

AN INTERACTIVE GUIDE TO RESOURCES FOR KINSHIP CARERS

Many of these resources are also of interest to permanent, foster and informal carers

2024
March





GPV/KCV acknowledges the peoples of the Kulin nation as the traditional owners of our great land and offers respect to Elders, past and present.

GPV/KCV acknowledges that the Aboriginal culture existed in Australia before European settlement and consisted of many community groups. Further, we acknowledge the Indigenous peoples of this land as the oldest continuing cultures in human history.

GPV/KCV acknowledges that laws and policies of the past have inflicted grief and suffering on our fellow Australians and regrets the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families.

GPV/KCV believes that a society that is inclusive of all is crucial to individual and community wellbeing and will behave with respect towards all irrespective of their race, religion, sexuality, gender or socio-economic background.

GPV/KCV acknowledges 13th of February as National Apology Day, the anniversary of then Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, delivering the National Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples in 2008. GPV/KCV will take steps that promote a happier and healthier future for Indigenous Australians, particularly the children and young people.

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Kinship Carers Victoria
acknowledges the support of the
Victorian government.



Families,
Fairness
and Housing

How to use this guide

Each resource in this guide can be accessed by simply clicking on the cover page image or title of the resource in which you are interested. This will take you to a version you can view online.

UPCOMING RESOURCES

The next resources produced by KCV will be the following:

- Podcast #31 - Kinship Care and Cyber Safety
- Resource Booklet – Case Planning, Case Management, Roles and Responsibilities

These will be posted on the KCV website as completed.

The next edition of this guide will be published in June/July 2024.

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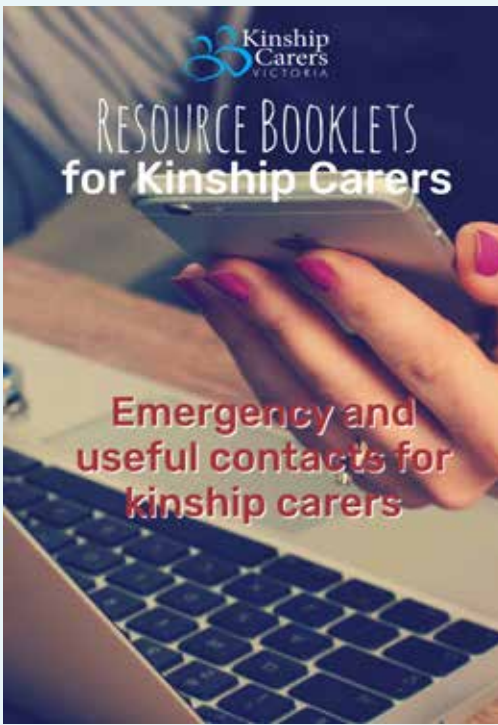
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Resource Booklets

There are three easy ways to access these resources:

1. View each individual resource described in this guide by clicking on its title or image in the guide
2. View the contents presented in this guide, and much more, on the KCV website at <https://kinshipcarersvictoria.org/carer-resources-booklets/> or by doing a web search for Kinship Carers Victoria
3. Use the QR code below to access the resources page on the KCV website





Emergency and useful contacts for kinship carers

A comprehensive – but by no means exhaustive – list of contact details for organisations providing services, support and information for carers and the children and young people in their care.

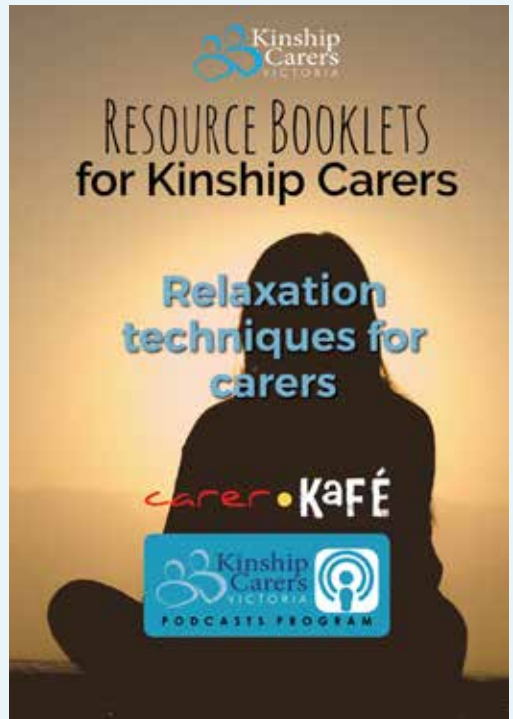
Includes emergency numbers such as police, ambulance, fire but also contact details for many other vitally important organisations in areas such as suicide prevention, mental health, alcohol and other drugs addiction, children and youth helplines, sexual assault, legal help, financial assistance, seniors' rights and more.

Relaxation techniques for carers (from podcast)

Deep breathing and meditation can provide you with a sense of calm, peace and balance that can benefit your emotional wellbeing and overall health through reducing stress.

The podcast features an interview with Eliza Terry, from YogaLiving. Eliza has been teaching Iyengar Yoga since 1998, and teaches mindfulness meditation, with a strong focus on breath work for relaxation.

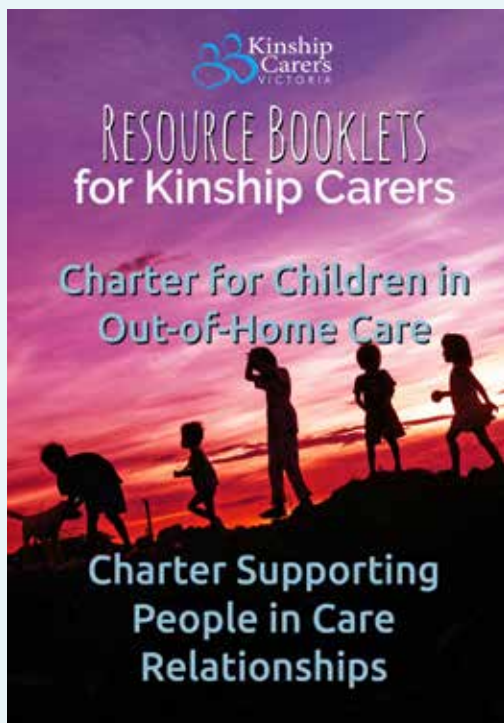
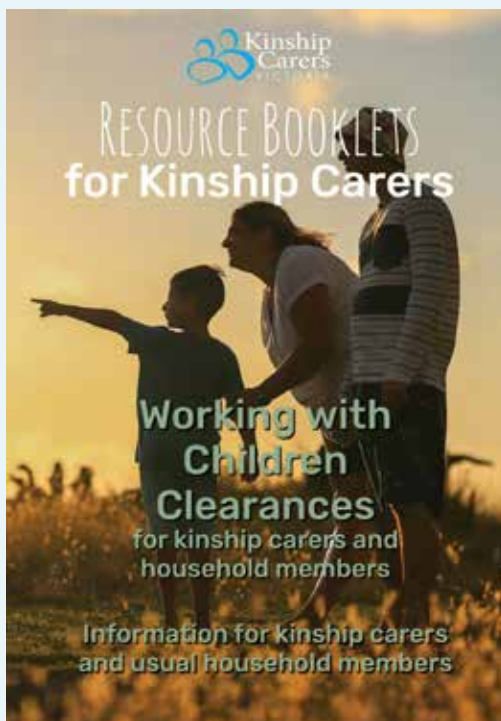
The podcast also includes interviews with two carers who share details of their own experiences with trying relaxation and breathing techniques.



Working with Children Clearances - for kinship carers & household members

A Working with Children Clearance (WWCC) (formerly Working with Children Check) is an ongoing screening process that provides greater protection for children, including children in kinship care, by monitoring a person's suitability to engage in child-related work (which includes carers).

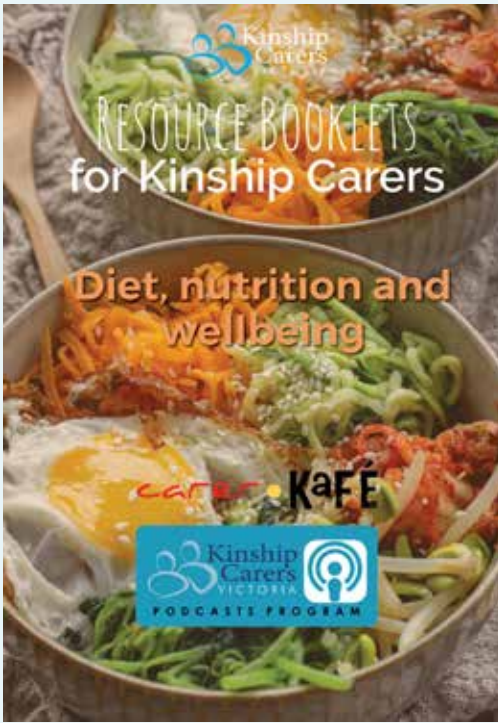
This booklet includes information such as when and how you should apply for a WWCC, what a 'usual household member' is, and what documents are required.



Charters – for children in OOHC & people in care relationships

The Charter for Children in Out-of-home Care is for children and young people who cannot live with their parents and are in OOHC. It lists what they should expect from people who look after and work with them while they are in care. This is also a guide for workers and carers on things they need to ensure happen.

The *Carers Recognition Act 2012* is supported by the Victorian charter supporting people in care relationships and includes situations where someone is being cared for under the Act in a kinship care arrangement.



Diet, nutrition & wellbeing (from podcast)

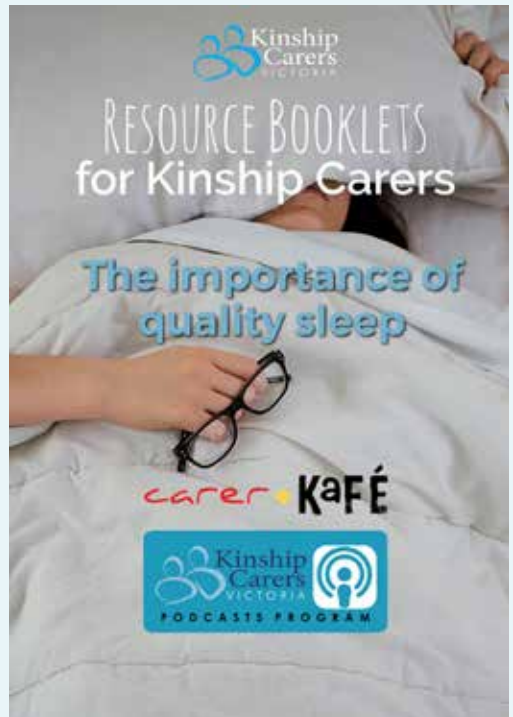
What are the latest trends in nutrition? What does recent research say about what and how we should eat? And what should the children in our care, in particular those children with neurodevelopmental disorders, eat?

Based on an adapted transcript of KCV's podcast on diet and nutrition, clinical nutritionist Nikki Valentini, director of SuperNature Nutrition, covers a broad range of current issues regarding nutrition and answers some common questions from carers and others regarding this topic.

The importance of quality sleep (from podcast)

Sleep plays a vital part in our wellbeing – so how do we get the right amount of it? Based on an adapted transcript of KCV's podcast on sleep, clinical psychologist Dr Damon Ashworth focuses on helping gain a greater understanding of our sleep difficulties and provides strategies to improve sleep and subsequent overall wellbeing.

Also includes interviews with two carers who share their personal stories around their sleeping patterns and how they manage this whilst dealing with their kinship carer responsibilities.



Planning for more effective access visits (from podcast)

Based on an adapted transcript of KCV's podcast on access visits. Access or contact visits with biological family can be challenging and may produce a range of emotions in children in kinship care families.

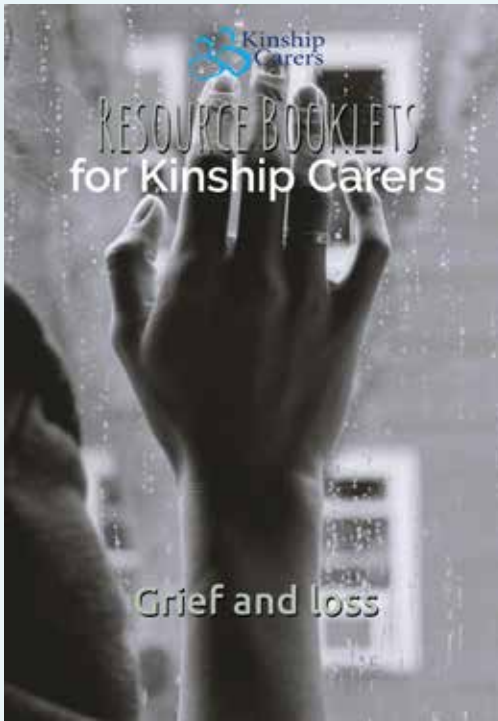
In this podcast, we spoke with Adam Lyons, Managing Director of Lancaster Consulting, who addresses some of the more common issues carers face in preparing the children in their care for access visits and outlines strategies for debriefing children afterwards.



Running a support group/being a carer representative

The kinship care movement needs groups that support, inform and promote the work of carers, and benefits from carer representatives arguing the case for all carers. This booklet contains helpful hints for carer representatives on conducting an effective kinship carer support group.

Using some kinship carers as representatives arguing the case for all kinship carers is a democratic and proven way of ensuring that kinship carers' voices are heard.



Grief and loss

Grief and feelings of loss can be triggered by many different experiences. These might include the death of a family member, friend or someone close, a relationship breakdown, placing your child(ren) into someone else's care, a loss of possession through disaster or theft, the death of a pet, retrenchment and more.

This resource booklet contains the details and contact numbers of agencies and organisations that may help you, the children and young people in your care, and any other friends or family members to cope with feelings arising from any of the above experiences.

Support for informal kinship carers

Invaluable information about the types of assistance, support, services and advice available to informal kinship carers. This booklet includes a comprehensive listing of federal and state government support, such as carer payments and allowances, Victorian state schools relief fund and more.

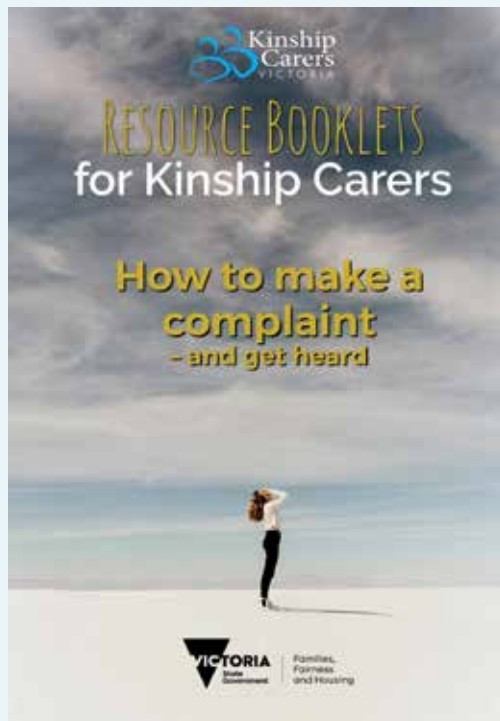
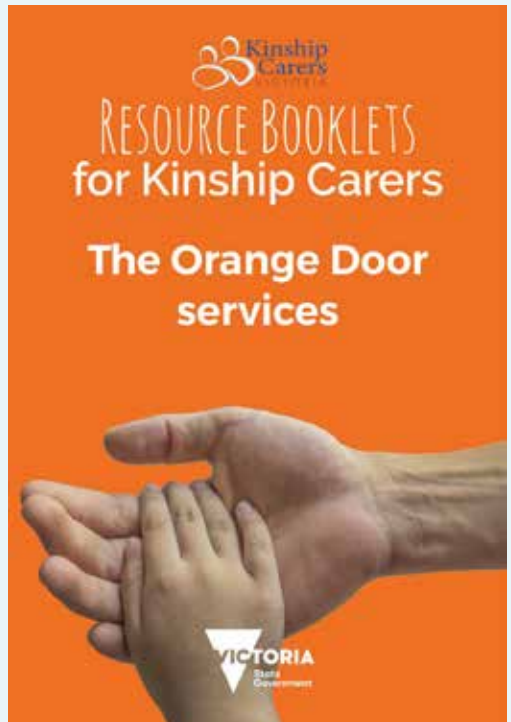
Also included is a listing of non-government organisations that provide support, such as Parentline, Griefline, Women's Legal Service Victoria, Partrens in Wellbeing, Family Relationships Online and more.



The Orange Door services

The Orange Door (formerly child FIRST) network provides help for women, children and young people who are experiencing family violence. It is also the entry point into family services for families who need assistance with the care and wellbeing of children to access the services they need to feel safe and supported.

Includes a list of contact details for statewide Orange Door services plus after-hours services such as Safe Steps, Sexual Assault Crisis Line, Men's Referral Service, the Rainbow Door, Kids Helpline and more.

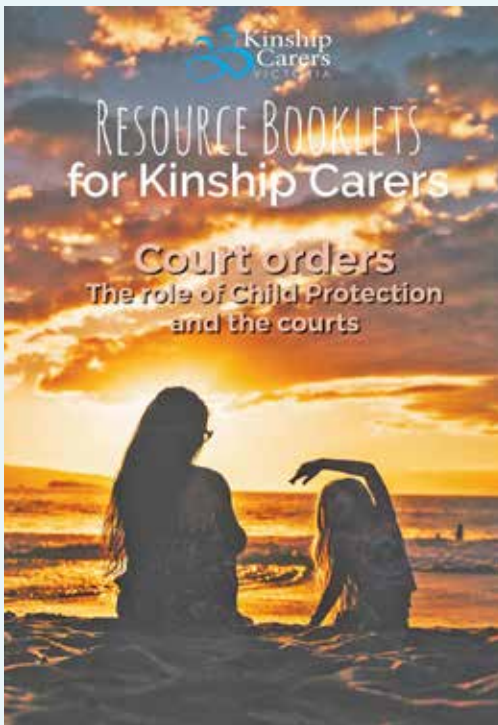


How to make a complaint – and get heard

You have the right to provide feedback, make a complaint or give a compliment about a decision or a situation relating to the care of a child or young person.

This booklet contains information on how to provide feedback or make a complaint with the DFFH or the Victorian Ombudsman, how to request reviews of Child Protection decisions, register a complaint with your agency and more.

Also included is useful information for kinship carers on advocacy and support.



Court orders – the role of Child Protection and the courts

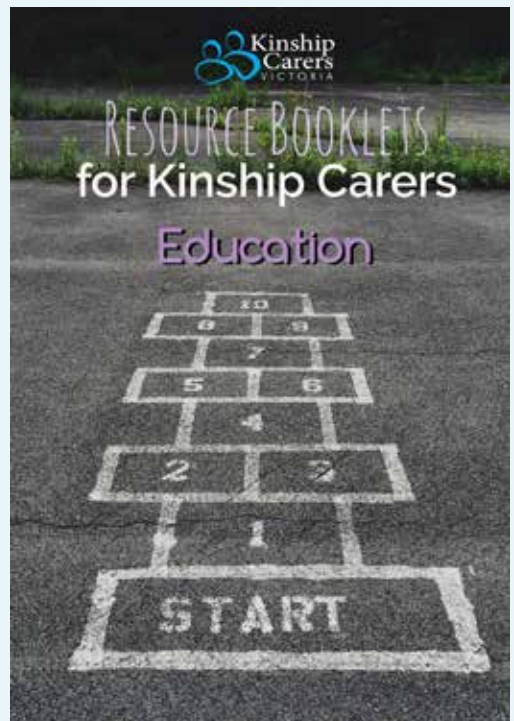
Includes a summary of the roles of Victorian Child Protection Service, the Victorian Children's Court, and the Family Court of Australia, plus information on the types of Child Protection orders in Victoria, Family Court orders and agreements.

Listed also is information on where to get legal advice and support form organisations such as the Law Institute of Victoria Legal Referral Service, the Court Network Children's Court Program, the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service Co-operative and more.

Education

This booklet contains a listing of Victorian Government Department of Education resources and support for children and young people in out-of-home care.

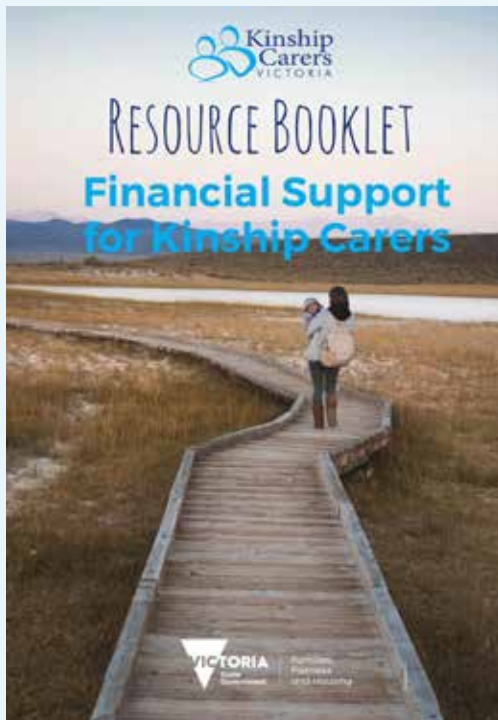
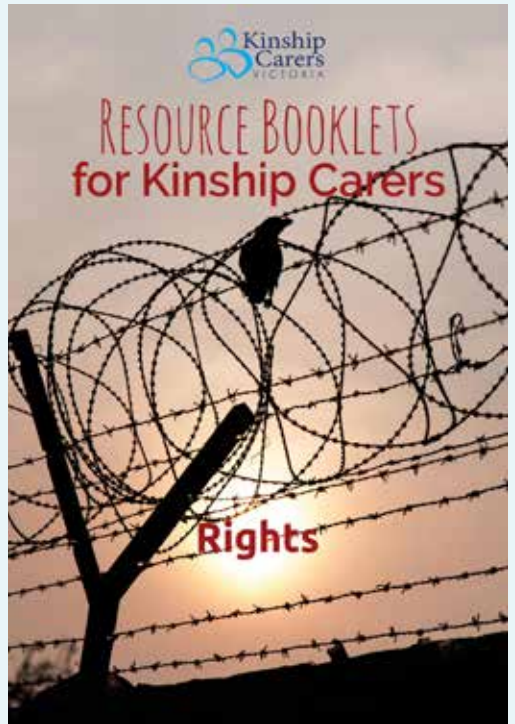
Includes details on funding sources, supported playgroups and programs, such as those run by not-for-profit organisation State Schools' Relief, the Early Start Kindergarten program, Raising Expectations, Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD), Koorie Engagement Support Officers and LOOKOUT Education Support Centres.



Rights

Contained in this booklet are federal and state government bodies plus other organisations, both local and international, which advocate for the rights of children and young people, such as the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission. Includes a listing of all state Commissioners for Children and Young People and Children's Advocate Commissioners.

Also contains the Charter of Children's Rights, the Carers Recognition Act, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights plus a summary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.




Financial support for kinship carers

Invaluable listing of numerous types of state and federal government assistance for kinship carers, including eligibility criteria and details on how to apply.

Included is information on Victorian assistance, such as care allowances, the carer card, client support funding, education and medical payments, and more.

The listing of Commonwealth assistance includes the family tax benefit, carer payment, child support, jobseeker payment, rent assistance and others.


**RESOURCE BOOKLETS
for Kinship Carers**



**For children & young
people with an
emotional or physical
disability**

For children & young people with an emotional/ physical disability

This booklet contains a comprehensive list of bodies offering support for families of children with disability, injuries, illness, a neurological condition or additional needs.

Includes organisations offering playgroups, online, telephone and face-to-face counselling, inclusion programs, mindfulness resources, equipment and therapies programs, assessments, peer support, advocacy and more.

Assistance for those coping with suicide

A listing of suicide-prevention organisations, providing contact numbers and information for emergency, crisis or other types of support.

Organisations include Lifeline, Beyond Blue, the Suicide Callback Service, 13YARN, Headspace, the Rainbow Door and many more.

Also includes organisations providing suicide-bereavement support, plus a support pack from the Victorian Government for those bereaved by suicide or other sudden death.


**RESOURCE BOOKLETS
for Kinship Carers**

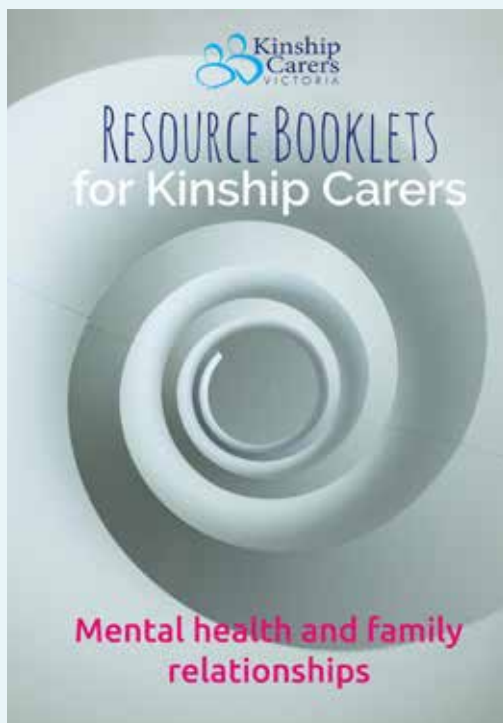
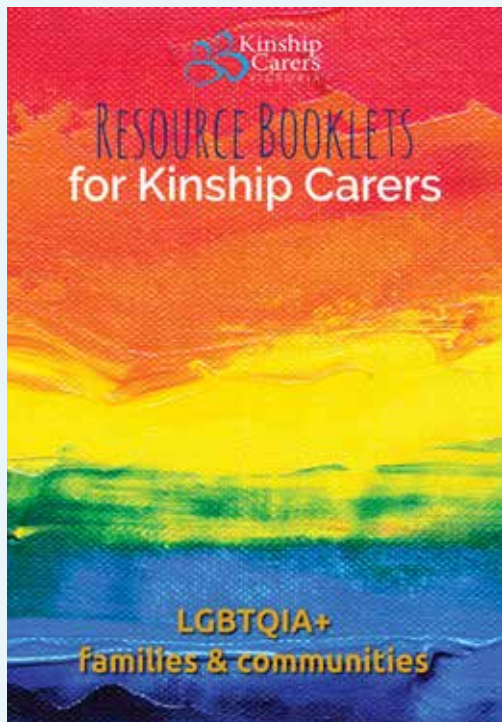


**Assistance for those
coping with suicide**

LGBTQIA+ families & communities

A comprehensive listing of agencies and organisations offering online, telephone and face-to-face counselling, support, services, referrals, seminars, professional development, workshops and social events for all members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

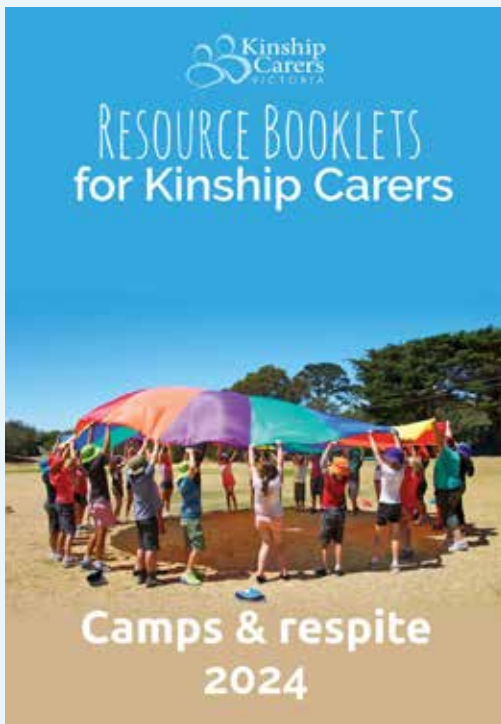
Includes organisations such as QLife, Queerspace, Zoe Belle Gender Collective, Wire, Rainbow Families, the Victorian Pride Centre, Transgender Victoria, Parents of Gender Diverse Children and many more.



Mental health and family relationships

Extensive list of government, not-for-profit and other organisations and agencies providing crisis support, online, telephone, video and face-to-face counselling, information, services, community forums, legal advice, referrals and financial advice on issues relating to mental health and families.

Includes Lifeline, Kids Helpline, QLife, MensLine Australia, 1800 RESPECT, the Butterfly Foundation, Yarning Safe and Strong, the National Alcohol and Other Drug Hotline, Griefline, MINUS18 and many others.



Camps & respite

Respite services support carers by allowing them time alone to rest and recharge after the demands of their carer role. Bodies providing respite services include Abracadabra Childcare Services and Family Contact Service.

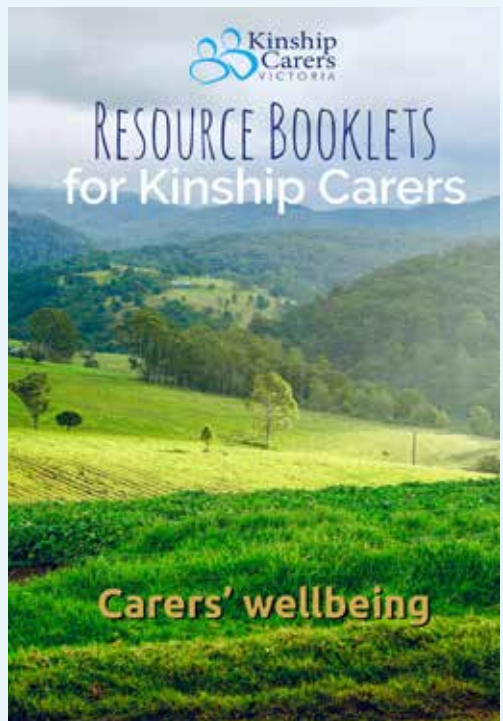
This booklet also includes a list of camps offered for children who have suffered trauma, substance abuse in the home, domestic violence, family breakdown, difficulty in school and/or are living in out-of-home care. Types of camps available include kids camps, family camps, teen girls camps, teen boys camps, week-long or weekend camps.

Carers' wellbeing

This resource contains several articles on activities for carer wellbeing plus a listing of KCV's seven wellbeing magazines already published which are full of articles on how carers can look after themselves.

Features information on KCV podcasts on carer wellbeing, with a range of expert speakers providing information and advice on this crucial element of placement stability.

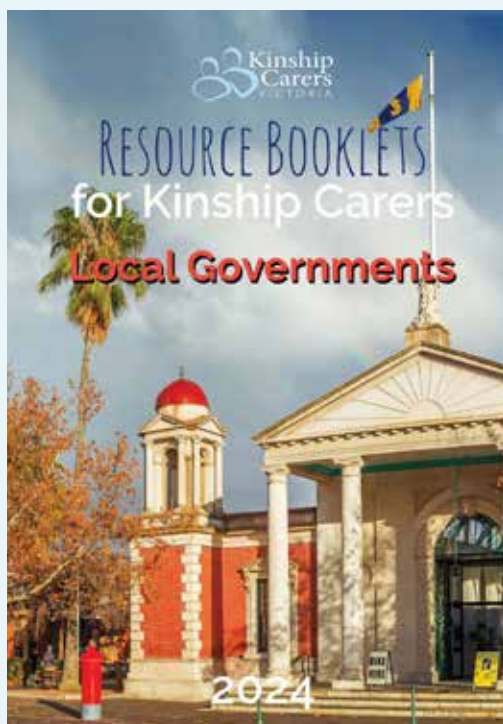
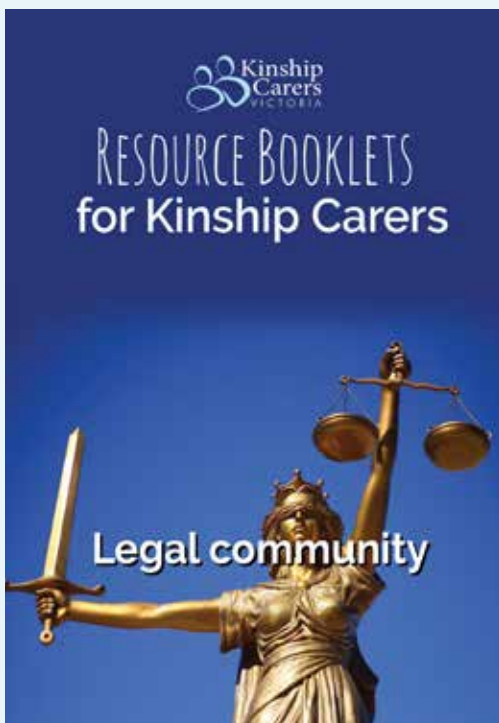
Topics covered in the KCV wellbeing podcast series: diet and nutrition for neurodiverse children and young people, grief and loss, preparing for access visits, the benefits of play, carer learning and development, the importance of quality sleep and more.



Legal community

Contains details of government and private organisations and networks providing free and/or paid-for legal advice and services.

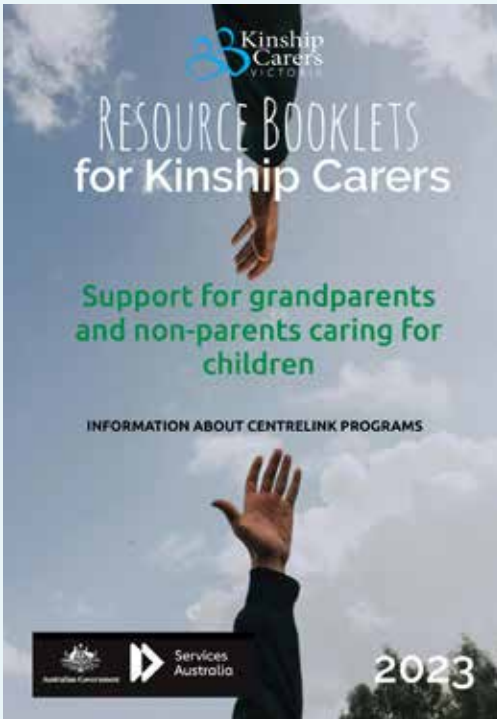
Includes such bodies as Victoria Legal Aid, the Victorian Ombudsman, Seniors Rights Victoria, Court Network Children's Court Volunteers, Women's Legal Service Victoria, the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service Co-operative, the Commission for Children and Young People, the Law Institute of Victoria's lawyer referral service and more, plus contact details for over 50 Community Legal Centres statewide.



Local government areas (LGAs)

Local governments offer a wide variety of programs to support families. These programs can suit the needs and interests of kinship care families. Therefore, we urge all kinship care families to make contact with their own local government to ask for information about family support programs. If you have a computer, you can search for your local government's website to find what is available. Just type in the name of your local government.

This booklet contains an up-to-date listing of contact details for all 79 Victorian LGAs.



Support for grandparents and non-parents caring for children

Information in this booklet is for grandparent and non-parent carers who are looking after a child under formal or informal arrangements.

Contains an invaluable listing of Centrelink/Services Australia supports available to kinship carers, including allowances, payments, benefits and how to apply for these and other forms of financial help, plus information, advice and other services.

KCV Podcast series

There are three easy ways to access these podcasts:

1. View each individual podcast described in this guide by clicking on its title or image in the guide
2. View the contents presented in this guide, and much more, on the KCV website at <https://kinshipcarersvictoria.org/listen-download-podcasts/> or by doing a web search for Kinship Carers Victoria
3. Use the QR code below to access the podcasts page on the KCV website



Podcast #30 – Diet and nutrition for neurodiverse children and young people (Mar 2024)



What is neurodiversity?

This is a term describing the idea that people experience and interact with the world in many varied ways, but there is no one 'right' way of thinking, learning, or behaving, with these differences not viewed as deficits.

Nikki Valentini, Clinical Nutritionist, functional medicine practitioner and director of SuperNature Nutrition, joined Kinship

Carers Victoria to speak in depth about the effect of diet/nutrition on children with autism, ADHD, OCD and other types of neurodiversity.

Podcast #29 – Issues with education for children and young people in out-of-home care (Jan 2024)

In this podcast we speak with Victoria's Commissioner for Children and Young People, Liana Buchanan, about the Commission's 'Let Us Learn' inquiry report, tabled in the Victorian parliament in November 2023.

The report shows that the education engagement and outcomes for children and young people in out-of-home care trail significantly behind those of their peers.

Liana explains why the Commission conducted the report and outlines its reaction to the findings. She also discusses some of the Commission's most pressing recommendations resulting from the inquiry.



Podcast #28 – Grief and loss (Dec 2024)

Throughout our lives, grief is an unavoidable and essential part of what it is to be human. When individuals and families experience a loss, every member of the family can feel and process their grief in different ways. Grandparents, parents or carers face the difficulty of managing their caring role while knowing how to help children understand their grief – all whilst also trying to accept and deal with their own feelings.



In this podcast we speak with Janice Butera, specialist grief practitioner with Grief Australia, who shares with us her knowledge about grief and loss and the challenges that can occur for families when faced with loss. Janice also offers some strategies for families to use in navigating their way through these difficult periods.

Podcast #27 – Preparing for Access Visits (Nov 2023)



Access or contact visits with biological family can be challenging and may produce a range of emotions in children in kinship care families.

The visits can be formal or informal, and sometimes they are supervised by a professional, such as a child protection worker or agency worker, or even by the kinship carer themselves.

In this podcast, we speak with Adam Lyons, Managing Director of Lancaster Consulting, who addresses

some of the more common issues carers face in preparing the children in their care for access visits and outlines strategies for debriefing children afterwards.

A resource booklet on this issue is available online via the KCV website or by calling the office.

Podcast #26 – The Benefits of Play (Oct 2023)



What does the latest research tell us about the benefits of play for the wellbeing of children and young people? The February 2023 edition of the Royal Children’s Hospital National Child Health Poll – Australian Families: How we play has some findings of great interest to kinship carers.

In this podcast we speak with paediatrician, researcher and child health advocate Dr Anthea Rhodes, the founding director of the poll. Anthea has clinical interests in the health needs of the vulnerable child, with expertise in child behaviour and development.

Podcast #25 – Nutrition (Aug 2023)

What are the latest trends in nutrition? What does recent research say about what and how we should eat? And what the children in our care, in particular those children with neurodevelopmental disorders, should eat?

In this podcast we speak again with Nikki Valentini, Clinical Nutritionist, functional medicine practitioner and director of SuperNature Nutrition on a broad range of current topics regarding nutrition. Nikki answers some of the more common questions from carers and others regarding this topic.



Podcast #24 – Carer Learning and Development (Jul 2023)

Gaining the skillset and knowledge needed to fulfil the kinship carer role can seem daunting, especially when the young people in a person's care have learning issues or have suffered trauma.

However, DFFH has set aside considerable funding to support learning and development for carers via Carer KaFE.



In this podcast we interview one carer who tells us about the things she realised she needed to learn and the support she sought once she became a kinship carer.

And we hear from Adam Lyons, Managing Director of Lancaster Consulting, who have been providing specialised support services and training for kinship and foster carers for well over a decade. Adam describes the program they run through Carer KaFE and the workshops and training they provide for carers.

Podcast #23 – The Importance of Quality Sleep (Apr 2023)



Sleep plays a vital part in our wellbeing – so how do we get the right amount of it?

Clinical psychologist Dr Damon Ashworth, author of *Deliberately Better Sleep*, talks with KCV about the three major factors affecting our sleep and issues such as waking up at night, napping, the right amount of sleep and the long-term effects of not getting enough sleep.

This podcast also includes interviews with two carers who share their personal stories around their sleeping patterns and how they manage this whilst dealing with their kinship carer responsibilities.

Podcast #22 – Benefits of Hobbies & Other Pursuits (Apr 2023)



In a recent survey on stress and wellbeing conducted by the Australian Psychological Society, four in five participants found activities like listening to music and spending time on a hobby were effective ways of managing stress.

Finding an enjoyable pastime can also enhance wellbeing, improve social connections, and even stave off depression or anxiety.

In this podcast, KCV spoke with two carers on their carer circumstances and about what part hobbies and other meaningful pursuits played in their lives.

Podcast #21 – The Benefits of Exercise (Feb 2023)

This podcast outlines the benefits of exercise, with suggestions for carers on different types of moderate exercise and how they can incorporate them into their lives.

Includes advice from fitness expert Nic Dorian of Castlemaine Women's Health & Fitness.

The podcast also features interviews with two carers who share details of their own carer experiences and what sorts of exercise they practise.



Podcast #20 – Relaxation techniques for carers (Nov 2022)

Deep breathing and meditation can provide you with a sense of calm, peace and balance that can benefit your emotional wellbeing and overall health through reducing stress.

The podcast features an interview with Eliza Terry, from YogaLiving. Eliza has been teaching Iyengar Yoga since 1998, and teaches mindfulness meditation, with a strong focus on breath work for relaxation.

The podcast also includes interviews with two carers who share details of their own experiences with trying relaxation and breathing techniques.



Podcast #19 – Diet and stress (Oct 2022)



There's a lot of information currently available about how, what and when to eat, and some of it can be quite overwhelming and confusing.

In this podcast Kinship Carers Victoria speaks with clinical nutritionist and functional medicine practitioner Nikki Valentini, director of SuperNature Nutrition at supernature.com.au.

Nikki explains how certain foods and nutrients have been shown to help us deal better with stress and anxiety while other types of foods and eating patterns have been linked to increases in these feelings – and even to other psychological issues and illness.

The podcast also includes interviews with carers who share their relationship to food and some of their dietary patterns.

Podcast #18 – Connecting with Others (Sep 2022)



Carers often mention their isolation yet many of them have not developed strategies or networks to assist them in overcoming these feelings.

This podcast – as part of Kinship Care Week 2022 – provides suggestions for kinship carers on how they can form meaningful connections with friends, family, neighbours and

the community to help them support their own physical and psychological wellbeing. The podcast also includes interviews with several carers who share their experiences of challenges the carer role has brought up and how they have managed social isolation before, during and after the pandemic.

Podcast #17 – DFFH responds to the COVID-19 crisis (Mar 2022)

Sandy Pitcher, Secretary of the Department of Families Fairness and Housing, speaks about the effects of Covid-19 on DFFH staff health and wellbeing and the extra workload involved as well as what strategies the department is putting in place to support both kinship carers and DFFH staff in surviving the Covid-19 pandemic.



This includes providing information and materials about vaccination consent for children and the accessibility and efficacy of vaccinations and rapid antigen tests.

Podcast #16 – Safety and efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines (Nov 2021)

In this podcast, KCV speaks to one of the country's leaders in this field, consultant paediatrician Associate Professor Margie Danchin, from Murdoch Childrens Research Institute (MCRI).

Margie is also an immunisation expert with over ten years of experience in vaccine research and clinical work, both in Australia and in resource poor settings.

She answers common questions and concerns kinship carers and others in the community may have around the safety and efficacy of coronavirus vaccines.



Podcast #15 – Self-care for kinship carers and how to prevent burnout (Sep 2021)

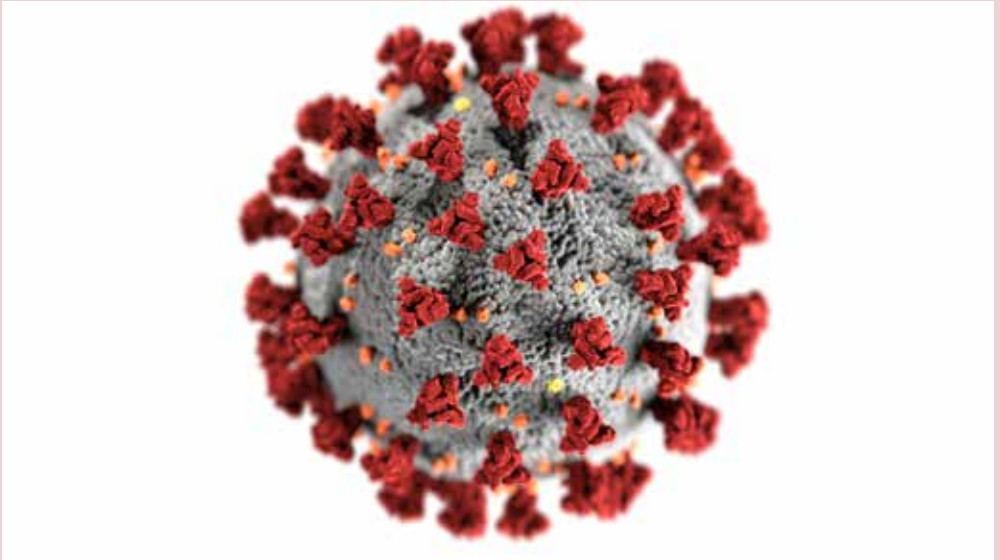


In this podcast, KCV spoke to psychologist, lecturer and researcher Dr Melissa Weinberg, an Honorary Fellow from the Dept of Psychology at Deakin University with expertise in the science of wellbeing and resilience.

Melissa speaks about the need for carers to monitor their own physical and emotional state and needs so that they may be able to fulfil their role as carer better and avoid burnout.

Podcast #14 – Coronavirus and kinship carers (Jul 2020)

In this podcast, Director of Kinship Carers Victoria (KCV) Anne McLeish talks about the challenges faced by kinship carers during the COVID-19 lockdown and how they and the young people in their care have been coping.



Podcast #13 – Sleep and wellbeing (Jun 2020)

In this podcast on sleep and wellbeing, KCV spoke to psychologist Dr Melissa Weinberg, Honorary Fellow from the Dept of Psychology at Deakin University.

Dr Weinberg discusses the effects sleeping poorly or well can have on a person's physical and psychological health and suggests a series of valuable tips on how carers can improve their own patterns of sleep as well as those of the children or young people in their care.



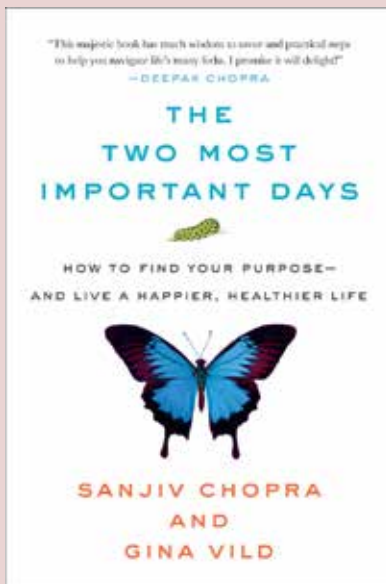
Podcast #12 – Creating happiness (Apr 2020)

Dr Sanjiv Chopra is a professor of medicine at the Harvard Medical School, a best-selling author and sought-after motivational speaker, who is often referred to as a 'happiness guru'.

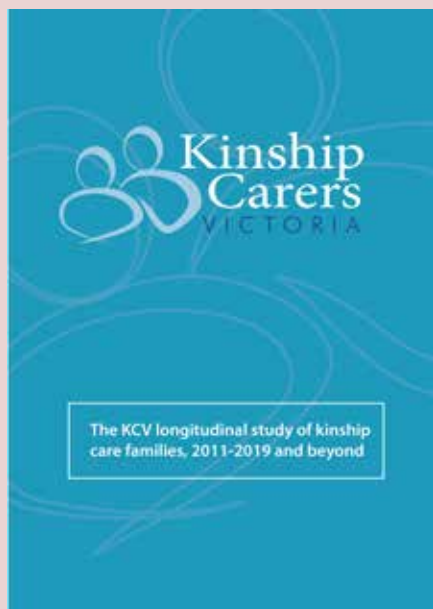
In an episode of The Bucket Podcast (at thebucket.com) broadcast on 10 October 2019, Dr Chopra spoke about his book, *The Two Most Important Days: How to Find Your Purpose and Live a Happy and Healthy Life*.

This KCV podcast draws both on the contents of his book and that Bucket Podcast to present evidence on how happiness can be a choice in our lives.

Dr Chopra contends that there are four things that have been scientifically shown to be associated with happiness: friends, forgiveness, giving and gratitude.



Podcast #11 – KCV longitudinal study report (Jul 2019)



In 2019 Kinship Carers Victoria released the eighth report on its longitudinal study of kinship carer families, begun in 2011 (and which was eventually concluded in 2020).

In this podcast, Director of KCV Anne McLeish discusses why the study was established, as well as providing an analysis of the latest report findings, which show that, for the most part, kinship care arrangements for the families in the study continue to be stable.

If you wish to read the 10th and final report of the study, it is available via this link: <https://kinshipcarersvictoria.org/longitudinal-study/> and can be downloaded here: <https://kinshipcarersvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/KCV-Longitudinal-Study-of-Kinship-Care-Families-2020.pdf>

Podcast #10 – The health of children in kinship care (May 2019)



The health of children in kinship care is of primary concern. Resources must continually be put into finding ways to improve health care outcomes for children in out of home care.

In this podcast KCV speaks with Dr Karen McLean, paediatrician with the Pathway to Good Health Clinic, the Sleep Disorders Clinic, the Royal Children's Hospital, the Murdoch Children's Research Institute and the Department of Paediatrics with the University of Melbourne.

Podcast #9 – The roles that grandparents play survey report (Apr 2019)

In 2019 Grandparents Victoria released a report of a survey titled 'The Roles That Grandparents Play'.

Director of GPV, Anne McLeish, speaks about the reason for conducting the survey and about the findings, which highlight the varying roles grandparents play within Victorian families and the community.



Podcast #8 – Kinship carers and the state budget (Nov 2018)

Thanks to the Victorian Government's new program of support for kinship carers, 30 new kinship care specialists have been employed to support and speak with carers throughout the state.

This podcast features snapshots of discussions taken from a recent seminar held to enable carers to meet those kinship care specialists.



Podcast #7 – The 2018 Federal Election (Oct 2018)

With the Federal Election inching closer, Director of KCV Anne McLeish spoke about how the organisation works to influence politicians' thinking about kinship care.



Podcast #6 – The 2018 federal and state elections and kinship care (Sep 2018)



With elections, both state and federal approaching, Director of Kinship Carers Victoria Anne McLeish spoke about KCV's campaign priorities and the organisation's log of claims for governments and standing candidates.

CEO of Shepparton FamilyCare David

Tennant also discussed issues relating to families, children and welfare and where improvements can be made.

Podcast #5 – LOOKOUT centres (Aug 2018)

In this podcast Director of Kinship Carers Victoria (KCV) Anne McLeish discusses how education is a key factor in ensuring positive outcomes for children as they mature into adults. KCV believes children have the right to a high-quality education that ensures all students experience success at school.

This has lead KCV to call for reinforcement of the capacity of the state's LOOKOUT Education Support Centres in their efforts to support children and young people in out-of-home care.



Murray Geddes, Principal of the LOOKOUT Centre for the South Eastern Victoria Region, also explains the role the centres play and how kinship carers and the children in their care can benefit.

Podcast #4 – Kinship carer wellbeing (Jul 2018)

This podcast again addresses the issue of carer wellbeing.

Director of Kinship Carers Victoria (KCV) Anne McLeish talks about how KCV works to better protect and promote carer wellbeing and about the various projects KCV employs to do so.



We visit one of KCV's artist-in-residence sessions and talk to participants and coordinators about the value of the experience.

Podcast #3 – Kinship care and the 2018 Victorian election (Jun 2018)



With a view to the forthcoming state election in November of 2018, Grandparents Victoria / Kinship Carers Victoria released a log of claims against which the organisation judges the commitment to families of all the candidates standing in the election.

Anne McLeish, director of GPV/KCV talks about how the log of claims, covering areas such as children's rights, education, family welfare and health was developed.

This podcast also includes an interview with Barbara Champion, Director of Play Australia, the peak national advocacy organisation for play in this country.

Podcast #2 – The importance of kinship carer wellbeing (May 2018)



This podcast, the second in a series of 12, addresses the issue of carer wellbeing. Director of Kinship Carers Victoria (KCV) Anne McLeish talks about why the physical and emotional health of kinship carers and their access to support services is so important and how KCV works to better protect and promote carer wellbeing.

Two kinship carers also speak about their personal and professional perspectives on this key element of kinship care.

Podcast #1 – Welcome to the KCV podcast series (Apr 2018)

This program, the first in a series of 12 produced and published online over the following year, features an interview with Anne McLeish, Director of Kinship Carers Victoria, or KCV.

Anne talks today about the aims of this podcast series, plus the mission and scope of activities of KCV, and she touches briefly on the range of issues facing both carers and the children in their care which will be addressed throughout this series.



Fact Sheets

There are three easy ways to access these factsheets:

1. View each individual factsheet described in this guide by clicking on its title or image in the guide
2. View the contents presented in this guide, and much more, on the KCV website at <https://kinshipcarersvictoria.org/resources-fact-sheets/> or by doing a web search for Kinship Carers Victoria
3. Use the QR code below to access the factsheets page on the KCV website



Age-appropriate sexual behaviours



**CENTRE AGAINST
SEXUAL ASSAULT
CENTRAL VICTORIA**

Sex play and sexual behaviour is normal in children and young people. Age-appropriate behaviours do not require intervention by carers and professionals.

But some behaviours signal the need to watch for the frequency and persistence of these behaviours. If a child or young person exhibits several of these behaviours, or they continue despite clear requests to stop, seek advice from Child Protection or your agency.

Still other behaviours are indicative of very concerning sexual behaviour. Most of these behaviours require immediate professional advice, particularly if they are accompanied by secrecy, anxiety, tension, coercion, force, compulsion and threats.

This factsheet includes listings of Sexually Abusive Behaviour Treatment Services (SABTS) and Centres Against Sexual Assault (CASAs) across the state.

Responding to a disclosure of abuse

If a child or young person has been abused, they are more likely to disclose this when they start feeling safe. As a carer, it is important to think about the possibility of a disclosure and how you would respond, before such a situation arises.



This will help you be prepared and respond as well as possible, because when a child or young person discloses to you, they will be very aware of your immediate reaction. If you respond with shock, they will feel this.

This factsheet contains a list of what to do, or NOT do, if a child or young person discloses to you that they have been abused.

Also contained are links and contact details for numerous useful resources, such as various Centres Against Sexual Assault (CASAs), the Orange Door, the Reportable Conduct Scheme and a guide written by the Australian Institute of Family Studies.

The impact of caring and looking after yourself

The demands of being a carer can be high. It is important that you manage your health and wellbeing, which may help in your role as a carer. You are the best person to know what makes you feel better emotionally, physically and mentally.



This factsheet provides some practical tips and suggestions to look after yourself, things to expect or consider, and where to get support. Being aware of what supports are available is crucial for a successful caring relationship. These may include emotional support, physical and practical support, financial support, education and learning, task-focused and problem-solving support, respite care, community support and social support.

The child or young person's child protection worker or agency case manager is there to support you to meet the needs of the child or young person. This may be in the form of information and access to local support services, or help with managing contact with the child or young person's parents or other family members.

Privacy and photographs



Keeping up to date with the law and regulations around privacy, especially with respect to online publication or use of photographs, is challenging.

It can also be difficult to find the right balance between joyful sharing of images and potentially exposing children or young people to risk. This factsheet provides answers and advice to some commonly asked questions by parents and carers.

Can photos of the child or young person in your care be put on the fridge? Can you put photos of the children and young people in your care on your Facebook page? Can photos of children or young people be published in a school newsletter? Can their photos be published in newspapers? And are there protocols for displaying photographs of family members of Aboriginal children and young people?

Also included are some links to useful resources, such as that of the eSafety Commissioner.

Aboriginal culture



VACCA
Connected by culture

This factsheet provides a snapshot of information to help carers enhance their knowledge about Aboriginal culture in Victoria, and the cultural needs of the child or young person they are caring for. Further information about caring for Aboriginal children in out-of-home care can be found in the Caring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care resource developed by the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA).

Culture plays a key role in an Aboriginal child or young person's development, identity and self-esteem, and in determining their overall wellbeing. As a relative carer of an Aboriginal child or young person, carers have a significant role in fostering their Aboriginal identity and connection to culture. If carers prioritise and understand the importance of Aboriginal culture to a child or young person's wellbeing and positive development, and bring this into the home, they are more likely to raise Aboriginal children and young people who experience better life outcomes.

Types of out-of-home care



Families,
Fairness
and Housing

This factsheet covers in detail the different kinds of out-of-home care (OOHC), including kinship care, foster care, permanent care, residential care, semi-independent accommodation

options with a Lead Tenant, and voluntary out-of-home care.

Included are definitions of the types of care, differences between the various OOHC arrangements, how each of them come to be, the legal frameworks governing the differing arrangements and what part, if any, is played in them by Child Protection Services.

Also included is a flow chart outlining the processes involved in informal, statutory and voluntary kinship care arrangements, and in assessments for permanent care, with information provided on eligibility for the care allowance and other forms of state and federal government funding programs.

Questions to ask when a child or young person is placed in your care

When a child or young person comes into your care, there are a number of questions you should ask Child Protection or the authorised Aboriginal agency. While these questions are designed to help you understand the needs of the child or young person, and the potential impact on your home, family life and routines, Child Protection or the authorised Aboriginal agency may not be able to provide all the information you request.



Families,
Fairness
and Housing

General questions to ask include such things as: What is the expected length of the care arrangement? Why does this child or young person need a kinship care arrangement? Does the child or young person have any allergies or illnesses? Does the child or young person have any particular dietary requirements? Are there any sensitive key issues to be aware of? What is their emotional or physical state?

Victorian Carer Card

The Victorian Carer Card recognises the significant contribution carers make to the lives of people they care for and the communities in which they live. Carers can use the card independently of the person in their care.



Carer Card holders can also now benefit from the same discounts available to Seniors Card holders. There are more than 4,000 participating businesses whose discounts are now available. These include discounts on a range of goods and services like eating out, shopping, getting help with your finances, or even leisure and recreation activities, like seeing a movie at a Village cinema. There are also new carer transport concessions now available for Carer Card holders.

This factsheet contains information on who is eligible for the card, how to apply for one, how to update/renew your card, and it also contains a link to an online directory of thousands of discounts available to carers.



Wellbeing Magazines

There are three easy ways to access these wellbeing magazines:

1. View each individual magazine described in this guide by clicking on its title or image in the guide
2. View the contents presented in this guide, and much more, on the KCV website at <https://kinshipcarersvictoria.org/kinship-carers-wellbeing-magazine/> or by doing a web search for Kinship Carers Victoria
3. Use the QR code below to access the wellbeing magazines page on the KCV website



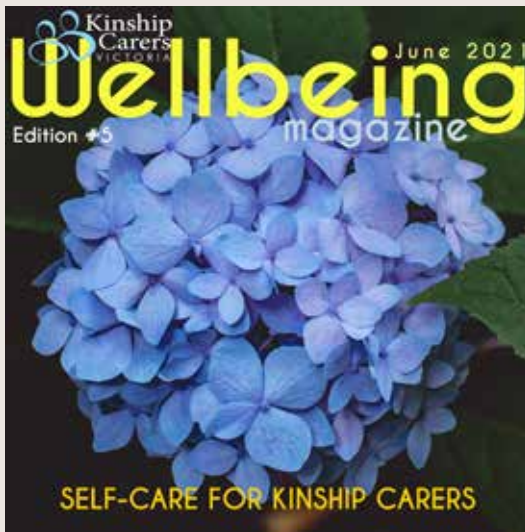
Wellbeing Magazine #7 Articles

- What are 'Blue Zones' and where are they?
- Common features of a healthy life in three of the Blue Zones
- Blue Zone dietary elements
- Blue Zone lifestyle/activities
- How to nap like the longest living people in the world
- Four morning habits of the longest living people in the world
- Blue Zones food guidelines
- Strength training can protect the brain from degeneration in those at risk of Alzheimer's disease
- Eight suggestions for brain-boosting exercises
- How social connections keep seniors healthy
- How long can Australians live?



Wellbeing Magazine #6 Articles

- Kinship carers' self-care survey
- Crucial conversations – Ten tips for handling difficult conversations with family
- Ten ways that singing benefits your health
- Processed food 'may be driving us mad'
- Treat your food as if it's your medicine
- Nine ways to boost your body's natural immunity defences



Wellbeing Magazine #5 Articles

- Self-care for kinship carers
 - Developing a self-care plan
 - COVID-19 survival strategies favoured by kinship carers
 - Building a personalised self-care plan
 - Relationships – the secret to health and happiness
 - Ten rules for maintaining relationships
 - Ten tips for getting a good sleep
-
- Seven more stress relievers
 - Five benefits of walking
 - The KCV self-care planners
 - Feedback about this magazine
 - Seven nutrients to eat for stress relief
 - The science behind hobbies improving mental health
 - Four breathing exercises
 - The KCV self-care community
 - Some self-affirming thoughts to consider
 - Pick-me-up ideas

Wellbeing Magazine #4 Articles

- Pearls of wisdom about happiness from Dr Sanjiv Chopra
- Ten keys to happiness
- Nutritional strategies to ease anxiety
- Self-care for Kinship carers
- Preventing burnout
- Developing a self-care plan
- There are five different types of self-care
- Some quick pick me up ideas
- The amazing health benefits of ginger
- Looking after yourself as a carer
- Get up and walk your way to greater health and happiness
- The Pursuit of Happiness
- Some health benefits of coffee
- Beetroots have some amazing benefits for you
- When in need – call a friend



Wellbeing Magazine #3 Articles

- Building stronger relationships
- Crossword – Strong relationships
- Podcasts to support and inform kinship carers
- Take a colouring break
- The amazing health benefits of lemons
- Building stronger bodies
- Crossword – Strong bodies
- Word search – Animals •
- Colouring break two • Hints from yesteryear
- Brainteasers • Who do I contact? – Useful numbers



- Stress ball exercises • Crossword – stress balls • Breathing exercises for stress • The health benefits of vinegar • Hints from yesteryear
- Brainteasers • Who do I contact? - Useful numbers

Wellbeing Magazine #2 Articles

- The future of healing
- Play is important for adults too!
- Crossword – let's play
- Seven benefits of colouring for adults
- Ten wellbeing uses for lavender
- Word search – flowers
- Walking isn't just good for you, it's good for the economy
- How stress balls can help you



Wellbeing Magazine #1 Articles

- The secret to health and happiness
 - Crossword – Happiness
 - Seven scientifically proven benefits of gratitude
 - A gratitude journal
 - The importance of sleep
 - Ten tips for getting a good night's sleep
 - Crossword – Sleep
 - Eating for Stress Relief
-
- Crossword – Stress busting foods
 - Ten wellbeing uses for eucalyptus
 - Ten tips to reduce stress
 - My wellbeing journal
 - Walking has more benefits than you think
 - Take a deep breath
 - Stop, Lock, Affirm
 - Find the healthy foods
 - A brainteaser
 - When in need, call a friend



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