



connect

VOLUME 4 • ISSUE 2 • AUTUMN 2014

A NEWSLETTER FOR SUPPORTERS OF CATHOLICCARE





Helping families to stay connected

Here at CatholicCare there has been a long tradition of service and advocacy for the most vulnerable members of our community.

Of particular focus are those marginalised in society as a result of poverty, disadvantage or other barriers to social inclusion.

Healthy relationships underpin the wellbeing of our whole community and help to reduce life stresses and disadvantage.

We know people can feel overwhelmed at times. Together, we can help a family negotiate a solution when adversity strikes, whether from unemployment, trauma, loss and grief, alcohol or other drug issues.

We want to continue negotiating solutions and provide affordable services that look after the needs of families and individuals, but while the demand for services is increasing, the likelihood of long-term government funding has greatly decreased.

In light of this, we are investigating ways to generate alternative income, and ensure our focus on building kinder and more equitable societies continues into the future.

In this edition of CONNECT, the spotlight is on services that assist families who are in the process of separating. As you will read, our services are highly successful in helping to restore not only the child-parent relationship but relationships as a whole.

We hope you are inspired by our work and enjoy reading how your financial support is making a difference to people's lives.

Thank you for your prayers and support.

Fr Joe Caddy
Chief Executive Officer

Parenting Orders Program (POP)

POP provides individual support/counselling and group programs for families in conflict over parenting arrangements. POP services are available to all, whether ordered by the court or by private agreement.

190 families (489 individuals including children) participated in individual and group support programs.

*74% of clients surveyed said they now have new skills and knowledge to use in family relationships.**



Case Study

When the Federal Magistrate's Court (FMC) referred Jane and Rick to the Parenting Orders Program, they'd been separated for 7 years and had a long history of court proceedings about the care of their children Charlotte, 13 and Matt, 9.

Rick was not letting Matt see Jane, believing he was being abused by her and her new partner. Charlotte was only seeing her Dad for a few hours per fortnight and the relationship and communication between Jane and Rick was highly inflammatory (abusive phone calls and text messages etc.). Added into the mix was a history of family violence and Rick's criminal background, of which he was very ashamed.

The POP counsellor held a number of individual sessions with both parents to help them understand their parenting styles and how the conflict was impacting the children and each child's relationship with the parent.

As a result Rick began to understand why he was overprotective of his son (which related to his own history of trauma as a child) and how he could better relate to his daughter and repair a relationship damaged by family violence and conflict.

Rick then approached Jane and shared his concerns and genuine desire to resolve the dispute out of court. Drawing on the skills learnt, they were able to talk through the issues and resolved the matter without court intervention. By the time the case closed, Charlotte was spending more time, including overnights, with her father and the relationship is improving.

**Figures are for the period July 13 – March 14.*

Our focus is helping families to work through their differences and agree on arrangements that ensure the interests of the children are at the forefront.

Family Dispute Resolution (FDR)

Our accredited practitioners use their expertise in Family Law to help families to work through issues of parenting, property and financial settlements without having to go to court.

Case Study

"Tell your father if he doesn't send your jacket, I don't know what I'll do."

"I don't have your jacket. You must have lost it. Your mother is just trying to turn you against me."

That's how a recent case started between Rosalie and Jock. Despite having separated more than 3 years ago when their children Julie and Joe were 7 and 5, the conflict between the parents was still going strong. Rosalie initially came to CatholicCare seeking help for Julie who was being unusually disruptive and sullen at school. It was becoming a real problem to get her there, whilst Joe the youngest was having difficulty sleeping at night.

It soon became apparent that there were bigger issues at hand and Rosalie and Jock were internally referred to the Family Dispute Resolution service.

669 sessions were offered, supporting 282 families across locations in Melbourne and Geelong.

*75% of FDR clients surveyed agreed they're better able to cope or deal with their issues as a result of the help they received.**

Although Rosalie admitted to being sceptical initially, she and Jock agreed to try child focused family dispute resolution "because nothing was working and we were both feeling emotionally drained". The FDR practitioner, Juan, helped them to understand each other's position and, most importantly, got them to think about what it would be like to be Julie or Joe at this time. How exhausted might they be?

After three visits they managed to arrive at a workable arrangement with a review scheduled for six months later. "The kids are definitely happier and more settled now that Jock and I aren't at each other's throats every time he rings" said Rosalie. "Juan helped us to get on with making things work on a practical level and to ask ourselves regularly - how will this arrangement work for Julie and Joe?"

Geelong Family Relationship Centre (FRC)

Our Family Relationship Centre in Geelong works in partnership with other community service organisations to support families and see them through difficult times.

Meg and Seth came to the FRC in disagreement about a 50/50 living arrangement for their 10 year old daughter Tegan and 7 year old son Jack. Meg felt Tegan wasn't coping and needed to spend more time with her. Both parents had minimal contact and would often argue when they did.

In the first mediation session they struggled to see how their poor communication and conflict was affecting the children. We referred them to our three hour seminar 'Building Connections' which focuses parents on tuning into their children post-separation, and developing communication strategies that improve the co-parenting relationship.

In the second session, both parents spoke about how much they gained from 'Building Connections' and agreed that while the children managed the 50/50 living arrangements well, they found the conflict difficult to cope with. As a result, they were able to reflect on

397 families (878 individuals including children) accessed support through our FRC in Geelong.

*77% of clients surveyed said as a result of the help they received, they have information about other services to meet their family's needs.**

their own responsibility in improving communication, leading to a more positive and respectful environment for the children to travel between homes.

While they left the living arrangements in place, an agreement was made to communicate more effectively and "check in" with each other on a regular basis to see how the children were managing.

International Women's Day 2014 – Inspiring Change

International Women's Day was celebrated in style with music, inspiring talks and a special award ceremony.



There were tears when guests heard the personal story of our own Tomasa Morales who works with the Refugee and Settlement program in Dandenong. Tomasa and her family fled war when she was a child and sought asylum in Honduras. Years later she returned to her native El Salvador as a Human Rights worker before arriving in Australia as a refugee with her husband and children.

Sr. Mary O'Shannassy, Coordinator of the Prison Chaplaincy was the recipient of our Inspirational Woman Award, which recognises those who embody the spirit of International Women's Day. Sr. Mary is a well deserving winner, and advocates tirelessly for programs that break the chains of poverty and disadvantage experienced by prisoners upon their release.

**Tomasas full story will be featured in an upcoming edition of Kairos.*

'An Afternoon with Dudley Drew' raises \$5000 for Clemente Fitzroy

On 15 March, Dudley Drew, one of Australia's living art legends made a rare public appearance at St Kevin's College Toorak for a Q&A session.



Sr. Mary Carroll (middle) with the winning painting

While initially a little overwhelmed by all the attention, Dudley managed to delight the audience of art lovers and budding artists with his sometimes colourful answers!

Dudley also donated a spectacular still-life for raffling at the event, and a delighted Sr Mary Carroll was the lucky one who got to take it home.

With \$5000 raised, two adult students from disadvantaged backgrounds now have the opportunity to pursue a tertiary level education.

A great result for everyone involved!



Parker-Moffit Bequest Society

On 20 March, long-term and committed donors came together to learn how, through their bequests, they help secure the future of many families.



Fr. Joe Caddy and Bequest Society members

Peter Foster, a long time CatholicCare donor shared his personal story of adopting three children through the Catholic Social Welfare Bureau and paid tribute to the courage, tenacity and vision of Norma Parker and Connie Moffit whom the Society is named after.

The Society was established in 2013 to protect their legacy and to preserve, enhance and promote the work of CatholicCare into the future.



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CatholicCare News

- An organisational Capacity Building Project (CBP) is underway to review our current systems and procedures.
- Our values are being refreshed to better reflect the rapidly changing non-profit environment in which we operate.
- A Learning and Development Review to gauge future staff learning and development needs has been completed.
- Our new website was launched. Users can now purchase products, donate, book courses, apply for jobs and register for events online.



visit www.ccam.org.au



Frank Tomasetig,
Volunteer Coordinator
and IT Volunteer, Ajay

- A volunteer blog site is under development with the assistance of volunteer IT expert, Ajay Parthasarathi. The site will be a forum for current and prospective volunteers to exchange information, opinions and news based on their own experiences of volunteering.

- We farewell Janet Cribbes, who leaves us on 13 June after five years of service. Janet has led the Fundraising, Marketing and Communications team since September 2012 and prior to that oversaw our highly successful 2009 Bushfire Community Recovery Program in the Black Saturday fire affected areas in and around Kinglake. Janet has made significant contributions to CatholicCare and we wish her well in her future endeavours.



Janet Cribbes

Prayer for Today

Every day I need you Lord,
but this day especially,
I need some extra strength
to face whatever is to be.

This day more than any other day,
I need to feel you near...
To fortify my courage
and to overcome my fear.

By myself I cannot meet
the challenge of the hour.
There are times
when human creatures
need a higher power.

To help them bear
what must borne,
and so dear Lord I pray,
hold onto my trembling hand
and be with me today.

walk 5kms in their shoes?



Jamila walked at night in a Malaysian forest to get to Indonesia

THE  AGE
RUNMELBOURNE
PRESENTED BY 

July 27, 2014
FEDERATION SQUARE

[SIGN UP NOW](#)

Join the team today!

www.ccam.org.au/events

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