

Finformation



*The Newsletter of The Family Inclusion Network of WA Inc
Working With Families Involved in the Child Protection System*



Family Christmas Lunch 2018

FAMILY PARTNERS:

Parents Helping Parents

The mission of The Family Inclusion Network of WA (Fin WA) is to have a child protection system that is respectful and inclusive of parents, families and community, as important participants. We know that when this happens, it is more likely that children have improved relationships with parents and other carers in the long term, and develop a sense of relational permanence that helps ground their identity.

Fin WA is committed to helping families navigate the child protection system so they can participate with more information, knowledge and confidence. Part of how we are including and supporting families, is by developing a Peer Mentor programme. We are calling our Peer Mentors: Family Partners. Family Partners are people who have had personal experiences with the child protection system and who are able to walk alongside other families to provide hope and support as they navigate the system. Regular training, supervision and support for Family Partners is provided. The kinds of roles Family Partners can fulfill include:

- * Administrative tasks
- * Support and information to parents
- * Accompanying a parent to various appointments
- * Providing input into training, resources and consultations.

For more information about the programme, including training dates, please contact our Community Development Officer, Jacquie:

Ph: 0411 032 308

FRIDAY DROP-IN

Every **Friday between 10.30am - 12 noon**
at Fin WA Office

156 Vincent St, North Perth.

Drop in if you need information and advice to help guide you through the child protection system, or simply to chat with other parents.

Bus routes 19 and 960 from Roe Street Bus Station

Free street parking available

To book a time, call 9328 6434

Fin WA runs regular:

Finding Your Way with the Department training throughout the year. This 3 hour, interactive workshop provides an overview of the Departments processes, and of parents rights and responsibilities.

Contact us for more information

Ph: 9328 6434

Bringing Up Great Kids, Mirrabooka.

Bringing Up Great Kids is an interactive, reflective and supportive parenting programme. Parenting can be brilliant, with many amazing experiences but there are times when it can be challenging, stressful and hard to manage. When the challenges become too much, getting support can help you be the parent you want to be. This programme offers regular workshops, home visits and a supported playgroup.

Some parents need extra support to:

- cope and find balance when times are tough.
- strengthen relationships between parent & child
- recognise their strengths
- plan for a positive future

If this sounds like you, the Bringing Up Great Kids Program, Mirrabooka may be helpful.

For more information or to book your place in a workshop call Michelle: Ph: 0401 839 766



Workshops

Tuesdays: 10am - 12.30pm

**Sudbury Community House
Mirrabooka**

Janice's story

We have been working with Janice, a 35 year old mother of two since February 2017. Janice has been involved with the Department of Communities, Child Protection in the past. Janice's daughter is in full time school, so she has been regularly attending playgroup with her 2 year old son Tom.

Prior to having children, Janice drank alcohol and used drugs, but since having children she has stopped. Janice is a single mum and her ex-partner, the father of the children, visits infrequently. Janice experiences poor mental health; her depression and emotional instability create significant barriers to her capacity to function on a daily basis, and to meet the needs of her children.

Janice has developed trusting relationships with both BUGK workers, who have been providing incidental counselling and teaching Janice some new coping strategies. When Janice feels that she is becoming unwell, she will make a point of coming attending the group to seek support, and she notes that "Tom and I love coming to the playgroup, it is keeping me sane and on a steady path." During the playgroup, workers have been guiding Janice in recognising Tom's cues for her attention and coaching her on how to respond. Janice has also found the information about brain development fascinating and useful - she has even passed this knowledge onto other friends.

Janice has also been assisted with referral to other relevant services such as Speech Pathology Services, and Counselling.

10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

In November 2018, over 100 people gathered to help celebrate and reflect on the history and work of Fin WA. Some of the many quotes we received at the event:

"Dear Fin WA, you are the light of hope in many families lives who are often at their darkest hours. I want to thank you for all the work you do for families."



"A great day of shared partnership, respect and love. That is what Fin WA is all about."



I was deeply encouraged by the advocacy and encouragement of the Fin WA Advocate. The work you are all doing to be the voice - to amplify the voice - of the lived experience of families who have had to navigate the system. It was an honour to be a part of the 10 year anniversary.



Strength from Hearts in our Hands

In 2018 Fin WA commissioned Noongar Artist Nerolie Blurton to do an art piece that speaks to the experience of families involved with the Child Protection System. We are thrilled with the vibrant and meaningful work that she designed. This is the story behind the art:

At the centre is the large wavy green spirit representing the work of Fin WA, a good place in which growth and knowledge begins. It is a strong spirit at the centre of helping others. The spirit can deal with many issues from the heart and soul which are leading out from the spirits heart. It deals with this in a loving way.

The family connection line at the top is connected to families from many places. The families between the waterholes are happy and have been reunited; on the other side near the eye there are no families together. The eye is sad and crying lots of tears from them because they are not together.

The small white connected dots are the stories of the people in the strong spirits hands - the stories of many people it connects with and helps; many people are sitting around yarning at the home of the strong spirit (the "U" symbols) - it helps them heal.

The heart beat lines carry grief and trauma in life but are still strong because they start to heal near the strong spirit. All the circles are homes and places of families helped.

The lines everywhere are travel lines connecting them up - they are travelling on their journey to understanding and gaining helpful knowledge for the future. The leaves represent life, and the flowers growth.

The tall tree with roots represents standing tall with strong roots attached to country.

The landscape is our connection to country, to the land and each other.

In the circles some spirits are upside down and not all together yet - just as life can be; in the other circles the family is safe, strong and together - up the right way as one.