

Welcome to PPSS March Newsletter

Welcome to this month's PPSS newsletter. We always look forward to bringing you the latest on our services and coming events for families and professionals. Our newsletters are increasing in length as we develop and launch more programs and have more news to share with you.

If you've always wanted to know more about Journal Club, this issue includes two articles that provide you with a greater insight into how it operates and the support it provides for participants. We tell you about recent and upcoming member events, including our film screening with FCC, July's session on 'Adoptee Stories', and more.

This year, members will see our work focus more on families formed through permanent care and adoption; this is a direct reflection of the lack of services for these families outside of PPSS. Many of our kinship and foster carer members will still find our programs interesting and relevant to their experiences and, as always, all PPSS services will remain open to individuals within any family who finds them of value.

Jennifer Duncan - CEO



Dates for your Diary

Thursday April 4
8.00 – 9.30pm
Journal Club

Thursday April 18
7.30 – 10.00pm
Movie Night

Thursday May 6
8.00 – 9.30pm
Journal Club

Thursday May 16
7.00 – 10.00pm
Building Stronger Relationships

Saturday June 23
10.00 – 4.00pm
Parenting with Mindfulness

Wednesday July 24
7.00 – 8.30pm
Adult Adoptee Stories

For information including venues visit
www.ppss.org.au/event-calendar-all

Let's Talk About School: Helping Educators Understand the Implications of Kinship Care

An excellent resource for kinship carers to use with their school and/or child's teacher to provide teachers with a deeper understanding of the experiences of children in kinship care and how these impact on their needs within the classroom.

Written by our Programs Manager, Lindy Bok, who has a background in special education, the handbook provides a deeper understanding of: the lived experience of kinship families; the way a child's losses and experiences impact on time at school; techniques to help schools cater for the needs of children in kinship care; further resources for families and teachers.

Available exclusively from our bookshop at <http://shop.ppss.org.au/> for \$18.00 inc. P & H.

Are you a PPSS member?

PPSS has a member base of over 700 parents and individuals from families formed through permanent care and adoption, as well as professionals and others with an interest or connection to home-based care. Many more people receive information about PPSS through parent groups, colleagues and community service organisations. Membership of PPSS is free.

If you receive information about PPSS through another source and would like to connect with us directly, you can apply for membership any time by going online www.ppss.org.au or downloading the membership form at www.ppss.org.au/membership and sending it to us at 135 Mt Alexander Road, Flemington 3031.



Movie Night – *Somewhere Between*

Thursday 18 April 7.30 – 10.00pm

PPSS is partnering with Families with Children from China (FCC) to host a movie night.

Somewhere Between is a documentary by Linda Goldstein Knowlton, and tells the coming-of-age stories of four girls adopted from China and raised in the U.S.

It explores the themes of identify formation, family and inter-country adoption from the perspective of these young women. For more information on the film, visit www.somewherebetweenmovie.com. The film will be followed by Q & A with one of the teenage subjects, via Skype from the US.

All ticket income from this event will be donated to the Amity Foundation to help to improve the lives of children living in institutional care in China.

Booking: <http://www.trybooking.com/COZT>
Age limit: appropriate for children 14 and over
Cost: \$15.00 + 30c booking fee
Venue: PPSS, 135 Mt Alexander Rd, Flemington
Parking: easy; in surrounding streets



Journal Club

Sharing information

What is Journal Club?

The PPSS Journal Club began in 2009. It is an informal, monthly gathering where people meet to share their experiences of caring for and raising children in permanent care, kinship care, adoption and foster care. There is always support and often laughter about the challenges and joys of parenting.

Every family's individual journey is deeply respected in this non-judgemental setting.

Prior to each monthly Journal Club gathering, a short publication or research article is circulated for use as a discussion starter. However, it is not necessary to have read the article beforehand.

Topics vary and tend to emerge from participants' experience. Topics can range from school-related issues to more complex issues such as how to talk to children about their difficult backgrounds, how to manage challenging behaviours, and how to move to a place of healing - plus much more ...

Journal Club gatherings can be seen as a real opportunity for shared learning. Participants share valuable insights into different ways of supporting troubled children and also benefit from mutual support provided by others in the group. Professional workers are also welcome to attend and contribute to the discussion. Workers also benefit from hearing about the lived experiences of carers and parents.

Journal Club meets on the first Thursday of each month 8pm – 9.30pm at the Collingwood Library, Stanton Street Abbotsford - no registration necessary. Participants pay a gold coin to cover the room rental.



A new Journal Club will be starting in May in Werribee. Dates for this new Journal Club will be available to members soon.

Mary Natoli, Chris Cook, Cas O'Neill
Journal Club Facilitators

Come and find out about Journal Club

Next month's **Journal Club** topic is "Setting Clear Boundaries" which explores the difference between parenting in an authoritative style versus authoritarian.

Authoritarian means to be strict, controlling and dictatorial whilst authoritative means to be dependable, reliable and convincing.... Come along to the Collingwood Library in Stanton St on Thursday April 4 at 8.00pm to join the discussion.

Journal Club... so much more than a discussion group

As PPSS evaluators we recently conducted a detailed examination of Journal Club and its contribution: we attended meetings, interviewed people who regularly attend, talked in depth to the facilitators and gathered information from an online survey.

Between two and 20 people have attended each Journal Club session. Regular participants say it gives them significant emotional support, and they also value learning about a variety of topics. Some can't attend every session but are enthusiastic occasional participants. What seems to happen for everyone is that their experiences are 'normalised', and it is a relief not to have to explain their situation. Centring discussions around articles is important, but so is sharing each other's lives and experiences for a short time every month.

What really surprised us was the large number of PPSS members who read the articles but don't attend meetings – over two-thirds of the 46 survey respondents. Some said they would like to discuss the articles in a group setting but can't attend Journal Club at the current evening timeslot and location in Collingwood. Some people volunteered to help establish a Journal Club in their own area. While others just wanted to read the articles for information, a number were interested in an on-line discussion group.

This work is part of an ongoing evaluation, and we will continue to report our findings as they come in.

Julie Contole and Gay Mitchell
PPSS Evaluators



Call for articles and other interesting reading

Do you know of any articles or other resources that might be of interest to parents or other members of families formed through permanent care and adoption? PPSS is seeking to build its list of [online resources](#) and would like to hear from you. We are looking for articles or other readings on topics particularly relevant to permanent care and adoption as well as videos and other online resources that you have found useful.

To send us your suggestions, email deborah@ppss.org.au

Support Groups and Community Events

Journal Club

Thursday 4 April, 8.00pm - 9.30pm, Collingwood Library
Topic: Setting Clear Boundaries

Playgroups

Please visit our [website](#) for playgroups in Northern, Southern, Western and Greater Western regions.

Parenting With Mindfulness

Join PPSS on Sunday 23 June from 10.00am – 4.00pm to explore the value of parenting with mindfulness. The day will include speakers and workshops covering:

- An introduction to mindfulness
- Integrating mindfulness into parenting approaches, particularly in the context of challenging behaviours
- The development of self-awareness
- Practical strategies for parents to engage in parenting in a positive and optimistic frame
- Mindfulness tools to use with children and young people

It will be held at CERES in Brunswick. Register your interest by emailing rita@ppss.org.au or phone 9020 1832.

Save
the
date

New Fact Sheets

PPSS recently produced several fact sheets on subjects that are relevant and informative to our community. We are pleased to advise we now have three additional fact sheets including:

- **Helping your Child with Emotional Regulation**
- **Time in Vs. Time Out**
- **FAQs About Adoption & Permanent Care**

Be sure to check our website regularly as we develop more informative topics. <http://www.ppss.org.au/resources>

Links of Interest

Eastern Social Welfare Society are happy to announce their 2013 Korean Language and Culture Program. Please see the link for more information.

http://adoption.eastern.or.kr/eastern/board/detail.jsp?b_no=49942&c_no=002006002&bt_no=32

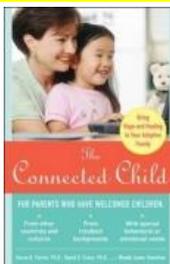
Hamer Scholarships is a Victorian Government program designed to build Chinese language capabilities of Victorians and strengthen cultural ties between Victoria and China. The program provides scholarships worth \$10,000 each to Victorian professionals, graduates, higher education students and researchers with links to China for Chinese language study at a Jiangsu-based institution.

Applications close 7/4/13. <http://www.dbi.vic.gov.au/projects-and-initiatives/the-hamer-scholarships>

Book Review

The Connected Child
Bring Hope and Healing to
your Adoptive Family

By Helen B Purvis, David R Cross and
Wendy Lyons Sunshine



For parents who have welcomed children from other countries and cultures; from troubled backgrounds; with special behavioural or emotional needs

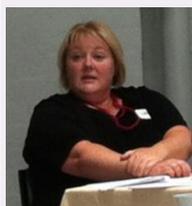
The *Connected Child* is a very easy to read book that offers hope to parents in their efforts to build stronger bonds with their adopted child, and to effectively deal with any learning or behavioural disorders. It offers a compassionate approach to helping your child heal, which has been developed by psychologists especially for children who have experienced early deprivation, trauma and attachment issues.

There are lots of practical, common sense strategies for parenting which focus on keeping the loving connection with your child, and helping your child learn appropriate behaviours and social skills.

The book offers simple but helpful explanations on topics such as: healthy and unhealthy child development; difficult behaviour; dealing with defiance; supporting healthy brain chemistry; and also gives lots of proactive strategies to make life easier.

To purchase this book and browse our bookshop visit <http://shop.ppss.org.au/> For any queries, please contact Michele on 9020 1833.

Workshop: *Understanding Lying and Stealing Behaviour in Traumatized Children*



On 23 March PPSS hosted a workshop on *Understanding Lying and Stealing Behaviour in Traumatized Children*. Led by Catherine McQueen, our presenter and also a senior clinician at Berry Street's Take Two service, we explored the impact of trauma on

children's development and relational capacity. Discussion centred on the impetus for lying and stealing by trauma-affected children, and the role of adults in supporting children to change their behaviour without driving them towards shame.

Useful resources for parents in this area include books by Daniel Hughes and Bruce Perry, including *Attachment-Focused Parenting* which is available via the PPSS book store.

PPSS would like to thank its volunteers Mary Natoli, Chris Cook, Cas O'Neill and Jenny Conrick for their efforts in organising this event.

Who am I? Making Records Meaningful - A new resource to support children's identity

Children develop a sense of who they are through the stories they are told about their childhoods and their families – through birth as well as through adoption or permanent care.

The records created about children while they are in care can be a key source of information, especially when children are not in touch with their family's oral historians.

As adults, these children will have access to the information in these records to help them come to terms with childhood experiences and develop a positive sense of identity.

Researchers from the *Who am I?* project have developed Who am I? Making Records Meaningful, a set of online resources to guide record-keeping that supports this sense of identity. Themes include:

- The 'Life Story Archive' and what it could contain
- What care leavers want to see in their records
- The story WITHIN the record
- Locating and accessing records
- The story OF the record
- Tip sheets for carers, workers and organisations
- Links to further resources

The Who am I? Making Records Meaningful resources can be found at <http://www.cfecfw.asn.au/know/research-and-evaluation/sector-research-partnership/partnership-projects/out-home-care/who-am-i> For more information, please contact Margaret Kertesz at mkertesz@unimelb.edu.au



Free Service for International Kinship Carers

Anyone who is caring for a relative child from overseas will know the joys, challenges and struggle such a situation involves. It is not always easy to find support, but a new service of International Social Service (ISS Australia) may be able to assist.

ISS Australia has been providing social work and specific legal services to families and children requiring assistance across international borders for over 50 years. In 2012 ISS received funding from the Barr Foundation to deliver counselling, support and outreach services to Victorian kinship carers and children who have arrived from overseas. This includes children for whom kinship care has been ordered by an overseas child protection authority, or unaccompanied children who have been directly sponsored by family members as orphan relatives.

The service is free and is delivered by qualified social workers. Service staff can offer short-term information and referral, or longer-term support, counselling and outreach. Anyone is welcome to contact ISS Australia to make enquiries about how our service can assist.

Please contact ISS Australia on Tel: 1300 657 843 or iss@iss.org.au

PPSS is funded by grants from [The William Buckland Foundation](#), [The Collie Foundation](#), [The Felton Bequest Committee](#) and [The Truby & Florence Williams Charitable Trust](#), which are managed by ANZ Trustees

Life Story Work Training

PPSS is currently developing *Life Story Work* training to be delivered to our members later this year.

PPSS has a strong commitment to providing training that incorporates the lived experience of children and families in permanent care and adoption.

As such, we would like to invite expressions of interest from members to become 'volunteer peer trainers' for PPSS's *Life Story Work*.

Volunteer Peer Trainers will undertake a train-the-trainer workshop to assist in the delivery of a *Life Story Work* program to parents.

If you think you may be interested in being a volunteer peer trainer, could you please register your interest via email to Rita at rita@ppss.org.au

We want to hear from you!

PPSS is planning its training activities for 2014 and we want to hear from you. What are the big ticket items that you would like to see us cover in training and workshops for members?

To have your say, take two minutes to go online to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/7NNZ9QT>
Survey closes on Monday, 15 April!!