

*Relationships Australia®*

ANNUAL REPORT  
2012–2013



# OUR VALUES

---

*At Relationships Australia we believe that healthy relationships are essential for the wellbeing of children, families, individuals and communities.*

*We are committed to social justice and inclusion, and respect the rights of all people, in all their diversity, to live with dignity and safety and to enjoy healthy relationships. These principles underpin our work.*

*Healthy relationships are essential for the wellbeing of children, families, individuals and communities.*



*Relationships Australia Victoria secured more than \$1 million in federal funding over three years to support children and young people in East Gippsland who experience, or are at risk of, mental ill-health.*



*Find and Connect Services are accessible through Relationships Australia Offices in six states and territories across the country.*



*Relationships Australia South Australia's state-wide CALD Domestic Violence Service website links people to homelessness and domestic violence service providers.*





*The Diploma of Counselling for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has provided students with a stepping stone to university, with the first graduate completing a degree in social work this year.*

*Relationships Australia Tasmania enhanced its capacity to support children and young people in Tasmania by introducing the Child and Adolescent Services Unit to provide a single entry point for counselling and support.*



*Support services are available through Relationships Australia in all states and territories to people affected by childhood sexual abuse or who are concerned that a child is being abused, and who may assist the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.*



Follow us on Twitter  
[@RelationshipsA2](https://twitter.com/RelationshipsA2)

*Relationships Australia®*

---

ANNUAL REPORT  
2012–2013



Relationships Australia is honoured to have Her Excellency, Ms Quentin Bryce AC, Governor-General of Australia as its national patron.

---

The artwork on the front cover, called *Secrets* was created by Hetty Spee, a Yanatji Wajarri woman from the Murchison region of Western Australia. Hetty had family and relationships in mind as she painted and believes the work reflects people's experience of family from many different cultures. Hetty's artwork was part of Relationships Australia Western Australia's *Moorditj Yarning* exhibition.

See page 22 for more on this.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this annual report may contain the images of people who may have since passed away.

---

---

# CONTENTS

---

CHAIR'S FOREWORD	03
NATIONAL BOARD	04
STRUCTURE OF THE FEDERATION	05
THE YEAR IN REVIEW	07
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	11
COUPLES AND FAMILIES	19
COMMUNITIES	28
SEMINARS/CONFERENCES/PRESENTATIONS/PAPERS/ PUBLICATIONS/FILMS 2012-2013	39
HEAD OFFICES DETAILS AND BOARD MEMBERS 2012-2013	44

The background of the entire image is an abstract, textured pattern. It features irregular, vein-like shapes in shades of blue and orange, set against a white or light grey base. The texture appears to be that of a woven fabric or a digital filter applied to a photograph. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is positioned in the upper left quadrant, containing the text.

*Relationships Australia has built upon  
its success and credibility in the past year.*

---

# CHAIR'S FOREWORD

---



It has been my pleasure to chair the National Board of Relationships Australia since November 2012. I would like to thank Terri Reilly for her thoughtful stewardship of the Board for the two years prior to this.

As is reflected in this report, the past year has been one with many successes and a number of challenges for both the Relationships Australia federation and the national body. The broad focus of our work has remained on supporting children, couples, families and communities. The report shows some of the events held around the country focusing on the work we are doing in communities with people from diverse backgrounds.

We continue to do well in tendering for services, with a number of new programs coming from Parliamentary apologies. For example, several of our member organisations were successful in tendering for *Find & Connect* contracts to deliver services to Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants.

During the year, our Queensland organisation successfully tendered to operate the Commonwealth's Family Relationships Advice Line.

We welcomed the Australian Government's decision to hold a Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. All our member organisations have been contracted to provide counselling and support to child sex abuse survivors and their families for the next three years.

Our primary funders, the Commonwealth Departments of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), and Attorney-General, have conducted reviews of the family services they fund to which we contributed our views.

Relationships Australia has been very pleased with the outcome of those reviews announced by the former Minister for Community Services, the Hon Julie Collins MP in the Hobart office of Relationships Australia on 1 August 2013. You can read more about the reviews in the Year in Review report.

Relationships Australia Incorporated exists to support and coordinate the activities of its eight member organisations. This work is undertaken by a small, productive and professional team based primarily in Canberra. On behalf of the National Board, I would like to thank all of the national office staff for their valuable contribution in 2012–13. I also wish to thank Alison Brook, our National Executive Officer, for her insight, professionalism, values and strong work ethic, and for supporting our collective and individual work.

The CEOs of the eight member organisations make up the National Board, and I would like to thank all Board members, and nominees who have participated in their CEO's absence from time to time during 2012–13. I would also like to thank Andrew Bickerdike, Deputy Chair of the National Board and Chair of our Governance Committee, and Marie Morrison, Chair of our Finance Committee.

Relationships Australia has built upon its success and credibility in the past year. We are confident that we are well placed for the future as we move into new areas of business and new ways of working collaboratively to achieve the best we can for our clients across the country.

**Mat Rowell**

Chair, National Board

---

# NATIONAL BOARD

---



**Chair**  
Mat Rowell



**Deputy Chair**  
Andrew Bickerdike



**Director**  
Judith Cross



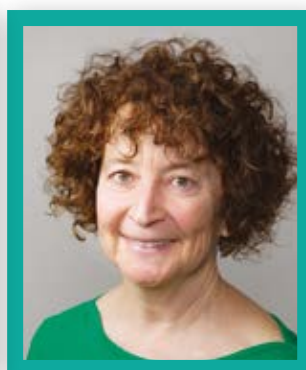
**Director**  
Frank Francis



**Director**  
Shane Klintworth



**Director**  
Marie Morrison



**Director**  
Mary Pekin



**Director**  
Terri Reilly

---

# STRUCTURE OF THE FEDERATION

---

## Relationships Australia Federation 2012–2013

---

### TASMANIA

---

**President** Greg Johannes  
**CEO** Mat Rowell

---

### NEW SOUTH WALES

---

**President** John Longworth  
**CEO** Frank Francis

---

### VICTORIA

---

**President** Judi Anderson  
**CEO** Andrew Bickerdike

---

### NORTHERN TERRITORY

---

**President** Natalie Bellew  
**CEO** Marie Morrison

---

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

---

**President** Franco Camatta  
**CEO** Judith Cross

---

### CANBERRA & REGION

---

**President** Jim Dunn  
**CEO** Mary Pekin

---

### QUEENSLAND

---

**President** Peter Swarbrick  
**CEO** Shane Klintworth

---

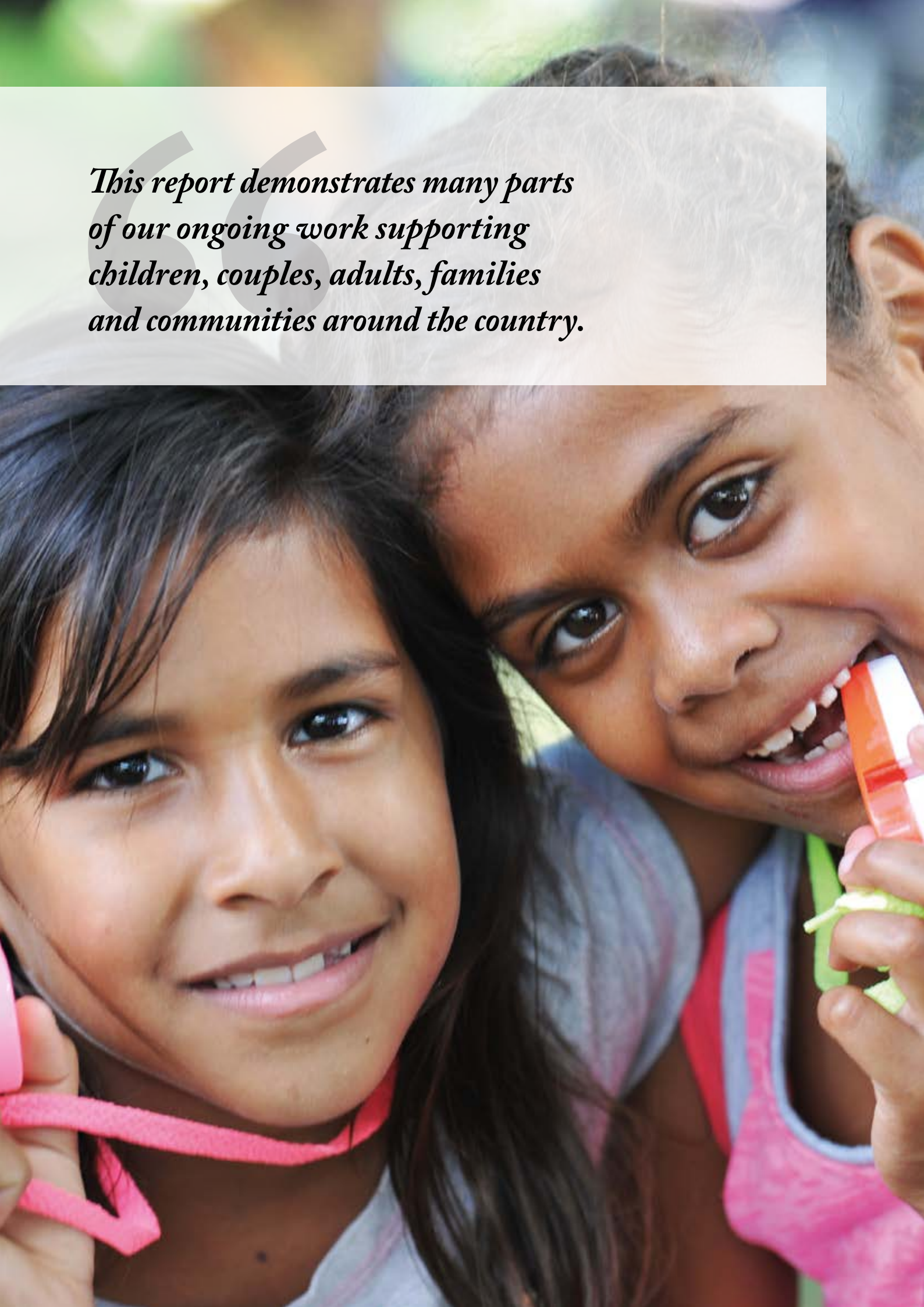
### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

---

**President** Helen Shurven  
**CEO** Terri Reilly

*The broad focus of our work has remained on supporting children, couples, families and communities.*



A close-up photograph of two young children, likely of South Asian descent, smiling warmly at the camera. The child on the left has long dark hair and is holding a pink ribbon. The child on the right is holding a green and yellow striped ribbon. They are both wearing light-colored clothing. The background is softly blurred, showing hints of green foliage.

*This report demonstrates many parts  
of our ongoing work supporting  
children, couples, adults, families  
and communities around the country.*

---

# THE YEAR IN REVIEW

---

*The past year has seen a continuation of our work with children, couples, adults, families and communities around the country and an expansion of our work into new areas of community support.*

## Apology to those affected by forced adoption

We strongly welcomed State, Territory and National Apologies to those affected by the previous practice of forced adoptions. Former Prime Minister Julia Gillard's eloquent apology reflected on the profound impact forced adoptions had, and continues to have, on mothers, children and others over the course of their lifetimes.

## Royal Commission

Relationships Australia also strongly supported the establishment of the new Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. We made submissions when the idea of the Royal Commission was proposed in late 2012, and were pleased to see its formation in early 2013.

Along with several other service providers, Relationships Australia has been contracted to

provide psychological support to those affected by institutional child sexual abuse during the coming triennium. That support is now available nationally through all our member organisations.

## Funding

Relationships Australia's funding is principally derived from contracts with the Commonwealth and State/Territory Governments. In the past year, the Commonwealth has conducted a major review of its Family Support Program (FSP) through the Departments of FaHCSIA and Attorney-General (the latter relating to support in family law matters).

We have welcomed these reviews and the openness with which they have been undertaken, giving organisations like ours an opportunity to contribute meaningfully with our perspective as national service providers of both family support and family law services.



### Our main points in response to the reviews were:

- the importance of maintaining universal access to services at times of vulnerability in people's lives;
- the value of early intervention as a preventative measure, safeguarding against vulnerability that may otherwise lead to entrenched conflict and disadvantage. In the case of family law funding, the importance of having counselling available early to prevent relationship breakdown where possible, rather than focusing counselling resources exclusively on support for families post-separation;
- the major ongoing need for intensive case-managed services for disadvantaged and vulnerable people, including a range of inter-connected services available to people living in areas of particular disadvantage;
- the impact of family breakdown on children and a renewed emphasis needed on focusing on children in all family support processes;
- the critical role that research and program/quality evaluation plays in ensuring that services offered are meaningful and effective and provide a return on social investment; and
- that organisational infrastructure needed to provide a large range of high-quality social services requires contractual arrangements that allow for some confidence of tenure.

We were pleased to note the outcomes of that review through a statement made by former Minister Collins early in the 2012–13 year largely reflecting the views put in our submission and those of many others in this sector.

## Client evaluation

As mentioned in last year's annual report, Relationships Australia conducted a national client evaluation late in the 2011–12 year, the results of which were collated and analysed in the reporting year. The aim of the research was to identify the levels of psychological distress, couple distress levels, and perceptions of impartiality of our mediation staff among our Family Support Program clients.

More than 4,000 Relationships Australia clients participated in the research. Between 55% and 75% of clients reported experiencing medium to very high psychological distress levels, with between 6% and 18% reporting levels of high distress that are indicative of anxiety and/or depression. These distress rates are far higher than reported in the general population by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

### Detailed research results are available on our website.

A further longitudinal client evaluation will be undertaken late in 2013, the results of which will be published in a future annual report.

## Family violence

In response to a Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department contract, The Australian Institute of Social Relations (the training division of Relationships Australia South Australia) and Dr Jennifer McIntosh of Family Transitions have developed a standardised front line screening tool called Family Law DOORS (Detection of Overall Risk Screen).

DOORS is a three-part framework that assists separating parents and family law professionals to detect and respond to wellbeing and safety risks that family members may be experiencing after separation. The framework addresses how these factors can be better identified, and offers pathways of effective, coordinated response.

---

## Submissions

During the year Relationships Australia provided input into a number of reviews and inquiries, in addition to the FSP Review previously mentioned. These included submissions into various gambling reviews – by the Federal Parliament, Free TV and ASTRA, as well as contributing to the review of the definition of charity.

## Partnerships

For a second consecutive year, Relationships Australia was successful in gaining support from the SBS Foundation for free television airtime to broadcast our community service announcement about the importance of healthy relationships in our lives. We have been delighted to have had the benefit of two years in this community partnership with SBS and thank them for their support.

In February and March 2013, Relationships Australia also supported the producers of *Making Couples Happy*, a four-part ABC television series examining the relationships of four Sydney couples and the effectiveness of interventions to increase communication and satisfaction in their marriages. A book of the same name published concurrently also had our endorsement.

## The extent of our work

Relationships Australia had a total income in 2012-13 of more than \$125 million, nationally. Most of that income is derived from contracts with the Commonwealth Departments of FaHCSIA and Attorney-General as well as State and Territory Government funding.

We employ more than 1,900 staff and operate from 150 sites around the country, in addition to outreach work. We provided services to more than 155,000 clients during the year, 57.3% of whom were women and 42.7% men. Nationally, 4.2% of our clients were from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and 6.6% from a CALD background, though this varied from state to state.

This report demonstrates many parts of our ongoing work supporting children, couples, adults, families and communities around the country.

*We hope you enjoy reading about what we do and that you make contact with us should you have any questions.*

**Alison Brook**

National Executive Officer





*During the year, Relationships Australia centres worked directly with more children and young people than ever before, with increased demand for children's services predicted to continue.*

---

# CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

---

## Supporting young Aboriginal and CALD people with mental ill-health

It can be difficult for young people and their families to acknowledge and access services during periods of mental ill-health, and this is particularly the case if services are not culturally responsive. Relationships Australia South Australia has established a specialist *Family Youth Mental Health Support Service (FYMHSS)* unit that works specifically with Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) young people (12 to 24 years), and their families, who are experiencing mental ill-health including depression, anxiety, suicide and grief and loss.

After several years of providing community mental health programs, Relationships Australia surveyed the areas where there were high levels of unmet need and identified Western Adelaide, Port Adelaide, Tea Tree Gully and Salisbury as areas that had high numbers of CALD and Aboriginal families where there were possible gaps in services available.

Working collaboratively with other family members and community organisations, FYMHSS workers support young people and their families by developing collaborative family action plans to

support the recovery of the young person. Family and home environments strongly influence Aboriginal and CALD young people, and play a critical role in early identification, intervention and recovery from mental ill-health. The program uses a variety of approaches to engage and build family and community capacity to recognise mental health issues, enabling them to seek help and connect with a full range of services.

There is still a high level of stigma associated with mental ill-health, especially in Aboriginal and CALD communities. There are many barriers to work through, including language, racism, and cultural misunderstandings. The program offers tailored educational group programs for young people and families to help them gain a better understanding of mental health issues, risks, and protective strategies.

## *X-Men* – Building relationship skills in teenage boys

Relationships Australia Queensland continues to enjoy its long-term partnership with a local high school to facilitate *X-Men*, a program aimed at building strong relationship skills in boys aged 13 to 18.

---

The program, co-facilitated by the school student liaison officer and a specialist male counsellor from Relationships Australia, work closely with the school guidance officer, the school-based police officer, teachers and parents.

The high school is located in a low socio-economic area with a high unemployment rate. With more than 1,800 students, (of whom over 1,000 are boys) there is a high demand for *X-Men*. Grade eight and nine boys, who have been demonstrating aggressive behaviours, have been affected by domestic violence and/or who are disengaged from school are nominated to participate in the program.

The program consists of ten weekly facilitated group sessions, one-on-one counselling, working on behaviour management plans and connecting with parents. It aims to teach the boys how to have positive relationships with adults, how to respect themselves and others, and how to control their anger and aggression.

The boys particularly enjoy preparing and eating meals together, helping to foster a sense of belonging and community. They have a room with a kitchen and take pride in maintaining it. The program includes a camp where the boys are challenged by outdoor adventure activities.

The program's success has a high demand due to the positive impact on participants and their families, their peers, the school and the wider community. The boys have become more engaged in their education and cope better with difficult situations and emotions, both in and out of school.

## Music for children with autism

A practitioner in Relationships Australia Tasmania's *Music for Autism* program, provided through the National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Program, has been working with children at an independent school that provides education and learning programs for children living with severe autism in northern Tasmania.

While conventional counselling can often be beneficial for children in mainstream schools,



many children with autism are non-verbal, or have difficulties expressing their emotional needs through speech. The music program, facilitated by a student welfare worker who is also a registered music therapist, has shown that music can be an effective medium for working with these children.

The program provides children with the means and opportunity to communicate, express their emotions, and engage in social interactions with others. Sessions typically include improvisation (playing instruments), listening to music, moving to music, singing songs, writing and recording songs, drawing to music, and music-assisted counselling and relaxation. During improvisation, the worker has observed a growing number of children engage in music-based communication with their peers and with staff. As the program progresses, children have increasingly been observed initiating communication as well as engaging with others for longer periods of time.

The program has had a profound impact on a number of the children. Some months into the program a seven year old girl, who had been non-verbal and had found it hard to focus for longer than a minute, has become able to remain focused on the music for twenty minutes or more, engages in eye contact, and responds to the music with her vocalisations.

To ensure the music program is sustainable and not reliant on one person, other school staff will receive in-service training, and additional instruments are being sourced.

---

## Focus on children

Improving the wellbeing and safety of children and young people who are vulnerable due to life changes such as parental separation and family violence remain a priority for Relationships Australia Victoria.

During the year, Relationships Australia centres worked directly with more children and young people than ever before, with increased demand for children's services predicted to continue. In response to this demand, a number of decisions have been made to boost delivery of services for children.



A key initiative was a project to further develop the organisation's capacity to respond to the needs of children and their families, as well as develop and implement new high quality services centred on children's wellbeing. Two project officers were appointed to manage the project, with support from a representative Children and Families Advisory Group.

The project involves a range of initiatives, including further training and professional development for practitioners, changes in the clinical environment at the centres to make them more appropriate and welcoming for children, and development of relevant child-focused information.

Community outreach programs are also helping to strengthen child/parent relationships, reflecting the growing emphasis on children within Relationships Australia Victoria's service delivery.

A ten-week program in the outer Melbourne suburb of Hampton Park engaged Aboriginal fathers and their children in a community garden project, cultural workshops and parenting yarns. Cranbourne Centre in partnership with Southern Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) developed the innovative program with the aim of strengthening father/child bonds and developing confidence in the men as positive role models for their children.

A central activity was the establishment of a community garden, which not only yielded edible produce, but was also used as a metaphor for child development and the nurturing aspect of relationships. It also offered informal clinical support and a conduit to other family relationship services.

## African Youth Drive: Youth leading change – aspirations for actions

The *African Youth Drive* was a project established by Relationships Australia South Australia's PEACE Multicultural Services team to respond to the emerging needs of young African people who are at risk of damaging their sexual health, or are already engaging in behaviours that put others at risk.

Through music, performance and dance, the project creatively engages with young African people who feel disconnected from sexual health providers and mainstream models of service. They are provided with life skills and sexual health information relevant to



Comprising 30 young people from eight different African countries, *African Youth Drive* has produced a range of original performances such as songs written about unsafe sex, the experiences of being a young African person living in Australia, an HIV role-play and expressive dance routines. These works are recorded and distributed to community members as a way of creating awareness, building health literacy and contextual understanding, and breaking down the social isolation of those affected by HIV.

Relationships Australia's PEACE Multicultural Services team will continue to facilitate the project and work in partnership with the community.

**RESPECT** is a program being facilitated by Relationships Australia Northern Territory in Darwin for young people from remote Aboriginal communities who attend boarding schools in town, and young people from urban areas, with migrant and refugee backgrounds. Funded by FaHCSIA, the program emphasises respectful relationships.

- Respect: giving it, getting it and that we are all worthy of it.
- How respect relates to life: family, jealousy, culture, grog and ganja, girlfriends, boyfriends, bullying, technology (Facebook, phones), what we see on TV and movies and hear in songs.
- How we become the people we want to be in the world; how we feel good about ourselves and build strong spirit; how we treat others with respect.

As trust with group leaders builds, small group work allows students to go deeper into complex and often painful subjects. Throughout the workshops, Relationships Australia affirms that everyone is worthy of respect. The workshops culminate in the participants creating a banner showing what respect means for them. The banner is then left behind with their school or organisation to act as a visual reminder.

The program is grounded in respect - for culture, for difference, and for the participants themselves. Participants genuinely value an opportunity to explore these subjects in a safe, affirming space.





## Taking time out in Bathurst

The *Time Out* program in Bathurst is generating encouraging results for young people and families where a family member is suffering from a mental illness. The program involves and supports the whole family through periods of mental ill-health and is facilitated by Relationships Australia New South Wales.

*Time Out* originated in 2011 with the *SMILES* program - *Simplifying Mental Illness Life Enhancement Skills* - a three day program run during school holidays for eight to twelve year olds living with a family member with a mental illness.

The *SMILES* program educates young people about mental illness and provides peer support, interactive and relaxation exercises, problem solving skills and opportunities for expression through artwork and music.

The goal of *SMILES* is to support young people to be able to talk to others in the same situation and reduce their feelings of isolation, increase their ability to cope, build self-esteem, and find a new freedom for self-expression.

Relationships Australia extended the program to include the whole family, leading to the *Time Out* program being established. *Time Out* offers group sessions for the young person and concurrent groups for the parents. The group for the parents (or the family member who is experiencing the

mental illness) focuses on personal growth and parenting. In the final half hour of *Time Out*, the parents and the young people come together to join in an activity, game or discussion.

Comments from the young people involved in the program include:

*"I was so relieved to find out that I couldn't catch my dad's illness. It's all his, and I don't have to go through the same thing when I'm an adult."*

*"Attending Time Out has made me more confident in how I manage it all ... I feel better taking time out from caring for my mum and remembering I'm still just a kid."*

The *Time Out* program is run in partnership with Centacare Wilcannia Forbes, the House with No Steps and the Western NSW Local Health District. The *SMILES* program was developed by Australian counsellor Erica Pitman and is internationally recognised as best practice for young people who have a relative experiencing a mental illness.



## Positive conversations about problem gambling

In order to introduce people to Gamblers Help services and empower them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, Relationships Australia Tasmania has been using creative ways to facilitate positive conversations about problem gambling.

During Responsible Gambling Awareness Week in May 2013, Gamblers Help counsellors and community educators installed a public artwork in the central mall in Launceston to spark people's curiosity and start conversations about responsible gambling. The artwork was a life-sized, lifelike headless human sculpture made out of packaging tape and newspaper, dressed in track pants and a hoodie. When installed on site at the mall leaning against a wall, it appeared that the figure had buried his head in the wall. Passers-by did double takes as they walked by this seemingly real, yet surreal figure in the street. This created an opportunity to engage people in conversation about how ignoring the issue of problem gambling is rather like sticking our heads in the wall (literally).

*This street art approach was particularly successful in attracting the attention of adolescents and young adults.*

Many people find it difficult to talk about problem gambling. The research shows that only 15% of problem gamblers seek help. While it may seem easier to shy away from talking about the big issues, Relationships Australia's Gamblers Help counsellors and community educators have found that community members are more likely to engage in conversations about the ways that problem gambling affects people's lives if presented with an opportunity to gain some information in a light-hearted way.

With the uptake of new technologies, online gaming and media promotion, young people today are more exposed to gambling than ever before, resulting in



increased risk of developing issues with problem gambling. It is therefore important that novel ways continue to be found to educate and inform young audiences about the pleasures and pitfalls associated with gambling. Using creative ways (such as the headless gambler) to engage people in conversations has been one of many positive strategies to raise awareness of problem gambling in the community.

## Family Mental Health Support Services (FMHSS)

With a focus on children and young people, the first Western Australian based FMHSS program has developed a strong relationship with the community, offering preventative and early intervention strategies for those in need. Funded through FaHCSIA, the program is located in Kwinana and Cockburn, south of Perth. Relationships Australia Western Australia identified this region as a priority-need area for mental health services, particularly catering to children and young people. The Kwinana and Cockburn communities have a diverse range of cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, with strong population growth due to new housing developments. There is high unemployment in the region, particularly among young people.

The FMHSS service team is able to provide a level of assistance tailored to the client's needs. Working with other community organisations, FMHSS offers individual counselling, family counselling and workshops, and other services.

The FMHSS is actively involved with Aboriginal families in the region and engages with grandparents who are the full-time carers of their grandchildren. The need for this service prompted the establishment of the Grandparent Support Group in Kwinana and Cockburn, in partnership with South Coastal Women's Health.

Lunchtime seminars for parents are held to target hard-to-reach families on topics such as "Parenting angry teens" and "Helping your anxious child" in Kwinana and Cockburn. The response has been overwhelming, and ongoing workshops with some of the families who attended were seen as a positive outcome.

Through the well-established relationships with other service providers and organisations in the area, the team at FMHSS conducted professional development workshops with those organisations on "Responding to clients who are angry and aggressive". The response was excellent and the initiative will continue to expand in the next twelve months.

The FMHSS service has recently been relocated in the Darius Wells Library and Resource Centre, a new facility positioned in the centre of the Kwinana and Cockburn communities. The Centre offers support for the whole family and includes a specialist child therapy service.

## Supporting young people leaving care

Young people who have been in foster care or other forms of out of home care and in the care of the Minister for Family and Community Services rarely have the living skills or financial means to live independently once they leave care.

The After Care Resource Centre (ARC), operated by Relationships Australia New South Wales is a service supporting young people leaving care.

The ARC assists young people (aged between 16 and 25 years) to find appropriate housing, employment or education options, and to access health services. It also helps with parenting support, managing a budget, referrals to other appropriate support

services and can advocate for young clients to access government financial support for independent living.

This year the ARC has run a number of additional support programs including a mothers group for care leavers and a home maintenance course in partnership with Bunnings Hardware.

The mothers group establishes a support system for young expectant mothers, providing information, ideas and encouragement on birth, parenting, health and relationships. Its purpose is to educate young parents, and mitigate the risk of an intergenerational out-of-home care cycle.

*A highlight for the group this year was a photo shoot with mums and babies to include in a life story book.*

The photo shoot provided an opportunity for the mums to feel good about themselves, to enjoy the experience of a professional photo shoot and to have a special photograph for their life story book.

Run in partnership with Bunnings Hardware, another program involved working with young people to teach home maintenance skills. Often these young people have not had a significant adult in their lives to teach them practical skills – the Bunnings course was a first step in fostering these skills along with a sense of independence and confidence.





*Couples and families want and deserve the best services available and Relationships Australia is focused on ensuring that our counselling and early intervention services are at the forefront of best practice.*

---

# COUPLES AND FAMILIES

---

## *Family Relationship Advice Line* has a new provider

In October 2012, Relationships Australia Queensland became the new provider of *The Family Relationship Advice Line* (FRAL) service, a Commonwealth Government initiative providing a national telephone service to assist families affected by relationship or separation issues.

The FRAL provides free, anonymous and accessible information on family relationship issues and advice on parenting arrangements after separation. The service is available to parents, grandparents, children, young people, step-parents or friends. A major focus of the FRAL is to reach Australia's most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. Callers can also be referred to local services that can provide further assistance.

The FRAL complements the information and services offered by Family Relationship Centres around Australia and ensures that people who are not able to attend a centre can access help.

Relationships Australia operates the Advice Line with a 'no wrong door' service delivery model, ensuring a caller's first point of contact is with a tertiary qualified

practitioner who can screen, assess and respond to the caller's needs and risks, and make appropriate and seamless referrals without having to transfer the call.

The practitioners who staff the service:

- have expertise in the specific needs of the target group;
- have expertise in providing support, education, advice and referral for family relationship needs;
- provide evidence-informed support for families with relationship difficulties (including separation);
- provide continual screening, safety and risk assessment for all callers; and
- are advocates for the needs of children, and provide education, support and resources.

Since Relationships Australia Queensland started managing the service in late 2012, the Advice Line has received more than 57,000 calls, believed to be a significant increase from previous years.

**The Family Relationship Advice Line (1800 050 321) is available six days a week, 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday, and 10am to 4pm on Saturday (local time), except national public holidays.**



## Breaking the silence by sharing the stories

Relationships Australia South Australia first began providing support services to adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse in 2004. In the following years it was the main support service in South Australia for people who were sexually abused as children, and for those presenting evidence to the Mullighan Inquiry. The service was named *Respond SA*, as a call to action.

The *Respond SA* website supports adult survivors, their families, and service providers, to understand the issues. Many people feel betrayed and isolated so the sharing of experiences is an important way of breaking the silence that has been imposed on those who were abused as children and whose reports of violence were not believed.

The website includes real stories of survivors, told by actors to protect their identity. This year, *Respond SA* released a short film called 'Jo's Story'. Jo started her young life in an orphanage where she was abused by a priest. She was known to stand up for those who did not have a voice; this meant that she was often punished. The announcement of the Royal Commission has been part of Jo's road to justice, but it is just part of that road. Jo says that she prefers to be known as a *Remembered Australian* and telling her story.

*Respond SA* strongly supports the need for a Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Royal Commission will have a wider role than other inquiries – looking at the many different institutional environments in which children have been abused.

The Royal Commission will provide an opportunity to confront the practices that actively work to silence the voices of children, to cover things up, to protect perpetrators and not respond. Relationships Australia in each state and territory, together with wide range of other organisations, has been funded to provide support services to survivors during the Royal Commission. Relationships Australia is aware of the courage required for adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse to disclose their experience, seek help and give testimony.

## Professional services move offshore

A partnership forged with the Family Court of Australia and AusAID, as part of its Access to Justice Strategy, has led to Relationships Australia Victoria providing professional training services to Indonesian judges.

The secular Indonesian Supreme Court presides over matters relating to separation and divorce and the ensuing impact of these on children and property.

The training workshops conducted by Relationships Australia in Indonesia focused on interviewing, mediation and assessment skills that facilitate access to justice for women and others, including those with a disability. The training aligns with a progressive reform agenda within the Indonesian court system.

This is the first time that Relationships Australia has extended its professional services to an international client base.

The stage was shared with local community-based activist groups, including Pemberdayaan Perempuan Kepala Keluarga (PEKKA), representing the needs of female heads of households.



PEKKA sought to engage judges in a deeper understanding of the effects of domestic violence and experiences of women and others, and those with a disability, in the justice system.

The relationship has been reciprocal with Relationships Australia hosting several delegations of Indonesian judges and court administrators to Australia as part of tours organised and facilitated by the Family Court of Australia, in conjunction with AusAID.

It is hoped that the partnership will continue to flourish as part of Australia's provision of aid to other countries in addressing access to justice issues.

## Parents and teenagers at the table

Over the past year, Relationships Australia Tasmania has been funded to explore new family support options for CALD families and teenagers. Through a series of facilitated discussions, this pilot program focuses on positive and effective parenting skills, social inclusion and cultural acceptance.

The program involves a series of four facilitated meetings for families from CALD backgrounds. These sessions enable participating parents and teenage children to discuss some of the challenges faced by families in the transition to Australian life and to explore parenting strategies that support engaging positively with those challenges.

The forums also raise awareness of available support options and expose mainstream family and youth support practitioners to the realities, challenges and practices these families face.

A further objective has been to produce learnings and professional practice changes to be disseminated across broader community services, particularly the family and youth support sector. The pilot was designed and implemented using evidence-based principles and approaches.

Feedback from participants strongly suggests that the program has been useful and created opportunities for reflection and discussion, particularly in the case of parents who are raising teenagers in a still-new cultural context, and, in the case of teenagers, negotiating two cultures and norms.

*“We are trying to find a halfway point between our cultures. We want our children to take their opportunity, to become something.”*

*“I am an Australian citizen with Ethiopian parents and heritage... For me it is about negotiating between these two important sets of values.”*

From the practitioners' perspective, the pilot has been useful for practice development because it enables a deeper understanding of the challenges of working in the cross-cultural and settlement context, and increases their confidence to support families settling into a new culture. Service providers are able to connect better with these clients, and develop pathways into mainstream family support.

---

## Engaging GLBTI families

Through its social inclusion program, Relationships Australia Victoria has developed initiatives to improve GLBTI (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex) inclusive practice across its centres.

Melbourne and Greensborough Family Relationship Centres (FRCs) took part in Gay and Lesbian Victoria's *How2* program, a change program that assists organisations to implement practices, protocols and procedures to help improve access to services by the GLBTI community.

The program included an assessment of the FRCs' access and intake processes, disclosure and documentation, cultural safety, professional development, training for staff, and community consultations.

As part of the community consultation process, the centres conducted a survey of Rainbow families – defined as parents who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex, and their children. The survey aimed to explore the way FRCs worked with Rainbow families and the way families accessed support services in order to identify ways to improve services and outcomes for families and children.

It was distributed widely through various GLBTI networks, with results providing valuable information about Rainbow families' use of, and experience with, mainstream family support services; what they look

for when choosing a support service; experiences of separation and difficulties with co-parents and/or donors; and perception and use of FRCs.

Staff at Melbourne and Greensborough FRCs took part in training for health and welfare service providers working with same-sex parented families run by the Bouverie Centre.

The training enabled staff to discuss the types of scenarios and situations in which they had worked with GLBTI clients.

A GLBTI working group was established to review the findings from the FRCs' participation in the *How2* program, and to develop an action plan for exploring and implementing GLBTI inclusive practice across other Relationships Australia centres.

## Moorditj Yarning continues to grow

*Moorditj Yarning*, an Aboriginal specific program at Relationships Australia Western Australia, began in 2005 as a response to an absence of Aboriginal people accessing the organisation's services. Extensive consultation with the community began, leading to the development of a philosophy that shaped a program designed to meet the needs and objectives of local Aboriginal communities.

This philosophy also related to how services were delivered. While provision is made for services at Relationships Australia premises, this kind of contact is often not an option for some members of the community. As a result, services often take place at community centres, in people's homes or wherever people feel comfortable. The service is offered to Aboriginal people and is not limited by age group, gender or presenting issue. High demand for services has led to the development and delivery of group workshops alongside one-to-one counselling, allowing a greater number of people to access therapeutic services and relevant educational information.

Eight years on and *Moorditj Yarning* has expanded significantly, with highlight of the year always being the annual Moorditj Yarning Art Exhibition, held around NAIDOC week. Community members



who participate in the group workshops create the artwork displayed. Art has become a medium for people of all ages to come together and pass on stories to younger generations. Participants identify the painting and coming together as part of a healing process.

*Since its inception five years ago at a Relationship Australia branch, the exhibition has grown in popularity and more artists have become involved.*

To accommodate this expansion the exhibition is now held at the Perth Town Hall. This year 63 artists contributed work to the exhibition, with a total of 125 pieces of artwork on display. The majority of the works are sold and this success has led to several exhibitors pursuing art as a career and business opportunity. The opening night of the exhibition allows the artists and invited guests to share a unique experience.

Moorditj Yarning has created a space for mutual teaching and learning experiences. Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal colleagues work alongside each other to deliver services. Co-delivery has facilitated an exchange of respect and knowledge necessary for providing services to community. The exchange of learning assists the ongoing development of Moorditj



Yarning to deliver the best possible practice, and sits well with Relationships Australia's commitment to ensure services are inclusive and appropriate for Aboriginal people and communities.



## Study on the short-term effectiveness of a community-based gambling help counselling service

Relationships Australia Queensland provides a free *Gambling Help Service* (GHS), offering information, counselling and support to people and families affected by gambling in Queensland.

Knowing up to 3% of Australians have a moderate to severe gambling problem, Relationships Australia conducted an evaluation on the effectiveness of community-based gambling help counselling services.

The study examined the short-term effectiveness of services on gambling severity and financial, psychological, relationship and social outcomes. Problem gambling has a high co-occurrence with financial stress, psychological distress and disorders, relationship distress, and substance use problems (Rickwood, Blaszczynski, Delfabbro, Dowling, & Heading, 2010). Services targeting problem gambling would ideally assess and treat both the gambling and associated stressors and use standardised measures to track pre/post-counselling outcomes and whether short-term improvements are maintained at follow-up.

The study is in line with Relationships Australia's commitment to measuring the effectiveness of services and building the organisation's capacity to track client outcomes across services.

Clients completed the pre/post outcomes measures. So far clients report a significant reduction in gambling severity, work and social problems, anxiety and sense of loneliness, but not on relationship distress, depression and substance use problems. Further clients are entering the GHS effectiveness study across the next few months and follow-up assessments of longer-term treatment effects are planned.

The results from this study illustrate which issues improve as a result of GHS counselling, and which show no change, or even deterioration - despite treatment. The standardised measures used in this study provide valid and reliable data about service effectiveness and guide research-informed decisions about improving the GHS.

## Riverina Murray Family Referral Service

*Family Referral Services* (FRS) are a New South Wales Government initiative to assist families, children and young people who do not meet the statutory threshold for child protection intervention, but would benefit from support to address current risks and prevent their escalation. They provide information and link vulnerable children, young people and their families to a range of support services in their local areas. There are now eleven FRSs throughout NSW, with Relationships Australia Canberra & Region delivering the Riverina Murray FRS.

The Riverina Murray FRS has been operating since April 2013. As the FRS supports families and connects them with local services, a key focus has been on promoting the service, and building relationships and partnerships with local service providers and the wider community.

To maximise accessibility for families and service providers, FRS staff have been located in Wagga Wagga, Griffith, Tumut, Albury, Deniliquin, and through *Mallee Family Care* in Dareton and Balranald.



A key activity of the Riverina Murray FRS has been the establishment of strong working relationships with the Child Well Being Units based in four State Government departments: Health, Police, Education and Communities, and Families and Community Services. One example is the meetings held in conjunction with the local Police Area Command to give assistance to victims and perpetrators of crime to change or recover from their circumstances.

These links have identified new opportunities to improve client outcomes by working creatively together. For example, a pilot program targeting educational neglect and youth at risk of school expulsion has been developed and implemented with the Department of Education and Communities, the Department of Family and Community Services, the *Keep Them Safe* regional coordinator, and a number of key local stakeholders.

Furthermore, with the goal of keeping young people and families safe, the Riverina Murray FRS has developed a good working relationship with the Department of Family and Community Services in the region to address and provide services for the growing number of young people being referred to them. This partnership works to prevent families 'slipping through the cracks' of the service system.

## Aboriginal Building Connections

*Aboriginal Building Connections* (ABC) is an education seminar that aims to encourage Aboriginal parents and extended family members to gain awareness of

the importance of not engaging in conflict to better support their children and encourage them to grow up healthy, safe and strong.

Issues covered during ABC seminars include the importance of self-care, the impact of family breakdown on children, useful parenting tips, healthy ways to communicate with the other parent and family members, setting goals for healthy parenting and exploring support services available to participants.

Originally developed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at Interrelate New South Wales, ABC has been taken up with enthusiasm by Relationships Australia Northern Territory. It is currently being delivered in prisons in Alice Springs and is about to be rolled out to a wider audience throughout the Northern Territory.

The facilitators have received support from the Alice Springs Correctional Centre and good feedback gained from the male inmates who have been open about their role as a parent – most have separated from their partners.

Inmates said the seminar has been useful to them and asked many questions, demonstrating interest and curiosity in the program. In addition, they have expressed their interest in ABC being delivered in their communities around Alice Springs. The Alice Springs prison has requested ABC be delivered on an ongoing bimonthly basis.



## Evolving models for early intervention services

The achievement of a stable, loving relationship and happy children remains the ideal for most couples.

This goal is often difficult to achieve, and supporting people to build better relationships through couple and family counselling remains a core business of Relationships Australia New South Wales.

*Couples and families want and deserve the best services available and Relationships Australia is focused on ensuring that our counselling and early intervention services are at the forefront of best practice.*

Chronic difficulties, conflict or unresolved endings to intimate relationships are not only associated with a wide range of social problems, but a range of physical and mental health conditions as well.

Recent surveys reveal that most families using Relationships Australia's services in NSW said they benefited from attending and were able to find better ways to relate (2012 & 2013 RA NSW Snapshot and Intermediate surveys).

In developing couple and family counselling services we rely on the early theorists, as well as more recent research focused on early intervention for families. The research of Drs John and Julie Gottman, Emotionally Focused Therapy, Imago Relationship Therapy, and developmental attachment models all contribute to our understanding of families and relationships. We also acknowledge the role of trauma and different models of intervention relevant to culturally diverse backgrounds.

In recent years, we have been influenced by the growing awareness of attachment trauma on brain development and are aware that trauma in the early years of a child's life has long term implications for emotional regulation, education and adult relationships, as well as the development of resilience.

---

In supporting people to navigate the challenges they face, Relationships Australia knows that the key ingredient to effective work is establishing a counselling alliance between the client and the counsellor, based on safety and trust. When trust is strong, the families are more likely to be able to deal with the setbacks and understand the effort required for healing to progress relationship wellbeing.

Incorporating the changing models and theories for couple and family intervention is key to the development of best practice in the constantly evolving field of couple and family therapy.

## ACT Child and Family Centres

Since 2007, Relationships Australia Canberra & Region has been supporting the work of the ACT Government-funded Child and Family Centres through the delivery of outreach counselling and relationship support services for their clients. Providing relationship support services at locations where clients feel comfortable and confident to attend increases the uptake of people using the services.

The ACT Child and Family Centres offer services tailored to the needs of families with children up to eight years old. Recognising the importance of setting the foundation for a child's future health,

development and learning in their early years, the centres focus on integrated delivery of services in a community setting.

The provision of counselling services has recently expanded to include co-facilitating *Learn, Giggle & Grow*, a program in which parents and children have the opportunity to interact and play in a safe and supported environment, at one of the centres. A partnership between the centres, Canberra Mothercraft Society and Relationships Australia delivers *Relaxing into Parenting* and *Baby Makes Three* for first time parents to help their transition into parenthood. Relationships Australia also delivers other workshops and seminars for parents of young families at the ACT Child and Family Centres.

As a member of the reference group, Relationships Australia contributed to the establishment of the West Belconnen Child and Family Centre that has a particular focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and carers.

For Relationships Australia, working collaboratively to provide support services in a community setting has increased accessibility to its services, and continues to strengthen connections between service providers working across the ACT.





*Incorporating the changing models and theories for couple and family intervention is key to the development of best practice in the constantly evolving field of couple and family therapy.*

---

# COMMUNITIES

---

## The importance of *Find & Connect*: a seamless service across Australia

The abuse and neglect of children has a lasting impact on their lives, and when this happens in out-of-home care, the impact is often greater. Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants have all too often experienced abuse and a breach of trust by the very institutions that should have protected and cared for them. Many were lied to, removed from their families, and mistreated.

The National Apology for Forgotten Australians in 2009 by former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd was an important step in acknowledging this past. This was followed by a commitment to support people through new services. In August 2012 the National *Find & Connect* Support Service was formally launched by the former Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. Hon Jenny Macklin MP,

Providers of *Find & Connect* Services around Australia work collaboratively to ensure that Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants can access support in the state or territory they are currently living in, regardless of what state or territory they were living in when in care.

The service supports people in many different ways: counselling, records and family searches, support for family reunions for those who grew up in out-of-home care, support groups, drop-in centres and referral advice.

The national *Find & Connect* Service free call number is based on the date of the Apology (1800 16 11 09). Every year, an event is hosted in each state and territory to mark the anniversary of this historic event and to show a continued commitment to support those affected by past practices.

*Relationships Australia values working with people who have knowledge that is based on their lived experience in out-of-home-care.*

Relationships Australia South Australia benefits from the advice of a Consumer Reference Group (CRG) comprising seven members who bring experience from a range of former care arrangements, including church-based institutional care, state-based care, foster care, and other forms of out-of-home care.

Speaking out for what is right has been an important part of the work of Forgotten Australians and this year Relationships Australia South Australia was pleased to be selected to provide national Ambassador training. Twelve Forgotten Australians undertook a five-day training program with the Australian Institute of Social Relations (Relationships Australia (SA)'s training division) to become Ambassadors. Their role is to provide information, impart understanding of the impact of institutional care, and provide advice for the current and future needs of Forgotten Australians who are accessing a range of Government and non-Government services.



FaHCSIA's support for the *Find & Connect* Services has been crucial to its success in this first year. It has organised a number of regular national meetings for service providers. Representatives from FaHCSIA and service providers meet to exchange information and ensure the delivery of best practice standards across all services.

## Deadly families are happy, safe and strong

"Deadly" is not always a negative word – if you are from some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, it can mean excellent, great, or even 'wicked'! When the Townsville office of Relationships Australia Queensland and the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service agreed there

needed to be an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's event for women experiencing domestic violence, they knew there was no better event name than "Deadly Families are Happy, Safe and Strong."

Relationships Australia became the lead organisation for the event. Operating on a shoestring budget, the organisers relied on the goodwill and donations of several local groups and businesses, and a group of Indigenous community volunteers, who all share a passion for reducing the incidence of domestic violence and promoting strong, positive, happy families.

The event included speakers, food, entertainment and activities for every age, from young children through to seniors.

The more serious side of the day was increasing awareness about the importance of safe and healthy relationships, as well as advising participants about local community resources available to assist families for whom domestic or family violence may be of concern. There were separate tents for men and women to come together for a yarn and to talk with experts in family wellbeing.

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders and leaders are keen to see their families and communities take a stand against domestic and family violence. They are aware that this issue affects all sectors of society and want to encourage their people to participate in community events aimed at violence prevention. By stressing the positive aspects of family wellbeing and identifying community resources that



---

can help families become “happy, safe and strong”, the organisers were able to begin to address this important issue in a way that was positive and culturally acceptable.

Following an overwhelmingly positive response, the committee would like to see this become an annual event.

## World Refugee Day

For a second year, Relationships Australia Northern Territory has been involved with Melaleuca Refugee Centre in celebrating *World Refugee Day*, by holding an interactive kite making and flying stall at an annual festival.

Jingili Water Gardens was abuzz with food, music, dance, a citizenship ceremony, a soccer comp and many community run stalls.

Relationships Australia staff assisted children and families to construct, decorate and fly 122 bright, tassel-streaming kites that afternoon.

With the *World Refugee Day* theme this year being ‘Restoring Hope’ Relationships Australia staff guided conversation and decoration of kites, where appropriate, along the lines of people’s journey to Australia, their values and the hopes they now had living in Australia represented on the paper kites with colourful wording and drawings.

*World Refugee Day* is also a celebration of the diversity, skills and knowledge brought to our communities in art, culture, community, language, ideas and business by those who have sought refuge in Australia.



## Working in the justice system

The demand for therapeutic and support services for detainees and victims of crime continues to grow in the ACT justice system. Recent research shows detainees have considerably higher rates of mental and physical illness than the wider community, with Aboriginal detainees experiencing higher rates than non-Aboriginal detainees.

Relationships Australia Canberra & Region has provided Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous counselling services for male detainees at the Alexander Maconochie Centre since 2011. The number of counselling hours provided has nearly doubled during this time.

Many Aboriginal detainees are referred into counselling through the *Yarning* program, a short program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander detainees using facilitated ‘yarning’. This program enables participants to make links back to their history and culture, and what this means in terms of their own behaviours, their vision for their life, and their role within their family and community now and when they are released. The *Yarning* program continues to be successfully delivered at the Alexander Maconochie and Bimberi Youth Justice Centres in the ACT.

Counselling services are also available for female detainees, and Relationships Australia works with the Alexander Maconochie Centre to provide other support services, including the resolution of entrenched conflict between inmates.

Other programs within the ACT Justice system include support for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Galambany Circle Sentencing panel members who provide a culturally relevant sentencing option in the ACT, and partnering with ACT Victims of Crime to work and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

By working to support detainees, easing their transition back to their families and the wider community and creating referral pathways for support services after their release, it is hoped that the rates of recidivism will be reduced in the ACT, and by extension, community wellbeing and mental health improved.



*More than 100 delegates from around the state attended the first annual Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Conference held in Hobart in May 2013.*

## Suicide prevention: everybody's business

Relationships Australia Tasmania has been working in suicide prevention and postvention to raise awareness of suicide and its family and community impact.

While Tasmanians have long been concerned about the growing impact of suicide in the community, opportunities to influence decision making and to share experiences have been limited. The establishment of a new community network is a strong move toward embracing the views and actions of all Tasmanians concerned or affected by suicide.

The Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Community Network (TSPCN) has been established to provide a platform for members to work together to discuss and advance issues of concern relating to suicide prevention, intervention and postvention. Relationships Australia Tasmania is funded by the Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services to convene and support the TSPCN.

The underpinning principles of the Network are that suicide prevention is everybody's business and that resilient communities that are able to understand and speak about suicide issues will also have the capacity to address the problem.

The Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy 2010 – 2014, guides the work of the TSPCN. Since its inception in September 2012, the TSPCN, through the goodwill and hard work of member organisations, has delivered several suicide prevention initiatives.

The annual LIFE Awards were also presented at the conference, recognising individuals and organisations for their outstanding work in suicide prevention.

In partnership with GLBTI communities and organisations a Tasmanian GLBTI Community Action Plan for Suicide Prevention was developed and launched at the conference. Many community members generously gave their time to participate in the consultation and contributed to the development of a Community Action Plan and to identify key projects.

With funding support from the Tasmanian Community Fund, Relationships Australia has compiled and published *Suicide grief: Personal stories of suicide loss*. Contributors to the book have shared their very personal experiences of the loss to suicide of a close relative. In telling their stories, it is their hope that others who have been bereaved by suicide feel less confused and alone and that they can find hope and healing.

## Beyond Gambling

The colourful and vibrant Chinese community in Perth offers a diverse and integral cultural element to the spirit of Western Australia. However, research has identified that the incidence of problem gambling among members of the Chinese communities is around five times higher than in the general population. Boredom and social isolation have been identified as the highest contributing factors causing Chinese migrants to become problem gamblers.

With the aim of reversing this trend, Relationships Australia Western Australia has formed a partnership within the Chinese community, through the Chung Wah Community and Aged Care (CWCAC) Association, to run *Beyond Gambling*.

---

Funded by the WA Department for Communities, the principal aims of the project are to raise awareness of problem gambling behaviours and their impacts on people, families and the community.

For the Chinese community, family is an intrinsic part of life, therefore the slogan adopted for the *Beyond Gambling* project is “Family comes first”. *Beyond Gambling* services are aimed at seniors, young people and families from local Chinese and other Asian communities.



The project was launched in February 2013 during the Perth Chinese New Year Carnival that attracts a diverse range of spectators and contributors. Many people from the Perth Chinese community attended the celebrations, allowing information about the *Beyond Gambling* project to be distributed widely.

The response to *Beyond Gambling* has been encouraging. As a result of the promotional strategies during the year, more than 1000 people from the community have gained knowledge about the project. The Chung Wah Association has distributed the information through community events, various “Responsible Gambling” functions, media spots, the Association Newsletter, regular inclusions in the Australian Chinese Times, and one-on-one discussions with community members and families. Chung Wah Association representatives also raised gambling-related issues on Mandarin language radio in WA.

This partnership has provided opportunities to raise awareness of each organisation’s activities, and professional development to build capacity.

## Culture and relationships events

Relationships Australia Canberra & Region has this year explored how it might help to build community capacity and acknowledge the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community sector workers in the ACT.

The *Dhunlung Yarra* Service, a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander therapeutic service staffed by Aboriginal professionals at Relationships Australia Canberra & Region, organised a number of culturally appropriate information sessions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people working in the ACT region. During the year, three inspirational and motivating speakers shared their knowledge with community workers.

In October, Adjunct Professor Rosemary Wanganen from The Australian Institute for Loss and Grief presented her workshop, *A Culturally Appropriate and Holistic Approach to Healing Grief*. Professor Wanganen’s past experiences and accumulated knowledge from her years of work on these issues helped her to formulate her theories on loss and grief, a complex set of issues that impact on the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal people in contemporary society.

In April, Associate Professor Raven Sinclair, from the Social Work Faculty at the University of Regina, Canada, talked about cultural competency from the perspective of a Canadian Aboriginal and examined the notion of presence as a self-care strategy. She also shared her experiences as a member of George Gordon’s (Kanewonuskatew) First Nation of Treaty #4 of Southend Saskatchewan in Canada.

In June, Barbara Wingard from the Dulwich Centre in Adelaide facilitated a workshop discussing lateral violence within Aboriginal organisations and communities.

All three speakers emphasised the benefits of respect for mutual learning in dealing with chronic loss and grief and intergenerational trauma within the community sector.

In addition to the wealth of experience shared by the facilitators, those attending workshops used the opportunity to build connections, share information about local services and build stronger, culturally safe referral pathways, equipping them to better support people within their communities.

By providing ongoing professional development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Relationships Australia Canberra & Region builds on the successful delivery of the Diploma of Counselling for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT and NSW. This course was established by the Australian Institute for Relationship Studies, the academic division of Relationships Australia NSW. By 2014, 67 people from Canberra and NSW will have graduated from this course with a nationally accredited qualification.

## Brutha's Day Out

The successful *Brutha's Day Out* initiative has continued to expand over the past year with two new programs run in regional Victoria and funding secured for a further metropolitan event.

Relationships Australia Victoria partnered with Wulgunggo Ngalu Learning Place to run a two-day program in Gippsland with funding from the Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group through the Victorian Department of Human Services (DHS).



About 40 Aboriginal men, including elders from across Gippsland, attended the program focusing on family violence.

The men took part in workshops and built a sculpture of an Aboriginal man with a young boy standing next to him. The sculpture now stands at the entrance to Wulgunggo Ngalu as an enduring testament to Aboriginal men and their place within their community.

*As a result of Relationships Australia's association with the Learning Place, the Traralgon Centre has developed a relationship skills workshop for Aboriginal men and their partners.*

The workshop was designed to provide information on listening skills, the importance of positive interaction and to allow the influence of partners, and strategies and skills to connect with partners.

Relationships Australia ran the second regional Brutha's Day Out in Ballarat in partnership with Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-operative (BADAC) to enable Aboriginal men from across the region to reconnect with each other.

The event facilitated the discussion of topics such as relationships, health, Aboriginal culture, lateral violence and healing, and problem gambling. As part of the program, the men also designed and painted a mural on an outside wall of BADAC's Cultural Centre.

Participants found the experience to be very moving, with many revealing that the sharing of their stories was helpful in creating a feeling of calmness and wellbeing. Another positive outcome was the re-establishment of an ongoing men's group at the Co-operative.

Relationships Australia has secured funding from the Kangoo Bambadin - Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group through DHS to deliver a *Brutha's Day Out* in Melbourne's Southern Metro Region in the second half of 2013.

---

Based on the successful *Sister's Day Out* for Aboriginal women, *Brutha's Day Out* also seeks to encourage the men to access information and referral pathways to support services, and empower them through opportunities that uses their expertise and cultural knowledge.

## Asylum seekers contributing to communities

The Relationships Australia New South Wales Epping and Ryde Community Hubs have recently developed gardening and support programs for asylum seekers living in residential and community detention.

The garden program supports refugees by providing them with a meaningful activity, a place to engage socially with peers and an experience similar to farming and food supply in their home country. The first program, started in April 2012, involved 15 participants from Afghanistan building a food garden at their Marsfield residence. As well as providing food, the garden provided a place of restoration and a chance to create something new.

Due to the uncertain nature of their legal status, asylum seekers often experience high levels of anxiety and depression. Productive, creative and focused, participants say that gardening brings a sense of peace and eases mental fatigue and worry.

As well as community gardening, the Community Hubs organise day trips to other community gardens to look at other refugee community gardens and to Bents Basin, a Sydney recreation area, for a visit and swim.



Asylum seeker families and unaccompanied minors are most commonly living in community detention. In supporting these people, Ryde and Epping Community Hub volunteers are involved in a homework help program, school holiday cooking, gardening programs, and computer use and repair courses. It's acknowledged that the volunteers often learn as much about global issues, compassion and humanity as the refugees learn about life in Australia.

The refugee garden program is also supported by the Jesuit Refugee Service, the Community Greening Program (Royal Botanic Gardens Trust and Housing NSW), Ryde Council and Eden Garden Centre, North Ryde.



## Culture and relationships in the Top End

Relationships Australia Northern Territory hosted a Family Film Night, celebrating culture and relationships as part of Families Week at Darwin's Deckchair Cinema in May 2013.

June Mills provided a beautiful welcome to country that explored the background, Dreamtime stories and traditional sacred animals associated with the land in and around the Deckchair Cinema itself, before performing the song 'Arafura Pearl', with backing vocals provided by her grandchildren.

Mbackeh Darboe of the African All Star Drummers is well known for his wild dancing, pounding drumming and haunting singing. Born into a “Griot” family (the musical historians of West Africa), he specialises in the vibrant Afro-Manding rhythms, from The Gambia, Senegal, Mali and Guinea. Mbackeh ran two sets of children’s drumming workshops, where children first decorated their own ‘drums’ and then performed with him on stage, as he sang the songs and spoke about the history of his own relationships and culture.

The evening had something for everyone: there were two fairies who painted children’s faces and created balloon animals. There were wonderful Greek treats, and the team from Incredible India cooked up a selection of delicious food for everyone to enjoy before settling in to watch the film “Finding Nemo”.

## Moruya Child and Family Relationships Hub

The opening of the Moruya Child and Family Relationships Hub in June 2013 is a good example of organisations working collaboratively to meet the needs of the local communities.

Led by Relationships Australia Canberra & Region, the Hub has been developed to house a number of not-for-profit organisations, providing a multi-service child and family community service location for people living on the lower NSW South Coast and establishing pathways to appropriate services.

The initial inspiration for the hub arose from meetings of the New South Wales South Coast Family Law Pathways Network. Relationships Australia took the initiative to develop the hub, bringing together a number of organisations on the project. There was a strong goodwill between the organisations working together to create better linkages between service providers.

A historic building previously used as shire council offices was chosen for its local significance and capacity to house several organisations.

Relationships Australia, Marymead, Carers ACT and Carers NSW are the current service providers with discussions under way with other organisations



who are interested in joining the centre. A series of paintings, representing people coming together on a journey at a meeting place, created by local Aboriginal artist, Bronwen Smith, are on display in the building.

*From the Hub, Relationships Australia has a greater capacity to deliver services on the lower South Coast.*

New programs include an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander *Women in the Bay* support group and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific family dispute resolution services.

## Let’s talk recognition – Reconciliation Week Celebration event

For the past two years, Relationships Australia South Australia’s PEACE Multicultural Services have celebrated National Reconciliation Week in Adelaide with a moving and memorable event that makes reconciliation a true and long-lasting connection. These events have brought together CALD communities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in South Australia to celebrate diversity and forge relationships with one another.



This is a rich intercultural event, which could be described as a kaleidoscope of languages, traditional dress and food.

Proud Kurna woman and Relationships Australia South Australia staff member, Katrina Power, opened the event with a traditional 'Welcome'.

*She spoke about the importance of all communities coming together to promote reconciliation and a brighter future for Indigenous Australians.*

Stevie Goldsmith, of Narrunga, Kurna and Ngarrindjeri descent, shared a vibrant and educational presentation on Indigenous culture and history.

Representatives from Relationships Australia and community leaders presented their personal acknowledgement of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in their native tongue. A native tree and herb planting took place in the communal garden, where children from various cultural backgrounds helped to till the soil to symbolise new growth and harmony.

In recent times, it has become a trend on websites to include an acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as part of the website design. Relationships Australia decided to create a short video of this special day that acknowledges the traditional owners and stream it from the website. The video

recognises the Kurna people and Relationships Australia is aware that its venue sites are variously on the lands of the Ngarrindjeri, Ngadjuri, Peramangk and Meru and that many different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people work within the organisation and access our services.

## Restoring hope

Three Relationships Australia Queensland employees were trained as facilitators of the "Building Resilience in Transcultural Australians". They now facilitate the group-based program designed for adults with a CALD background who are learning to live in a new and different culture.

The program uses an adult learning approach and the strengths of cultures of origin to help the process of acculturation, part of the emotional journey of migration. It includes learning activities to strengthen participants' personal and social resources, and to increase their resilience so they can enjoy a brighter life in their new country.

The theme of this year's Refugees' Week was "Restoring Hope". Relationships Australia promoted that message to the community and to staff within the organisation. Staff came together to hear stories from their colleagues who shared their journey to Australia as refugees – their stories of hardship, courage, strength and perseverance. Red Cross joined our celebration and provided insight into their vision and work they are doing with members of the Australian Congolese community and their families who remain in the Congo.

## CommunityWest

In early 2012 CommunityWest approached Relationships Australia Western Australia to provide specialised training in grief and loss and understanding and managing anger and aggression. CommunityWest is a well-respected, not-for-profit organisation in Western Australia delivering training and affiliated services in the Aged and Community Care sectors. The organisation is known for its strategic role in supporting Home and Community Care (HACC) service providers in the Western Australia.

---

The delivery of training to HACC service providers can be difficult as the sheer size and diversity of Western Australia demands an approach to training that is responsive to the requirements of each region. CommunityWest assists HACC providers in metropolitan, regional and remote areas of Western Australia, with each area having a unique culture and differing needs. To provide training that is relevant and appropriate, trainers need to be sensitive to the needs and nature of each community.

Regardless of location, HACC staff have to deal with physical and emotional challenges, like the deaths of clients and the aggression of some clients with dementia. Staff are better able to deal with these difficult situations if they are well trained and supported.

The remote Aboriginal communities in Western Australia are difficult to reach and require a great deal of planning to enable effective training to be delivered. An additional challenge when delivering sensitive and highly emotive training is that people in regional and remote locations can be close to the clients they are dealing with, and may even be family members. Relationships Australia trainers take this into account and are mindful of the language used and cultural implications of the information delivered.

CommunityWest and Relationships Australia will continue to work together on future training programs.

## Vulnerability and disadvantage framework

Relationships Australia New South Wales is committed to supporting those with the greatest need. In 2012, Relationships Australia New South Wales launched a new Strategic Plan for 2012–2015. A key focus of the Strategic Plan was increasing support for vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. The majority of our work and resources are now directed to supporting these communities.

To complement our existing suite of family and community support Relationships Australia is expanding services for specific communities. The new services developed this year to support vulnerable and disadvantaged communities include the *Find & Connect* service, supporting Forgotten Australians and

Former Child Migrants; an expansion of the Family Referral Service to a larger geographical region in the western suburbs of Sydney; the development of the Aboriginal Child and Family Centres in Gunnedah and the Shoalhaven; and development projects within the Community Builders program that support community skills and connections.

Today, nearly 40% of Relationships Australia NSW clients are classified as disadvantaged (having paid \$20 or less for services). This is a 15% increase in numbers from last year.

The number of Aboriginal clients attending Relationships Australia NSW services has exceeded expectations this year with more than 500 Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander clients. Relationships Australia NSW has a no fee policy for services for Aboriginal clients. We have also increased the number of active partnerships we have with Aboriginal organisations.

*More than 90% of our staff have now completed Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training.*

Staff have also attended professional training focused on working with issues experienced by vulnerable and disadvantaged clients including families with complex needs, mental health issues, domestic violence, trauma and loss, and child protection issues.

As part of increasing our knowledge and building the capacity of the sector we are keen to increase the number of partnerships and networks focussed on vulnerable and disadvantaged clients. Increasing numbers of Relationships Australia networks and partnerships are focussed on this group of clients. Overall, we have 214 service partnerships and 138 community networks. This is a significant increase on previous years.

The Snapshot survey of close to 2,000 FaHCSIA clients (March 2013) indicated that 85% of them felt they were better able to manage their issues and access help when needed, after visiting a Relationships Australia NSW service.



*We employ more than 1,900 staff and operate from 150 sites around the country, in addition to outreach work. We provided services to more than 155,000 clients during the year.*

---

# SEMINARS/CONFERENCES/ PRESENTATIONS/PAPERS/ PUBLICATIONS/FILMS 2012-2013

---

## International Conferences

**Elvery, S (RANSW)**, *Considering cultural and linguistic diversity in implementing the men's behaviour change program: "Taking Responsibility – a Course for Men"*, Inaugural White Ribbon Australia International Conference, Sydney, May 2013.

**Gray, R (RANSW)**, *Shame and silence in professional accounts of AOD counselling*, British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy, Birmingham, UK, May 2013.

**Gray, R, Broady, T, Gaffney, I and Lewis, P (RANSW)**, *Client motivation and intimate relationship status in men's behaviour change programs: recurring themes from qualitative interviews*, Inaugural Filicide Conference, Prato, Italy, May 2013.

**Hall, S (RAV)**, *Dads in Play*, Queen Elizabeth Centre International Early Parenting Conference, Melbourne, November 2012.

**Lewis, P, Westcott, G (RANSW) and Visser, S (RAWA)**, *Early intervention couples therapy within Relationships Australia – what is at the heart of the family services agenda? The differences and challenges when working with diverse cultures and communities*, 60th International Commission for Couples and Family Relations Conference, London, UK, June 2013.

**McIvor, R and Nield, J (RAV)**, *The work required to move men in men's behaviour change programs to second order change and beyond*, Inaugural White Ribbon Australia International Conference, Sydney, May 2013.

**O'Mara, A, Morris, M, Halford, K (RAQ)**, *Co-parenting education and family mediation outcomes*, 30th International Congress of Psychology, Cape Town, South Africa, July 2012.

**Ray, M (RASA)**, *Building the development of African women leaders*, Gender Inclusive Development International Symposium, School of International Studies, Flinders University, Adelaide, August 2012.

**Robinson, B (RAWA)**, *Feedback informed treatment with couples*, Achieving Clinical Excellence Conference, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, May 2013.

## National Conferences, seminars and presentations

**Bashford, V. (RATAS)**, *A collaborative approach to LGBTI suicide prevention in Tasmania – 'Let's Put The Pieces Together'* Health in Difference Conference, Melbourne, April 2013.

---

**Bickerdike, A (RAV) and Cleak, H (La Trobe University),** *Prevalence of family violence in family dispute resolution services and its impact on post-separation parenting: results of a 3 year study*, 11th National Mediation Conference, Sydney, September 2012.

**Bickerdike, A (RAV) and Cleak, H (La Trobe University),** *Family violence and FDR – evidence for practice*, 5th Annual FRSA Conference, “Positive Impact: Showcasing the Evidence”, Darwin, November 2012.

**Broady, T, Gray, R, Gaffney, I and Lewis, P (RANSW),** *Taking responsibility: evaluating the extent to which male perpetrators of family violence change their attitudes through group work intervention*, Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) Biennial Conference, Melbourne, July 2012.

**Broady, T, Gray, R, Gaffney, I and Lewis, P (RANSW),** *Investigating changes in the attitudes and behaviour of men who use violence: evidence for the effectiveness of men’s behaviour change programs*, 5th Annual FRSA Conference, Darwin, November 2012.

**Brown, J (RANSW),** *Working together while working together: co-therapy with foster families of young children in care*, Australian Family Therapy Conference, Perth, October 2012.

**Donnelly, R, Hawke, G (RANT), Arney, F (Menzies School of Health Research) and Tucci, J (Australian Childhood Foundation),** *‘Holding Children Together’ – a service based on a unique model to build the capacity of a network of services in Alice Springs to understand and better meet the needs of children who have experienced interpersonal trauma*, 5th Annual FRSA Conference, Darwin, November 2012.

**Dunlop, D and Turner, A (RANT),** *Working together holistically with families impacted by stress and trauma: an emerging partnership between ‘Holding Children Together’ (RANT, ACF) and ‘Akeyulerre’ (RANT, Akeyulerre)*, A Forum on Childhood Trauma: “Approaches to working with children and families experiencing trauma in the Northern Territory”, Alice Springs, May 2013.

**Fick, S (RACR),** *Working with troubled people*, ACT Law Society Seminar, Canberra, February 2013.

**Forbes, S (RANSW),** *Therapeutic work with people who’ve been trafficked*, compensation event for ‘People who’ve been trafficked’ by Anti-Slavery Australia, University of Technology, Sydney, May 2013.

**Fox, J and Thomas, J (RAV),** *Brutha’s Day Out*, Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Conference, Melbourne, November 2012.

**Fox, J and Braybrook, S (RAV),** *Brutha’s Day Out*, Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) 5th National Conference, “For Our Children: Living and Learning Together”, Cairns, June 2013.

**Freeburn, S and Wood, K (RANSW),** *Constructing an evaluative chain of evidence: the place of RANSW’s staff Aboriginal cultural awareness survey in implementing Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Community Access Strategies*, 5th Annual FRSA Conference, Darwin, November 2012.

**Gray, R (RANSW),** *Research and evaluation for busy practitioners*, Child and Family Interagency Forum, Dee Why, June 2013.

**Griggs, S (RACR),** *Child Informed Practice*, Riverina Family Law Pathways Network (FLPN) Conference, “Court between culture – exploring the diverse culture of family law and its clients”, March 2013.

**Griggs S, Nickell A, Brunskill, A and Foley, K (RACR),** *Family dispute resolution and you*, Charles Sturt University Inaugural Wellness and Wellbeing Conference, Wagga Wagga, February 2013.

**Griggs S, Nickell A, Brunskill, A and Foley, K (RACR),** *Healthy relationships*, Charles Sturt University Inaugural Wellness and Wellbeing Conference, Wagga Wagga, February 2013.

**Halford, K (University of Queensland), O’Mara, A and Morris, M (RAQ),** *Randomised clinical trial examining the effectiveness of family mediation and ways to enhance the process*, 5th Annual FRSA Conference, Darwin, November 2012.

**Hall, S (RAV),** *Dads in play*, 5th Annual FRSA Conference, Darwin, November 2012, and, QEC International Early Parenting Conference, Melbourne, November 2012.

---

**Hewlett, B (RANSW)**, *Anxiety is a thin stream of fear trickling through the mind. If encouraged, it cuts a channel through which all other thoughts are drained*, Australian Family Therapy Conference, Perth, October 2012, and, 5th Annual FRSA Conference, Darwin, November 2012.

**Kimlin, R (RASA)**, *Providing a holistic approach to Aboriginal families in the family law system*, SA FLPN "Faces of Family Law" Conference, Adelaide, May 2013.

**Lee, J (RASA)**, *Fathers as presenting parents for child counselling after conflicted parental separation*, Inaugural Conference of the Australian Psychological Society College of Counselling Psychology, Melbourne, March 2013.

**Lee, J (RASA)**, *Weathering the 'perfect storm' of domestic violence, parental separation and disrupted relationships in children with separation anxiety*, 12th Annual Conference of the Psychology of Relationships Interest Group, Adelaide, November 2012.

**Lockwood, G and Jackson, L (RAWA)**, *Experiences and outcomes from a WA based parent-coordination program for separated parents experiencing high conflict*, 5th Annual FRSA Conference, Darwin, November 2012.

**McIvor, R and Nield, J (RAV)**, *The work required to move men in men's behaviour change programs to second order change and beyond*, No to Violence (NTV) Conference, Melbourne, November 2012, and White Ribbon Conference, Sydney, May 2013.

**McIvor, R, Bhandary, R, Hong, Vo, Nguyen, K, Foelz, M and Griffiths, T (RAV)**, *Developing a Vietnamese men's behaviour change program, continuing this work and extending to other communities*, NTV Conference, Melbourne, November 2012.

**Matthews, Chris (RASA)**, *Manipulation, the technique that dare not speak its name*, National Mediation Conference, Sydney, September 2012.

**Morris, M and O'Mara, A (RAQ)**, *Motivational interviewing - enhancing family mediation*, 11th National Mediation Conference, Sydney, September 2012.

**Murray, J (RAQ)**, *Are pre-family dispute resolution (FDR) group information sessions effective in preparing separated parents for the FDR/mediation process?* 5th Annual FRSA Conference, Darwin, November 2012.

**Moyle, D (RANSW)**, *Healthy family relationships* (English, with Mandarin Interpreter) Chinese Family Program, Hurstville, May 2013.

**Murphy, L (RANSW)**, *Appropriate referral pathways for physicians when screening for domestic violence*, Family Planning State Forum, Ashfield, May 2013.

**Nickell, A (RACR)**, *Family dispute resolution and you*, Charles Sturt University Inaugural Wellness and Wellbeing Conference, Albury/Wodonga, February 2013.

**Nickell, A (RACR)**, *Healthy relationships*, Charles Sturt University Inaugural Wellness and Wellbeing Conference, Albury/Wodonga, February 2013.

**Nugent, W (RANSW)**, *The outcome fallacy: is the resolution in family dispute resolution an illusion?* Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA) Biennial Conference, Sydney, August 2012.

**O'Donnell, R (RANSW)**, *Taking another look - working with children in post-separation services: the value of single session work with children*, 5th Annual FRSA Conference, Darwin, November 2012.

**O'Mara, A and Manca, T (RAQ)**, *Family dispute resolution with complex clients: development, implementation and evaluation of a therapeutic FDR model*, 5th Annual FRSA Conference, Darwin, November 2012.

**Parkes, V (RANSW)**, *Our next step in the children's contact service: a brain friendly contact centre*, 5th Annual FRSA Conference, Darwin, November 2012.

**Patelesio, N (RANSW)**, *Pacific Families & Communities Together*, ACWA Biennial Conference, Sydney, August 2012.

**Pearce, A (RASA)**, *The role of Family Relationships Centres within the family law system*, Family Law: Property Disputes and Settlements Conference, Adelaide, November 2012.

---

**Pearson, G (RASA)**, *Responding to relationship issues*, presentation for SA Ambulance, Adelaide, March 2013.

**Pearson, G and Pearce, A (RASA)**, *Maintaining practitioner wellbeing*, Wicked Youth Forum, Country Health SA Local Health Network, Auburn, October 2012.

**Pearson, G (RASA)**, *Enhancing couple and family relationships - what the Masters of Relationships do well, key issues for men and how the brain influences our ability to change*, Salisbury Communities for Children "Children, Communities, Connections" Conference, Adelaide, November 2012.

**Petch, J (RAQ)**, *Predictors of relationship distress across the transition to parenthood*, Australian Psychological Society Annual Conference, Perth, September 2012.

**Petch, J, Murray, J (RAQ), Bickerdike, A (RAV) et al.**, *Psychological distress among clients seeking family and relationships services*, 5th Annual FRSA Conference, Darwin, November 2012.

**Power, L (RANSW)**, *Working with adolescents and their families*, ACWA Biennial Conference, Sydney, August 2012, and, Australian Family Therapy Conference, Perth, October 2012.

**Poynten H, and Pye, C (RAQ)**, *Working with domestic violence in the LGBT Community*, Violence Against Women National Conference, Brisbane, August 2012.

**Ralfs, Clare (RASA)**, *Intake and screening processes*, Penelope Showcase and Users Conference, Melbourne, March 2013.

**Richter, P (RACR)**, *Referring to and using the Children's Contact Service*, Riverina FLPN Conference, March 2013.

**Roberts, K, Foley, K and Brunskill, A (RACR)**, *Whiteboard shuttle – avoiding the pitfalls*, 11th National Mediation Conference, Sydney, September 2012.

**Robinson, B (RAWA)**, *Feedback informed treatment – collaborating with and being accountable to our clients*, 5th Annual FRSA Conference, Darwin, November 2012.

**Ross, C (RANT), Rhodes, H, Palavra J (NTLAC), Glanville, L (AGD) and Costs, A (Vic LAC)**, Panel discussion participation: *Providing an inclusive family law system*, FRSA Conference, Darwin, November 2012.

**Ryder, A (RAWA)**, *'Leavin on a Jet Plane': the impact of FIFO on families*, Inaugural Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women in Mining Workshop, November 2012.

**Selder, Adrian (RASA)**, *Program and practitioner statistics – a whole new range of possibilities*, Penelope Showcase and Users Conference, Melbourne, March 2013.

**Stott, J and Pearson G (RASA)**, *Basic Counselling Skills*, presentation for Department of Education and Child Development, Adelaide, May 2013.

**Towns, T (RANSW)**, *I might go to this one: strategies to enhance attendance at an 'Encouraging Young Mothers' program*, 5th Annual FRSA Conference, Darwin, November 2012.

**Vallance, Sandra (RASA)**, *Implementing Penelope – the pioneers*, Penelope Showcase and Users Conference, Melbourne, March 2013.

**Van Sambeek, L White, N and Tiparui, E (RANT)**, *It takes a forest to raise a tree: healing our children from the storms in their lives*, 5th Annual FRSA Conference, Darwin, November 2012.

**Van Sambeek, L, Tiparui, E and Munkara, P (RANT)**, *It takes a forest to raise a tree: healing our children from the storms in their lives*, A Forum on Childhood Trauma: "Approaches to Working with Children and Families Experiencing Trauma in the Northern Territory", Darwin, May 2013.

**Van Sambeek, L and White, N (RANT)**, *It takes a forest to raise a tree: healing our children from the storms in their lives*, 5th SNAICC National Conference, Cairns, June 2013.

**Warrener, D (RATAS)**, *RA Tas Aboriginal Service, good case site study*, Social and Emotional Wellbeing Meeting, Department of Health and Ageing, Canberra, December 2012.

---

## Publications

### **Australian Institute of Social Relations (RASA),**

*Parents perspective training scenarios: Facilitators Guide*, for Department of Education and Child Development, Adelaide 2013.

**Brown, J M (RANSW)**, *Therapeutic moments are the key: foster children give clues to their past experience of infant trauma and neglect*, Journal of Family Therapy, first published online: 3 September 2012. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-6427.2012.00606.x

**Brown, J M (RANSW)**, *Theory, practice and use of self in open dialogues approach to family therapy: a simple complexity or a complex simplicity?* Australia New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy, 33 (4), pp.266-282. First published online: December 2012. DOI: 10.1017/aft.2012.36

**Hall, S (RAV)**, *Dads in play. Action research project report for Communities for Children*, The Smith Family, Brimbank, Melbourne, 2012.

**PEACE Team, RASA**, *Travel Safe Booklet*, Adelaide 2012.

**Petch, J (RAQ), Halford, K (UQ), Creedy, D and Gamble, J (RAQ)**, *Couple relationship education at the transition to parenthood: a window of opportunity to reach high risk couples*. Family Process, 51: 498-511, DOI: 10.1111/j.1545-5300.2012.01420.x. 2012.

**Petch, J, Halford, K (UQ), Creedy, D and Gamble, J (RAQ)**, *A randomised controlled trial of a couple relationship and co-parenting program (Couple CARE for Parents) for high- and low-risk new parents*, Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 80(4), 662-73 (2012).

**Power, J, Perlesz, A, McNair, R, Schofield, M, Pitts, M, Brown, R and Bickerdike, A (RAV)**, *Gay and bisexual dads and diversity: fathers in the Work, Love, Play study*, Journal of Family Studies, Volume 18, Issue 2-3, pp. 143-154, December 2012.

**Power, J, Perlesz, A, Brown, R, Schofield, M, Pitts, M, McNair, R and Bickerdike, A (RAV)**, *Bisexual parents and family diversity: findings from the Work, Love, Play study*, Journal of Bisexuality, 12(4), pp. 519-538, 2012.

**Relationships Australia National FDR Network**, *A fair share, negotiating your property settlement*, Adelaide, 2012 (coordinated by RASA and RANSW).

**RASA and Together 4 Kids**, *'Caterpillars to Butterflies' Therapeutic Group Facilitator's Manual*, Adelaide, 2013.

**RASA and Together 4 Kids**, *'Pirates' Therapeutic Group Facilitator's Manual*, Adelaide 2013.

## Film

**Australian Institute of Social Relations (RASA) in conjunction with Family Transitions**, *The Family Law DOORS interviews of practitioners in the United States*, 2013.

**Australian Institute of Social Relations (RASA), in conjunction with Family Transitions**, *The Family Law DOORS interviews of practitioners*.

**Australian Institute of Social Relations (RASA)**, *Denise's Story – Arriving at a family and domestic violence service*, produced in collaboration with Nunga Mi:Minar and Together 4 Kids, 2012.

**Australian Institute of Social Relations (RASA)**, *Diana's story*, for Respond SA website, Adelaide, 2012.

**Relationships Australia National FDR Network**, *A fair share, negotiating your property settlement*, Adelaide, 2012 (coordinated by Relationships Australia (SA) and Relationships Australia NSW).



# HEAD OFFICES DETAILS AND BOARD MEMBERS 2012–2013

---

---

## Canberra and Region

---

15 Napier Close,  
Deakin ACT 2600  
**T** (02) 6122 7100  
[enquiries@racr.relationships.org.au](mailto:enquiries@racr.relationships.org.au)  
[www.racr.relationships.org.au](http://www.racr.relationships.org.au)

**CEO:** Mary Pekin | **President:** Jim Dunn

### Board

Peter Bailey	Ray Overvliet
Juliet Behrens	Mary Pekin
Jennifer Cavenagh	Bernadette Post
Alan Hodges	Anne Reese
Sue Lyons	Lorraine Watt
Jeremy Naumann	Paul Wyles

---

## New South Wales

---

5 Sarah Street,  
Lane Cove, NSW 2066  
**T** (02) 8874 8000  
[enquiries@ransw.org.au](mailto:enquiries@ransw.org.au)  
[www.nsw.relationships.com.au](http://www.nsw.relationships.com.au)

**CEO:** Frank Francis | **President:** John Longworth

### Board

Kerrie Bigsworth	Margaret Scott
Louise Fitt	Merilyn Sleigh
Ann Porcino	Helen Wiseman
Laura Raymer	

---

## Northern Territory

---

Level 2, Cavenagh Centre,  
43 Cavenagh Street, Darwin NT 0800  
**T** (08) 8923 4999  
[reception@ra-nt.org.au](mailto:reception@ra-nt.org.au)  
[www.nt.relationships.org.au](http://www.nt.relationships.org.au)

**CEO:** Marie Morrison | **President:** Natalie Bellew

### Board

Barbara Bradshaw	Christine Milowick
Sue Coombs	Barbara Pollock
Tony Eggington	

---

## Queensland

---

6/107 Miles Platting Road,  
Eight Mile Plains Queensland 4113  
**T** (07) 3423 6900  
[generalenquiries@raq.org.au](mailto:generalenquiries@raq.org.au)  
[www.raq.org.au](http://www.raq.org.au)

**CEO:** Shane Klintworth | **President:** Peter Swarbrick

### Board

David Abbott	Barry Mahoney
Lucy Craddock	Eva-Marie Seeto
Catherine Ketton	Helen Poropat
Shane Klintworth	

*We hope you enjoy reading about what we do and that you make contact with us should you have any questions.*

---

## South Australia

---

1st Floor, 191 Flinders Street,  
Adelaide SA 5000  
**T** (08) 8216 5200  
mail@rasa.org.au  
[www.rasa.org.au](http://www.rasa.org.au)

**CEO:** Judith Cross | **President:** Franco Camatta

### Board

Harold Bates-Brownsword	Vaia Proios
Judith Cross	Vicki Toovey
Geoff Kay	

---

## Tasmania

---

20 Clare Street,  
New Town Tasmania 7008  
**T** (03) 6279 5000  
enquiry@reitas.com.au  
[www.tas.relationships.org.au](http://www.tas.relationships.org.au)

**CEO:** Mat Rowell | **President:** Greg Johannes

### Board

Mary Bent	John Groom
Richard Colquhoun	Wendi Key
Ella Dixon	Mat Rowell
Maureen Doherty	Diana Williams

---

## Victoria

---

450 Burke Road,  
Camberwell Victoria 3124  
**T** (03) 8573 2222  
reception@rav.org.au  
[www.relationshipsvictoria.com.au](http://www.relationshipsvictoria.com.au)

**CEO:** Andrew Bickerdike | **President:** Judi Anderson

### Board

Lyn Brodie	Ronda Jacobs
Peter Boehm	(to April 2013)
Peter Gome	Lyn Littlefield
Kimberly Hunter	John Lovell
	Michael Shaw

---

## Western Australia

---

15 Cambridge Street,  
West Leederville WA 6007  
**T** (08) 9489 6300  
info@wa.relationships.com.au  
[www.wa.relationships.com.au](http://www.wa.relationships.com.au)

**CEO:** Terri Reilly | **President:** Helen Shurven

### Board

Lucy Bourne	Chris Lewis (to April 2013)
Anthony Dobbs	Pauline Logan
Rob Donovan	Richard Wilson
Noelene Jennings	

---

*Relationships Australia New South Wales was successful in winning a share in \$10 million funding to deliver Find and Connect services for Forgotten Australians and former child migrants.*



*The Family Mental Health Services funding received by Relationships Australia Western Australia means we now offer preventative and early intervention mental health support to children, young people and families in Kwinana, Cockburn and Albany.*

---



Supported by the  
SBS Foundation

[www.relationships.org.au](http://www.relationships.org.au)

1300 364 277