and Rudy Gonzalez for their many years of service to the Centre.

We are enthused by the Government's *Roadmap for Reform* which our collective contributions and expertise have helped shape, and we look forward to this approach bringing about significant service and client improvements for the benefit of Victoria's most vulnerable children, young people and families.

It's important to acknowledge what we have achieved to date, but there is still much work ahead. I look forward to continuing that work with the Centre and my sector colleagues as we seek to bring about a more caring, connected Victorian community.

Paul McDonald **Chairperson**

CEO's Report

In my work each day, I am driven by the stories of the people we serve. Young people who have been through the care system. Mums who know what it's like to have a child taken from them. Grandparents doing their best to care for a grandchild who has experienced trauma.

It is for them that we at the Centre constantly strive to do better, to challenge the status quo and to bring about real and lasting change.

2015-16 was a year of significant collaboration between the Centre, sector and government in creating and implementing a change agenda to improve the lives of vulnerable children and families.

Through all of our work, we have sought to advance the rights of children and young people experiencing vulnerability – through our project and social research work; through our collaborations with sector colleagues; through our strategic policy and campaign advocacy efforts; and through our work building capacity and knowledge across the sector.

We have formed and deepened alliances with our colleagues in other sectors – including family violence, local government, universal services and education – to ensure we are all working together to provide children and young people with every opportunity to be safe and thrive.

We have worked to embed a strong focus across the organisation on supporting Aboriginal organisations and communities to have greater decision-making capacity and control over their own children and families. This is one of the biggest but most important challenge we face in our sector and remains a key priority for the Centre.

I am proud and honoured that the Centre has a seat at the table as part of the implementation of the Government's family violence, child protection and family services reforms – as a sector we have much knowledge and expertise to offer and it is pleasing that this is being recognised. We will continue to represent the best interests of children, the sector and the people we serve throughout this important process.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the new Commissioner for Children and Young People, Liana Buchanan, who shares our passion for better outcomes and with whom the Centre has already developed a strong and effective working relationship.

This is an exciting and challenging time for our sector. It is up to us to seize the opportunities before us to effect and embed real and lasting change for the benefit of the children, young people and families in our community who need our support and care – those whose stories we carry around with us every day.

Deb Tsorbaris **CEO**

Advocating for change

that improves the lives of children, young people and families.



Throughout 2015-16, the Centre increased its advocacy activities, running a community-focused Federal election campaign aimed at raising awareness of key issues facing children, young people and families experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage.

In collaboration with the sector, the Centre also promoted the interests of children and families through policy advocacy at a state and national level.

Supporting child safe organisations

The Centre continued its commitment to promoting the work of *Betrayal of Trust*, the Victorian Parliamentary inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other non-government organisations, as well as the current federal Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

The Centre's focus was on ensuring appropriate responses to past victims of child abuse and the future protection of children from abuse and neglect in institutional settings.

Redress Scheme for Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse

The Centre prepared a submission in response to 'A Victorian redress scheme for institutional child abuse: Public Consultation Paper' released in response to the *Betrayal of Trust* inquiry.

The submission incorporated input from sector CEOs and senior management as well as the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Department of Justice.

It will be an important foundation paper for further discussions and negotiations between the Victorian Government, the Commonwealth and other State and Territory Governments on a national redress scheme for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse.

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

Throughout 2015-16, the Centre kept the sector informed about the work of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (the Commission) and actively responded to issues and consultation papers as they were released.

The Centre promoted the work of the Commission by:

- Providing updates on public hearings
- Providing summaries of some of the Commission's research papers, including:
 - *Scoping Review: Evaluations of out-of-home care practice elements that aim to prevent child sexual abuse,*
 - *Working with Children Checks – Royal Commission Research*
 - *Hear No Evil, See No Evil - Summary*
- Submitting written responses to issues papers:
 - *Statutory victims of crime compensation schemes*
 - *Risk of child sexual abuse in schools*
 - *Advocacy and Support and Therapeutic Treatment Services*
- Submitting written responses to the consultation papers:
 - *Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Out-of-home care: Consultation paper.*
 - *Best practice principles in responding to complaints of child sexual abuse in institutional contexts: Consultation paper.*
 - *Redress and civil litigation: Consultation paper.*
- Participating in a private roundtable hearing by the Commission on *Making Institutions Child Safe*
- Discussing access and quality of records with the Commission

Improving outcomes for Aboriginal young people

Reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal children and young people in care and ensuring Aboriginal people and organisations are at the centre of decision-making about their own children is one of the most pressing issues facing our sector.

The Centre worked with Berry Street, the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) and MacKillop Family Services to develop a statement of intent, *Beyond Good Intentions*, which outlined a sector commitment to ensure adequate resources and programs were transferred to Aboriginal services and communities to restore their capacity to care for their own children and families.

In October 2015, *Beyond Good Intentions* was formally endorsed by the Victorian Aboriginal Children's Forum, including the Victorian Minister for Families and Children Jenny Mikakos.

Following this, the *Roadmap for Reform* was released and included a strong focus on ensuring Aboriginal self-determination around decision-making and care for Aboriginal children and families.



This ensures that the commitment underpinning *Beyond Good Intentions* has now been embedded into the ongoing reform of our child protection and family services systems.

Other ways the Centre supported better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in 2015-16 included:

- Ongoing participation in the Aboriginal Children's Forum aimed at improving outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the care system
- Presenting the paper '*Is Australia Creating a Second Stolen Generation*' at the SNAICC National Conference in Perth in September 2015
- Attending SNAICC's *Family Matters Strategic Forum: Kids safe in culture, not in care* in February 2016, with more than 100 leaders from organisations across Australia. Out of the forum has come the *Family Matters* campaign, with the Centre represented on the campaign Champions Group, Policy & Advocacy Group and Communications Group
- Signing on to the *Family Matters* Statement of Commitment reflecting an intent to work collaboratively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their organisations to eliminate the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care
- Contributing to the *Placement and Reunification for Aboriginal Children* project with representation on the reference group
- Signing on to support National Congress of Australia's First People's Redfern Statement ahead of the Federal election in June 2016, urgently calling for a more just approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
- Beginning work on a Reconciliation Action Plan for the Centre (see page 27)

Reforming our Responses

2015-16 was a watershed year in Victoria, with the Royal Commission into Family Violence bringing down 227 recommendations in March and the Victorian Government subsequently announcing a major overhaul of the state's social services sector, committing an initial \$572 million to begin the reform process.

This commitment included \$168 million for the Government's *Roadmap for Reform*, which sets out priorities for improving the child protection system, including shifting focus from crisis response to prevention and early intervention.

In 2015-16, the Centre worked closely with the sector and the Government to inform the development of the *Roadmap for Reform* and has continued to play a key role in planning for its implementation.

CEO Deb Tsorbaris was appointed co-chair of the Roadmap for Reform Implementation Ministerial Advisory Group, alongside Minister for Families and Children, Jenny Mikakos. Deb was also appointed to the Family Violence Steering Committee established by the Government on the back of the Family Violence Royal Commission.

As part of ongoing efforts to keep the sector informed about the reform process, the Centre hosted a sector briefing in May 2016 with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services Kym Peake, which was attended by around 100 practitioners, academics and other senior sector staff.

The Centre will continue to work with the sector, the Government and our cross-sector colleagues in family violence, local government and universal services to ensure children and young people experiencing vulnerability are better protected and nurtured and their families better supported through the implementation of the *Roadmap for Reform*.



"The ambitious reform agenda across health and human services requires my department to change the way we work across government and with sector partners. It also requires us to shift the dynamic with the people we serve — to view them as genuine partners and collaborators."

- Kym Peake, Secretary of DHHS

Influencing Policy and Practice

The Centre contributed submissions on a range of policy issues ensuring the issues and needs of children, young people and families experiencing vulnerability were considered in Government policy development.

- Submissions in 2015-16 included:
- ✓ Senate Inquiry into Social Services Legislation Amendment (*Family Payments Structural Reform and Participation Measures*) Bill 2016
 - ✓ Senate Inquiry into the harms of pornography on Australian children
 - ✓ Victorian Government Gender Equality Strategy
 - ✓ Mental Health Ten Year Plan
 - ✓ Lookout Education Support Centres
 - ✓ Education State Early Childhood consultation
 - ✓ Victorian *State Budget 2015/16*



Kinship Carer Assessment Paper

Member organisations participating in the Centre’s quarterly Kinship Services Network Forums raised a number of concerns about current policies and practices. In response, the Centre prepared a paper about the fragmented nature of current kinship carer assessment processes and provided a series of recommendations to assist the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) in its response to the KPMG review of kinship care in Victoria.

The paper ensures Government has a clear understanding of sector concerns and issues should it embark on future changes to kinship care arrangements.

Targeted Care Packages Paper

The Centre undertook consultations with members to better understand organisation’s experiences of Targeted Care Packages (TCPs).

The findings showed that while TCPs have provided agencies with an opportunity to be innovative and flexible in their service delivery there remain a small number of challenges affecting implementation of TCPs. This paper informed the evaluation of TCPs in 2016.

Position paper on The Detention of Children Seeking Asylum

The Centre developed a policy position paper on children in detention, highlighting the significant adverse impacts on their physical, emotional and mental health, including their psycho-social development.

The paper called on the Government to remove all children from detention, introduce legislation to prevent the future detention of children and appoint an independent guardian for children seeking asylum.

More than 50 organisations from across the sector signed on to the position paper. The Centre then publicly released a letter to the Prime Minister on behalf of the signatories to the paper.





Let them stay

Photos (clockwise): the Centre staff, MacKillop staff, FCAV staff, Cohealth staff, Berry Street staff



Sector engagement for permanent care reforms

The Centre was invited to participate on the Sector Engagement Group established to support delivery of the Government's Permanency for Children project.

The Sector Engagement Group provided direction to the project team on the permanency changes and their impact on children, families, community service organisations, and advocacy and other external groups.

The group also included representatives from Berry St, MacKillop Family Services, Anglicare, OzChild, Wesley Mission Victoria, Baptcare, Connections UnitingCare, VACCA, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, Victorian Aboriginal Children and Young Person's Alliance, Foster Care Association of Victoria, CREATE Foundation, Kinship Care Victoria, Mirabel Foundation, Permanent Care and Adoptive Families, Commission for Children and Young People and Salvation Army – Westcare.

The Centre also assisted DHHS with organising information sessions for the sector on the permanent care reforms.

Permanency planning consultation

After implementation of the permanent care reforms, the Centre undertook a consultation process with members about the *Children Youth and Families Amendment (Permanent Care and Other Matters) Act 2014* to understand how the changes should be implemented and monitored to ensure the best interests of children remain central to decision making.

Using input from the consultations, the Centre prepared a paper to inform a planned six month review of the changes. The paper identified resourcing, data collection and ongoing monitoring and evaluation requirements to support the changes in the best interests of children.



Raising the sector profile

The Centre sought to raise its profile and build its supporter base in a number of ways throughout 2015-16 as part of a broader strategy to advocate on behalf of children, young people and families experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage.

Social media channels were central to the Centre's efforts to inform and engage with the sector and the broader community, with a focus on building a strong Twitter community.

The Centre also established a Facebook page, to further extend its reach and enable the sharing of more long-form content of interest to the sector and the broader community.

Work has begun on a redevelopment of the Centre website, with a focus on user friendliness, visit optimisation and enhanced functionality for people wishing to become members or attend training or a Centre event. The intention is to build the website as a key source of information for the sector and other organisations working with children and families, as well as an advocacy tool to advance the rights and wellbeing of vulnerable children and families.

As part of ongoing sector engagement, the Social Policy and Research team visited over 50 member and allied organisations during the year, to discuss research priorities, key challenges and examples of good practice and to seek feedback on how the Centre could better support their work.

The insights from these visits are helping to inform the work of the Centre and future engagement activities.

Centre staff have also been engaging with organisations external to the sector to build alliances and ensure coordinated approaches on a range of matters.

For example, the Centre has engaged with Victoria Legal Aid on permanent care reforms and their child protection legal guidelines and with Local Area Learning Networks on the *Raising Expectations* project aimed at encouraging more young care leavers into higher education. Many of these organisations have since become members of the Centre.



the Centre tweets had

232,000+

impressions 2015-16

**Impressions is a term that refers to the number of times tweets were delivered to twitter feeds*



Building our supporter base through tailored e-newsletters

4,127

Upcoming Training subscribers

2,545

Research Review & SectorLink subscribers

324

Member Update subscribers

Community campaigning

In 2015-16, the Centre broaden its advocacy focus to include community campaigning, as part of ongoing efforts to improve outcomes for children, young people and families experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage.

In the lead up to the July 2016 Federal election, the Centre rolled out a campaign focusing on ten priority issues to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people.

The Communications Team established a campaign page, introduced the social media hashtag #KidsFirst and encouraged supporters to write to their local Federal candidates to express their support for the ten identified priority issues.

#KidsFirst

19,135

Impressions

460


Engagements (retweets, likes etc.)

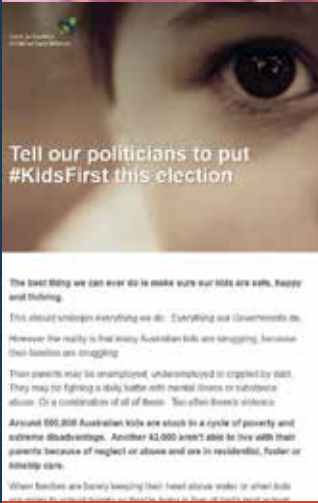
33


campaign specific tweets

Both major parties responded to the Centre's request for their position on each of the issues, which was then provided to supporters ahead of election day to help inform their vote.

The Centre has also built campaign alliances with others organisations on issues of importance, including actively participating in the development of SNAICC's *Family Matters* campaign which aims to eliminate the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in care and the Anglicare-initiated *Home Stretch* campaign aimed at extending care to young people until the age of 21 years.







#KidsFirst Campaign images

Leading and supporting

the development of innovative, evidence-informed policies, programs and practices



Throughout 2015-16, the Centre worked closely with the sector, researchers, Government and allied organisations to enhance the delivery of services and supports to children, young people and families across Victoria.

Sector Research Partnership

The Sector Research Partnership (SRP), a Centre-initiated community of practice bringing together academics and practitioners to deliver better outcomes for children and families, met three times in 2015-16. A number of new members joined, taking total membership to 28 organisations from across the sector and academia.

The SRP considered a range of issues during the year, including the *Roadmap for Reform* and permanent care legislative changes.

The Centre released its inaugural *Research Review* in November 2015, collating and annotating current and innovative research relating to families and children experiencing vulnerability and the diverse issues they face.

The *Research Review* is distributed on a monthly basis, supporting the sector's commitment to evidenced-informed practice and knowledge sharing. It has attracted positive feedback from across the sector and is widely-read.

5th Annual Sector Research Symposium

From Inquiry to Action was the theme of the fifth Annual Sector Research Symposium held in October 2015 at the University of Melbourne, hosted by the Sector Research Partnership.

Dr Marie Connelly of the University of Melbourne and Dr Emily Munro, a leading international expert on leaving care, delivered keynote addresses.

More than 160 people attended on both days of the Symposium, gaining insight from over 40 presentations from sector and academic experts showcasing their innovative work in the child and family welfare sector.



SRP Partners











Thank you to our SRP partners for their support in developing research initiatives for the immediate benefit of vulnerable children, young people and families.

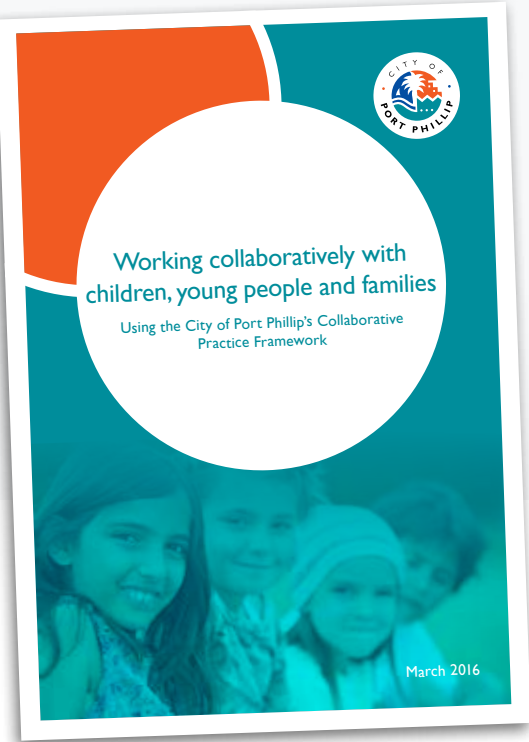
Leading collaboration

Collaborative Practice - City of Port Phillip

The Centre was awarded a contract to develop a Collaborative Practice Framework for the Family, Youth and Children's Department of the City of Port Phillip.

The two-month project involved developing a framework, implementation plan and a train the trainer module, following extensive stakeholder consultations.

The project demonstrates the Centre's commitment to strengthening collaborative practice across the sector and among organisations to improve outcomes for families and children.



Good Practice Guide

The Centre was engaged by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to collate contributions from the sector for the *2016 Good Practice Guide*.

The Guide incorporates stories from across the sector about practice approaches that have made a difference in the lives of vulnerable children and young people, providing a valuable information and insight-sharing channel for practitioners and others in the sector.

Child Protection Flexible Responses Initiative

The Centre was commissioned by DHHS to facilitate a process between family violence and child protection services to develop an integrated service provision model for family violence workers located in child protection services.

On the back of this project, 17 specialist family violence workers are being placed into child protection using the service model developed by the Centre.

Raising Expectations and aspirations for young people in care

Currently, only around 6 per cent of young Victorians leaving foster, kinship or residential care go on to higher education. As a community, our educational expectations and aspirations for young people in care are generally low.

So while many more are capable of going on to higher education, they simply don't receive the support and encouragement they need to do so.

The Raising Expectations project, established at the Centre in 2015-16 and funded by the Sidney Myer Fund, aims to get more young people leaving care into higher education – and to help them succeed by providing crucial supports and services, including scholarships, bursaries and mentoring.

The Centre is partnering with Federation University Australia and La Trobe University to deliver the project, with support from Anglicare Victoria and MacKillop Family Services.

In 2015-16, the project focus included:

- ✓ **Setting up project governance and infrastructure**
- ✓ **Building key relationships** across government, community service organisations supporting young people in and post care as well as Leaving Care, Kinship Care and Foster Care networks
- ✓ **Raising awareness within universities and developing university supports** including care leaver coordinators, embedding services into mainstream systems, providing scholarships, bursaries and other support services, information on websites for care leavers, identifying and capturing data through direct enrolments and Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre applications
- ✓ **Working collaboratively with aligned initiatives** such as LOOKOUT Education Support Centres
- ✓ **Including information in key resources** such as the Sortli (Sort Out Your Life) App for care leavers and the Foster Carer Handbook
- ✓ **Delivering an education session to 370 Residential Care workers at Resi Rocks** to emphasise the importance of their role in supporting the education of children and young people in their care
- ✓ **Identifying education and information needs for carers and practitioners** via an online survey and carer focus groups



Fostering Connections
to give children safe and
stable homes



The *Fostering Connections* project was established at the Centre under the leadership of project chair Lisa J. Griffiths. This sector-led initiative brings together 25 foster care agencies for the first time to attract carers and provide safe, stable homes for the more than 8000 children and young people unable to live with their families in Victoria. Since the project was established in August 2015, the Centre has delivered on behalf of the sector:

- A centralised website and referral service with over 36,500 visitors from the campaign launch on January 21 until the end of June 2016
- A centralised enquiry line
- An extensive marketing campaign promoting foster care across print, radio and digital outlets. The sector also collaborated to provide carer stories for promotion via radio and print
- A centralised enquiry management system capturing sector-wide data that will enhance the foster carer attraction and recruitment process, including an extensive sector change management process to help agencies adapt to using the system

Campaign Carer Enquiries
21 January 2016 - 30 June 2016



29 identified as
Aboriginal and Torres
Strait Islander (ATSI)

168 from 70+ different
CALD communities
across Victoria

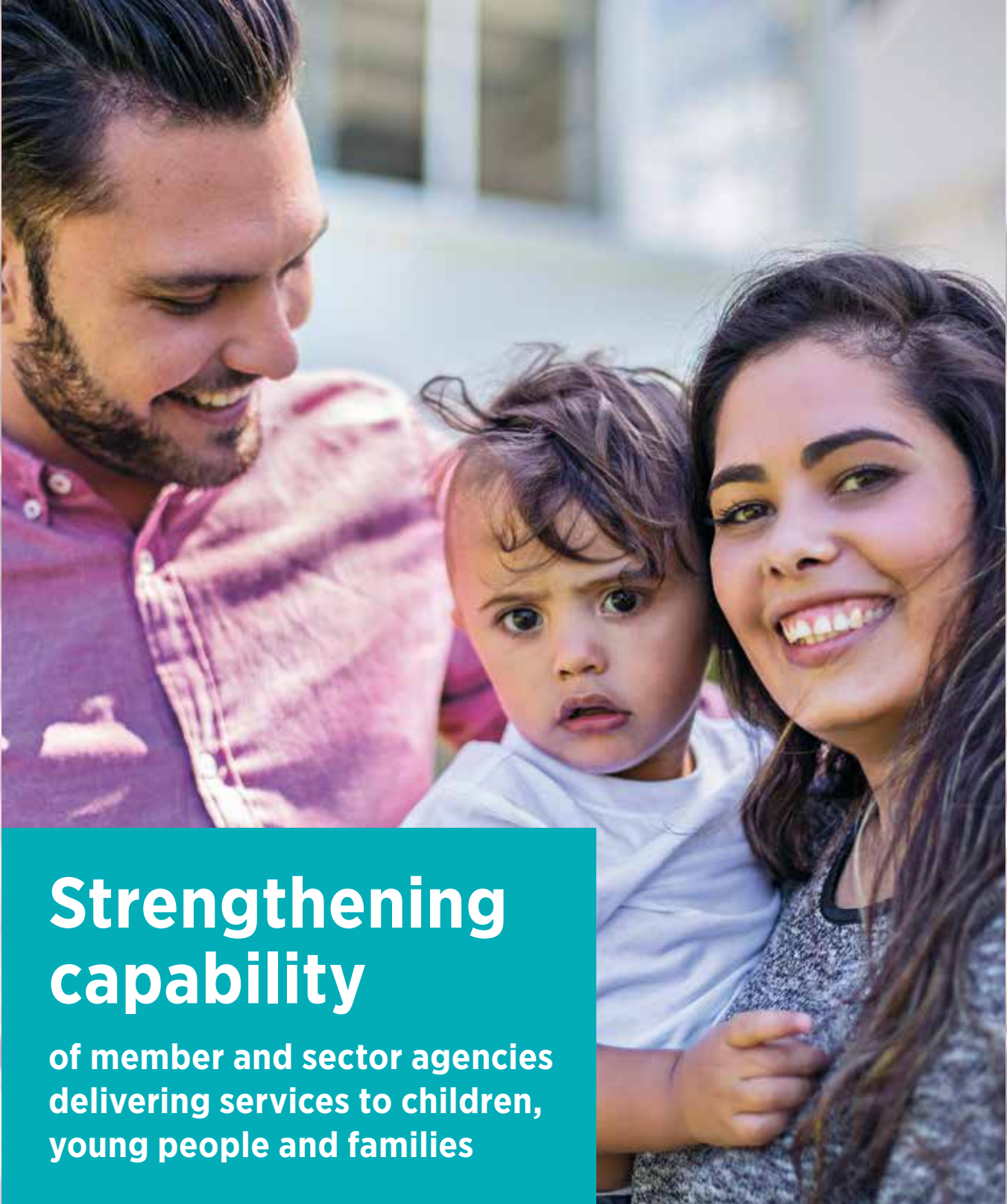
Supporting our Foster Carers

The Centre worked in collaboration with FCAV and DHHS on five retention projects, aimed at keeping foster carers in the system.

Carers, foster care agencies and young care leavers were extensively consulted as part of the projects.

As a result of these projects:

- Carer Advisory Groups were established in each division, providing an opportunity for carers, DHHS staff and agencies to discuss key issues affecting carers. The groups meet on a quarterly basis
- A new foster carer handbook, in both hard and electronic format, was developed
- Long term training framework in development
- A foster carer charter has been developed, which recognises the unique position of foster carers to share and contribute views and insights into the needs of the child or young person and their valued role in the care team
- A Fostering Support booklet was developed to clarify the issues and complaints management process



Strengthening
capability
of member and sector agencies
delivering services to children,
young people and families

In 2015-16, the Centre worked closely with child, youth and family services professionals to build their skills and knowledge in key areas and help to engender a sector culture of continuous improvement and innovative practice.

Building capacity across the Sector

In 2015-16, the Centre delivered a range of learning and development opportunities to build the knowledge and capacity of sector practitioners.

Courses covered the following areas:

- Child Protection, Early Intervention and Family
- Clients and Community
- Counselling and Therapy
- Management
- Mental Health
- Out of Home Care
- Staff Well being
- Youth Work
- Working with Aboriginal Children
- Domestic Violence

Training participation

Nationally Recognised Training	3 Courses (multiple intakes) 93 Participants* <small>*Studies completed in 2015-16 but may have commenced earlier</small>
Non accredited Training	38 Courses 582 Participants
Customised Training	35 Courses 783 Participants
RCLDS Training	70 Courses 1670 Participants



As part of ongoing efforts to ensure course offerings matched the needs of the sector, the Centre undertook a survey of past training participants and sector workers to identify knowledge gaps and areas for focus.

Survey findings identified a need for more trauma-informed training and family casework skills; the Centre consequently made additional courses available around these subject areas.



“The expectations were clearly outlined including reasonable adjustment in the beginning, the trainer was accessible, the training was exactly what I signed up for and it was delivered in respect of adult learning.” - Training Participant

Accredited Training case study: National Schools Chaplaincy Program

The Catholic Education Commission Victoria (CECV) in partnership with the Centre provided nationally recognised training to support staff to make a positive contribution to the wellbeing of all students in their school and link a range of wellbeing initiatives to school improvement and enhanced learning outcomes.

Thirty staff members attended the training in 2015-16, undertaking two nationally accredited units of competency:

- Responding holistically to client needs and
- Working with people with mental health issues.

“The trainer has great depth of knowledge in this area and easily handled all questions and was able to help us explore the field of mental health. She held my attention for the entirety of the two days with her knowledgeable delivery and openness to our inquiry.”

- Training Participant



Residential Care Learning and Development Strategy (RCLDS) training

Sexual Behaviour: What’s Normative, What’s not?

Understanding sexual behaviour was identified by sector workers as an area of interest for training and so became a key focus for the Centre’s Learning and Development team in 2015-16.

In November 2015 Dr Russell Pratt delivered training to 51 participants around understanding and identifying age-appropriate, concerning or problem sexual behaviour and how to respond.

At completion of training participants were able to define normative, concerning and sexual behaviour across developmental ages and stages, knew how to respond to situations regarding sexual behaviour and gained skills in managing emerging issues.

They also identified potential topics for future training which will help to inform future training offered at the Centre in relation to sexual behaviour.

“It was great to learn the traffic light system and how we can be aware when working with our young people.”

- RCLDS Training Participant



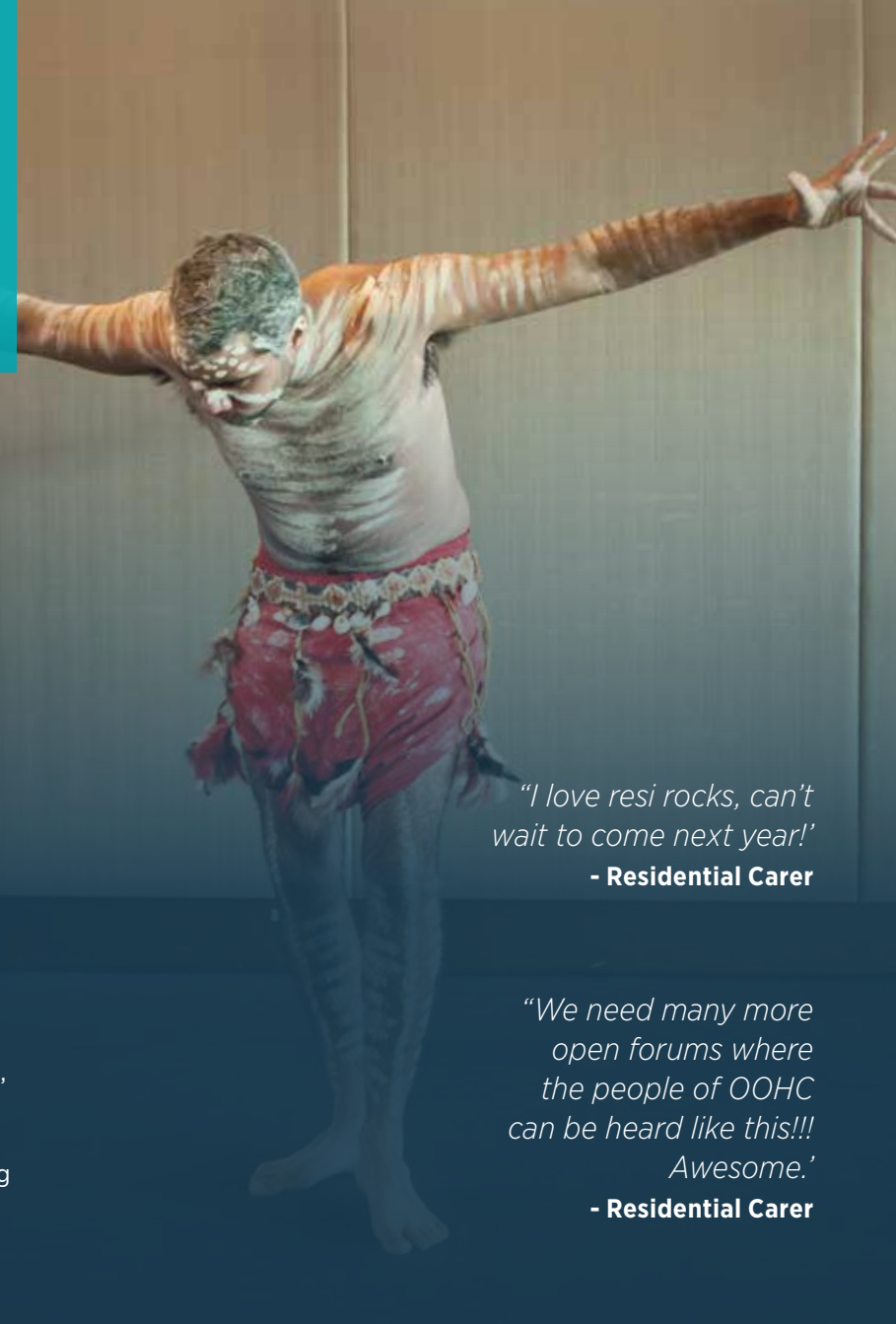
2016 Resi ROCKS

Resi ROCKS! celebrated its 10th Anniversary in May 2016. As well as being a day for residential carers across the state to come together and learn from each other, it was also an opportunity to celebrate their resilience and achievements.

Around 375 residential care workers attended the day, gaining insights from a range of presentations on good practice initiatives and recent innovations.

Minister for Families & Children Jenny Mikakos spoke about her government's recent investments in residential care.

The day culminated in an awards presentation, with Warrick Remilton from Berry Street receiving the Residential Care Leadership Award and Morgan House from Cara Inc taking home the Residential Care Team Award.



"I love resi rocks, can't wait to come next year!"

- Residential Carer

"We need many more open forums where the people of OOHc can be heard like this!!! Awesome."

- Residential Carer



Creating networking opportunities

The Centre ran a series of sector network forums in 2015-16, providing an important opportunity for people to come together with other professionals in their area of expertise.

The forums were well-attended, with participants benefiting from the opportunity to share good practice, identify common challenges and potential solutions and discuss pertinent research, policy changes and funding announcements.

The Centre held the following forums:

- Integrated Family Services and Child FIRST
- Victorian Residential Care Providers
- Quality Learning Circle
- Kinship Care
- Foster Care
- Leaving and Post Care Practitioners
- Learning and Development
- CEO and Corporate Services

The *Indigenous Care Leavers in Victoria* report, from Monash University’s Department of Social Work, was launched at a Leaving and Post-Care Practitioner Forum in May 2016.

The report, based on findings of a 14-month exploratory study of Indigenous care leavers and authored by Philip Mendes, Bernadette J Saunders and Susan Baidawi, found that nurturing and strengthening connection to culture was crucial in supporting care leavers’ resilience, identity and social connectedness.

Looking forward

Reconciliation Action Plan

The Centre began developing its Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in 2015-16, in recognition of the critical importance of advocating for the self-determination and wellbeing of Aboriginal families and children.

Work to finalise and embed the RAP across the organisation will continue in 2016-17.

Residential Care Workforce Vocational Education and Training (VET) Scheme

In 2015-16, the Centre started work with the Victorian Government and Victorian community services organisations on the Residential Care Workforce VET Scheme.

The scheme aims to establish a minimum qualification for the Victorian residential care workforce by the end of 2017, and provide training to current residential care workers who do not hold a qualification relevant to their work.

The Victorian Government has allocated \$8 million to support the costs of study and training to the existing workforce.

Out-of-Home Care Funders Group project

The Centre is partnering with Equity Trustees and the Sidney Myer Fund to bring together information and stakeholders, including philanthropy and government, to plan a more coordinated and effective approach to support young people leaving care.

Creating child safe organisations

As a peak body with a strong commitment to child safe environments, the Centre was commissioned by DHHS in 2015 to develop and deliver information sessions on new laws introduced by the Victorian Government out of the *Betrayal of Trust* inquiry, new child safe standards and new criminal offences to improve responses to child abuse.

The Centre delivered 22 information sessions to a wide range of individuals and organisations working with children.

They included schools, early childhood service providers, children’s services, hospitals, health centres, sexual assault services, family violence services, counselling services, housing and homelessness services, disability service providers, local councils, the Municipal Association of Victoria, neighbourhood houses, sports and recreation groups, camps providers, education services and recreation groups such as girl guides and scouts.

As part of the training, the Centre produced lists of resources, guides, tools and examples on each of the child safe standards and principles to assist organisations to review and develop child safe policies.

The Centre presented its work on child safe organisations at the following conferences:

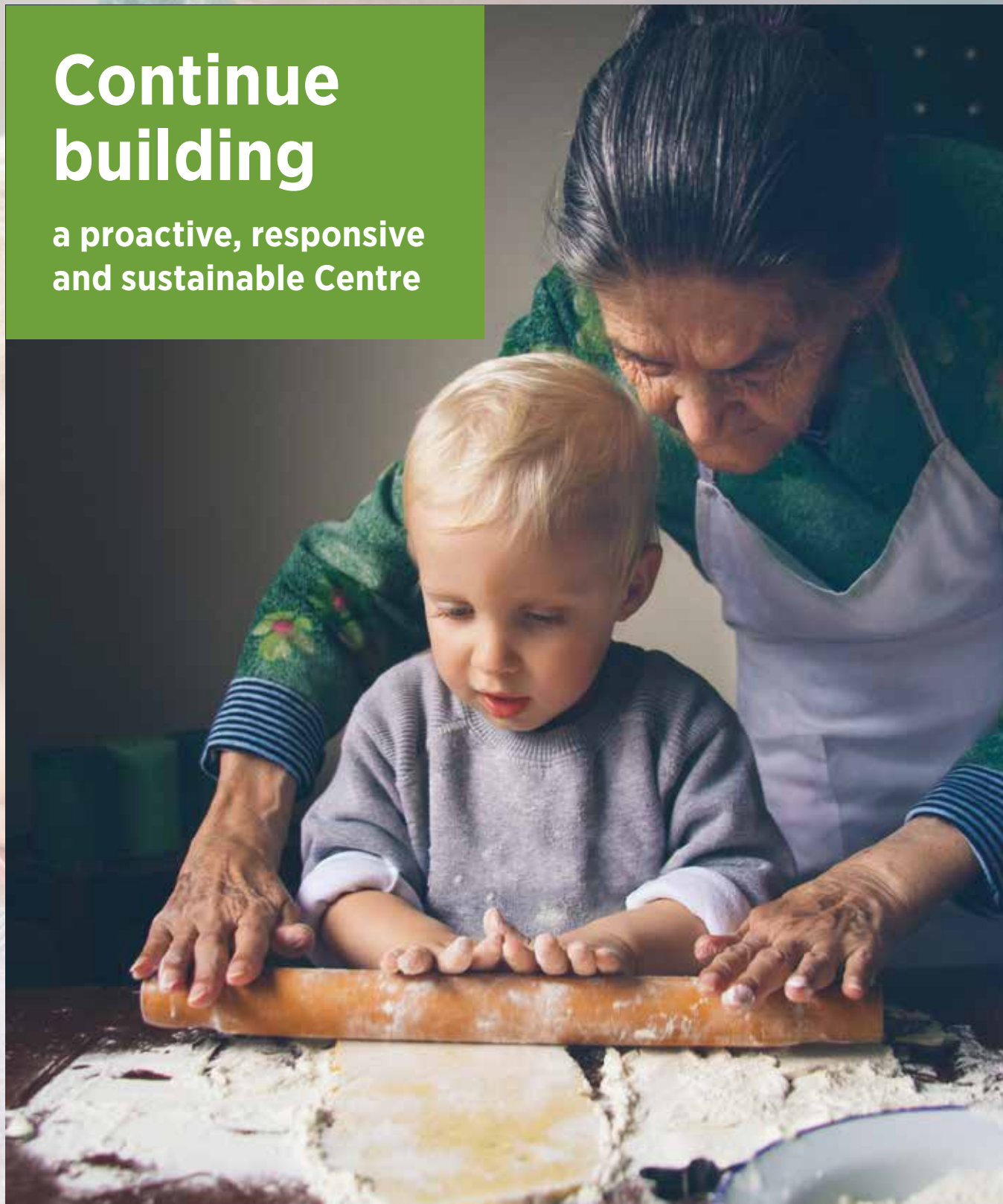
- Child Aware Approaches Conference
Brisbane, May 2016
- Connections UnitingCare Conference: *Making Lives Better - Improving Life Outcomes for Vulnerable Children and Families* Melbourne, May 2016

The Centre will continue its work supporting organisations to meet the new child safe standards in 2016-17, in conjunction with the Commission for Children and Young People.



Continue building

a proactive, responsive and sustainable Centre



In 2015-16, Centre staff focused on building a strong organisation, responsive to the needs of the sector, well-connected across the community, able to work effectively with Government to deliver good outcomes and with a clear direction for the future.

Expanding our member base

Our members are central to the work of the Centre and in creating a movement that fights for the rights of disadvantaged children, young people and families in Victoria and Australia. They work at the forefront of supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged children, young people and families.

Our membership base continued to grow in 2015-16 with a number of new organisations becoming members, including a number from outside the traditional children, youth and families sector.

We restructured our Associate and Student member fees to make it easier for individuals to become members of the Centre and join a broader movement of supporters.

We will continue to harness the power of our movement to advocate at a Victorian and national level for better outcomes for children and families experiencing disadvantage and vulnerability in our community.



Planning for the future

In 2015-16, Centre staff undertook a comprehensive operational planning process to identify key actions and tasks to bring its strategic objectives to life.

A number of facilitated sessions were held involving staff, the leadership team and the Board.

The sessions examined key external influences over the coming 12-18 months, the Centre's key strengths and weaknesses or vulnerabilities, its priorities and what it wants to be known for.

As a result of this process, the Centre has a strong and comprehensive operational plan with key accountabilities and milestones that will help to ensure we continue to meet our strategic objectives, provide strong leadership and support to the sector and advocate on behalf of Victoria's most vulnerable children, young people and families.



Our team

Board <small>(30th June 2016)</small>	Position	Organisation Representative
Paul McDonald	Chairperson	Anglicare Victoria, CEO
Sheree Limbrick	Vice Chairperson	CatholicCare Melbourne, Director of Operations
Grant Boyd	Treasurer	Bethany Community Support, CEO
Gerard Jones	Board Member	MacKillop Family Services, Executive Director of Operations
Peter Mulholland	Board Member	The Salvation Army Westcare, General Manager
Fran O'Toole	Board Member	Berry Street, Deputy CEO
Athina Georgiou	Board Member	QEC, CEO
Kelly Stanton	Board Member	Wesley Mission Victoria, General Manager of Services
Lisa J Griffiths	Board Member	OzChild, CEO
Greg Levine OAM	Independent Expert Member	

Staff <small>(30th June 2016)</small>	Position	Staff	Position
Ondine Childs	Strategic Projects Project Officer	Annabel Luscombe	SRP Project Officer
Dan Christie	<i>Fostering Connections</i> Senior Project Coordinator	Cate MacMillan	Accredited Trainer & Assessor
Corinne Davis	Business Development Officer	Sue Maddison	Executive Assistant
Mary Fall	Communications & Engagement Director	Mick Naughton	Strategic Projects Director
Virginia Henshall	<i>Fostering Connections</i> Stakeholder Manager	Andrea Scotis	<i>Fostering Connections</i> Project Assistant
Tash Howson	Communications & Engagement Coordinator	Khegan Sheehan	L&D Project Officer
Joanna Humphries	<i>Raising Expectations</i> Project Manager	Christopher Shelly	Operations & Finance Director
Raelene Jones	RCLDS Project Officer	Lin Sibley	<i>Fostering Connections</i> Enquiry Line Operator
Grace Kasper	Bookkeeper	Kim Somers	L&D Manager
Natasha Kelson	L&D Compliance Admissions Officer	Rosie Sparks	Administration Assistant
Mary Kyrios	Senior Policy & Project Officer	Ashwinny Krishna	<i>Fostering Connections</i> Project Manager
Michele Lonsdale	SRP Director	Deb Tsorbaris	CEO
		Alice Wilson O'Neil	SRP Project Officer



Financial reports

Treasurer’s Report

After another year of significant activity at the Centre, the Board is pleased to present an operating surplus of \$239,296 for the financial year ended 30 June 2016. Analysis of the financial reports shows the following significant movements:

- Overall revenue for the year increased by \$1,029,101 or 41.0% from 2015, with;
 - Affiliation Fees from members increased by 20.2%, with overall membership levels increasing.
 - Revenue from Business Undertaking increased by 24.6%, with increased levels of training, consultancy and projects over the year.
 - Government funding increased by 41.0% over the year, with the *Fostering Connections* project being a major component of this increase across the year.
 - Income from investments increased by 6.1% over the year.
- Overall expenditure for the year increased by \$778,045 or 30.0% from 2015, with;
 - Employee benefits increased by 41.9%, reflecting additional staffing resources for a number of funded projects including *Fostering Connections* and *Raising Expectations*.
 - Operations expenses increased by 28.0% reflecting the expenditure on the increasing levels of training, consultancy and projects over the year.
- The current assets for the year increased by \$1,152,501 or 50.1%, with;
 - Cash together with other financial assets increased by 52.7%, as cash and funds on deposit increased in line with the deferred revenue in relation to funded projects at year end.
- Non-current assets for the year reduced by 2.6% with Depreciation for the year of \$65,931.

- Total liabilities for the year increased by \$886,322 or 69.5%, with;
 - Deferred revenue increased by \$820,501, due to funding received for projects occurring in the 2016/17 financial year.
- The Statement of Cash Flow shows a net increase in cash and cash equivalents across the year of \$1,144,780. The change in cash flow primarily represents a timing difference between when a project is funded and when those funds are expended.

The Centre continues to maintain a healthy level of reserves to ensure that the important work being undertaken can continue to support the organisations supporting the vulnerable children, young people and their families.

I would like to thank the members of the Finance committee during the 2015/16 financial year Paul McDonald, Lisa J Griffiths, Angela Forbes, Ailsa Carr, Graham Boal and Chris Baring-Gould.

I would also like to acknowledge the Centre’s finance team Chris Shelly and Grace Kasper for their professional work during the year.

The following financial statements overview has been extracted from the Centre’s Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2016. The financial statements have been prepared as General Purpose Financial Statements in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012. The financial statements have been audited in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and Australian Auditing Standards by Crowe Horwath Melbourne. The full financial statements can be obtained from the Centre’s website www.cfecfw.asn.au or by request to the Centre (03) 9614 1577.



Grant Boyd
Treasurer

Statement of Surplus or Deficit and Other Comprehensive Income

For the Year Ended 30 June 2016

	2016 (\$)	2015 (\$)
Revenue	3,538,093	2,508,992
Investment income	73,594	69,361
Depreciation expense	(65,931)	(71,865)
Employee benefits expense	(1,691,737)	(1,192,459)
Operations expense	(1,303,246)	(1,018,139)
Office expense	(225,284)	(206,759)
Occupancy expense	(64,642)	(78,445)
Motor Vehicle expense	(21,551)	(26,679)
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year	239,296	(15,993)
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income attributable to members of the Centre	239,296	(15,993)

Statement of Cash Flows

For the Year Ended 30 June 2016

	2016 (\$)	2015 (\$)
Cash flows from operating activities		
Receipts from customers	4,473,516	3,120,310
Payments to suppliers and employees	(3,360,162)	(2,792,246)
Interest received	70,474	68,807
Net cash generated from operating activities	1,183,828	396,871

Cash flows from investing activities		
Payments for property, plant and equipment	(39,048)	(16,612)
Net cash used in investing activities	(39,048)	(16,612)

Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	1,144,780	380,259
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Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	2,173,383	1,793,124
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Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	3,318,163	2,173,383
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Statement of Financial Position

At 30 June 2016

Assets	2016 (\$)	2015 (\$)
Current Assets		
Cash on hand	970,474	365,230
Other financial assets	2,347,689	1,808,153
Trade and other receivables	94,240	92,964
Other assets	40,142	33,697
Total current assets	3,452,545	2,300,044

Non-current assets		
Property, plant & equipment	1,010,819	1,037,702
Total non-current assets	1,010,819	1,037,702
Total assets	4,463,364	3,337,746

Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	459,359	202,059
Deferred revenue	114,668	359,503
Provisions	124,811	74,360
Other liabilities	1,450,403	629,902
Total current liabilities	2,149,241	1,265,824

Non-current liabilities		
Provisions	12,275	9,370
Total non-current liabilities	12,275	9,370
Total liabilities	2,161,516	1,275,194

Net Assets	2,301,848	2,062,552
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Equity		
Accumulated Surplus	2,301,848	2,062,552
Total Equity	2,301,848	2,062,552

Statement of Changes in Equity

For the Year Ended 30 June 2016

	Accumulated Surplus (\$)
Balance at 1 July 2014	2,078,545
Total comprehensive income for the year	(15,993)
Balance at 30 June 2015	2,062,552
Total comprehensive income for the year	239,296
Balance at 30 June 2016	2,301,848

Together our members offer a powerful voice advocating for Victoria’s most vulnerable children, young people and families.

Our members







Anchor Inc, Anglicare Victoria, Australian Childhood Foundation, Australian Childhood Trauma Group, Australian Community Support Organisation, Baptcare, Berry Street, Barwon Child, Youth & Family, Benalla Rural City Council, Bendigo Community Health Services, Bethany Community Support, Brophy Family & Youth Services Inc, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Bubup Wilam, Camcare, Care With Me Inc, CARA Inc, Caroline Chisholm Society, CatholicCare Melbourne, CatholicCare Sandhurst, Catholic Social Services, Centacare Ballarat, Child and Family Services Ballarat, Children’s Protection Society, Christian Brethren Community Care Ltd T/A Temcare, City of Melbourne, City of Port Phillip - Family and Children’s Services, City of Yarra, Cobaw Community Health Service, Cohealth, Colac Area Health, Community Living and Respite Services, Concern Australia, Connections UnitingCare, Darebin Community Health, Domestic Violence Victoria, Doncare, drummond street services, E. W. Tipping Foundation, EACH Social and Community Health, Eastern Domestic Violence Service, Emerge Support, ERMHA, Family Access Network Inc, FamilyCare, Foundations Care Ltd, Gateway Health, Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative, Gippsland Lakes Community Health, Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand, Inner Eastern Local Learning & Employment Network, International Social Service Australia, ISIS Primary Care, Jesuit Social Services, Jewish Care, Junction Support Services Inc, Key Assets, Kyabram Community & Learning Centre, Lentara UnitingCare, Life Without Barriers, Lifeworks Relationship Counselling and Education Services, Lighthouse Institute, MacKillop Family Services, Make A Difference Dingley Village Inc, Mallee Family Care, Mallee Track Health & Community Services, Marillac, Melton City Council, Mirabel Foundation Inc, Moira Inc, Moonee Valley City Council - Family and Children’s Services, Odyssey House Victoria, ONCALL Personnel and Training, Oz Child: Children Australia Inc, Permanent Care and Adoptive Families, Quantum Support Services Inc, QEC, Relationships Australia, Rumbalara Family Services, The Alannah and Madeline Foundation, The Reach Foundation, The Salvation Army Crossroads, The Salvation Army SalvoCare Eastern, The Salvation Army Westcare, Tweddle Child and Family Health Service, UnitingCare Victoria and Tasmania, UnitingCare Werribee Support & Housing, Upper Murray Family Care, VANISH Inc, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation Inc, Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, Victorian Co-operative on Children’s Services for Ethnic Groups, Victoria Legal Aid, Wesley Mission Victoria, Wimmera UnitingCare, Women’s Information, Support & Housing in the North, Windermere Child & Family Services Inc.



The Centre acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government



By using ecoStar rather than a non recycled paper for this report, we reduced the environmental impact by:

-  **69kg of landfill**
-  **9kg of CO2 and greenhouse gases**
-  **93km of travel in average European car**
-  **1,306lt of water**
-  **120kWh of energy**
-  **102kg of wood**

Source: Carbon footprint data evaluated by Labelia Conseil. Virgin fibre paper data from latest European BREF data.



Centre for Excellence
in Child and Family Welfare Inc.

About the Centre

For over 100 years we have advocated to advance the rights and wellbeing of children, young people and families experiencing economic, social and cultural disadvantage.

We advocate for the rights of children and young people to be heard, to be safe, to access education and to remain connected to family, community and culture.

We represent over 100 community service organisations throughout Victoria working across the continuum of child and family services, from prevention and early intervention to the provision of out of home care.

Our member agencies are at the forefront of supporting vulnerable children, young people and families and we support their capacity to meet their goals.

Contact

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Child and Family Welfare

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