

Agenda

17 August 2025

12:30 pm - 6:00 pm
Registration

Registration - Main Foyer 2 & 3

17 August 2025

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm
Conversation Hour - Cathy Malchiodi

Conversation Hours - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 3

3:30 pm
[Cathy Malchiodi in conversation with Janise Mitchell](#)
[Cathy Malchiodi PhD, Janise Mitchell](#)
Cathy Malchiodi in conversation with Janise Mitchell

17 August 2025

4:30 pm - 5:00 pm
Break

Break - [Break](#)

17 August 2025

5:00 pm - 6:00 pm
Conversation Hour - Paul Gilbert

Conversation Hours - Plenary 3

5:00 pm
[Paul Gilbert in conversation with Janise Mitchell](#)
[Paul Gilbert, Janise Mitchell](#)
Paul Gilbert in conversation with Janise Mitchell

17 August 2025

6:00 pm - 7:30 pm
Welcome Drinks

Social - Main Foyer 2 & 3

18 August 2025

9:00 am - 9:20 am
Welcome to Country

Plenary

18 August 2025

9:20 am - 11:00 am
Opening Plenary

Plenary - Plenary 2

This opening plenary session will include a welcome from Conference Convenor Janise Mitchell, as well as presentations from Emeritus Professor Judy Atkinson and Professor Paul Gilbert.

9:20 am
[Opening plenary](#)
[Janise Mitchell](#)
Opening plenary

9:40 am
[Opening plenary](#)
[Judy Atkinson](#)

Opening plenary

10:20 am

[Compassion and Joe's Dream](#)

[Paul Gilbert](#)

Compassion and Joe's Dream

18 August 2025

11:00 am - 11:30 am

Morning Tea

Break

18 August 2025

11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Keynote: Applying trauma transformative practice using a developmental lens

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 3

[Applying trauma transformative practice using a developmental lens](#)

[Janise Mitchell](#)

Applying trauma transformative practice using a developmental lens

11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Keynote: Finding solid ground: Transforming treatment for complex trauma and dissociation

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 219 & 220

11:30 am

[Finding Solid Ground: Transforming Treatment for Complex Trauma and Dissociation](#)

[Bethany Brand, Ruth Lanius](#)

Join us for an exciting and interactive session where Dr. Ruth Lanius and Bethany Brand will introduce Finding Solid Ground (FSG)—the first evidence-based program proven to benefit dissociative, complex trauma clients. Backed by a rigorous randomized controlled study, this groundbreaking approach is reshaping how we treat some of the most challenging trauma cases. In this dynamic talk, we'll dive into the science behind FSG and bring the strategies to life through engaging role plays—taking turns as particularly difficult complex trauma clients. Witness how to apply these innovative techniques in real-world scenarios, and leave inspired to transform your practice with actionable insights.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Keynote: Living with a constant feeling of dread: Providing DDP interventions with parents who have experienced trauma. (not recorded)

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 203 & 204

[Living with a constant feeling of dread. Providing DDP interventions with parents who have experienced trauma.](#)

[Kim Golding](#)

Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP) is a model of intervention developed by Dan Hughes to help children who have experienced developmental trauma. Within DDP, parents are an integral part of the therapy with their children. They join the therapy sessions and provide a DDP-informed parenting approach at home. This draws on the parents' capacity for emotional regulation and mentalisation so that they can adopt the attitude of PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy) as described by Dan Hughes. Therapists need to work with the parents in order to prepare them for this collaboration. Parent and therapist make a therapeutic alliance built upon mutual trust and respect. The therapist prepares the parent for engaging in the child's sessions and provides parenting support and guidance. An important part of this work is exploring the parents' attachment history. This helps the parent to understand when they find staying open and engaged to their child most difficult and to be supported to find ways out of the defensive parenting that they can move into. This work can be extended when parents carry their own significant trauma histories. The therapist helps the parents to know their own vulnerability so that they can be available to the child when most needed. This can help them to stay compassionate to themselves and more available for their child. With the kind permission of one adoptive father, I will show examples of the work we did together to illustrate the importance and significance of this trauma work.

(This session will not be recorded)

11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Keynote: Resilience and post-traumatic growth

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 1

[Resilience and Post-Traumatic Growth](#)

[Arielle Schwartz](#)

Resilience and post-traumatic growth rely upon the opportunity to work through difficult life experiences. The deep, inner work of healing from trauma eventually can help clients to realize that they are stronger than they previously believed. In turn, they are more likely to accept themselves as they are, have an increased appreciation of life, develop new interests or passions, or discover new spiritual frameworks for their lives. As they feel stronger, they are more likely to see themselves as able to bring their gifts and contributions to the world. As therapists, we foster post-traumatic growth when we invite clients to take personal responsibility for the narrative that defines their lives. If their voices are full of disappointment and resignation, we can assist them to revise their stories until they arrive at satisfactory conclusions that support growth after trauma. This does not mean that they can change what happened in the past. However, they can work through the pain of the past until they find resolutions in the here and now.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Keynote: The nature and process of compassion focused therapy for the traumatised mind

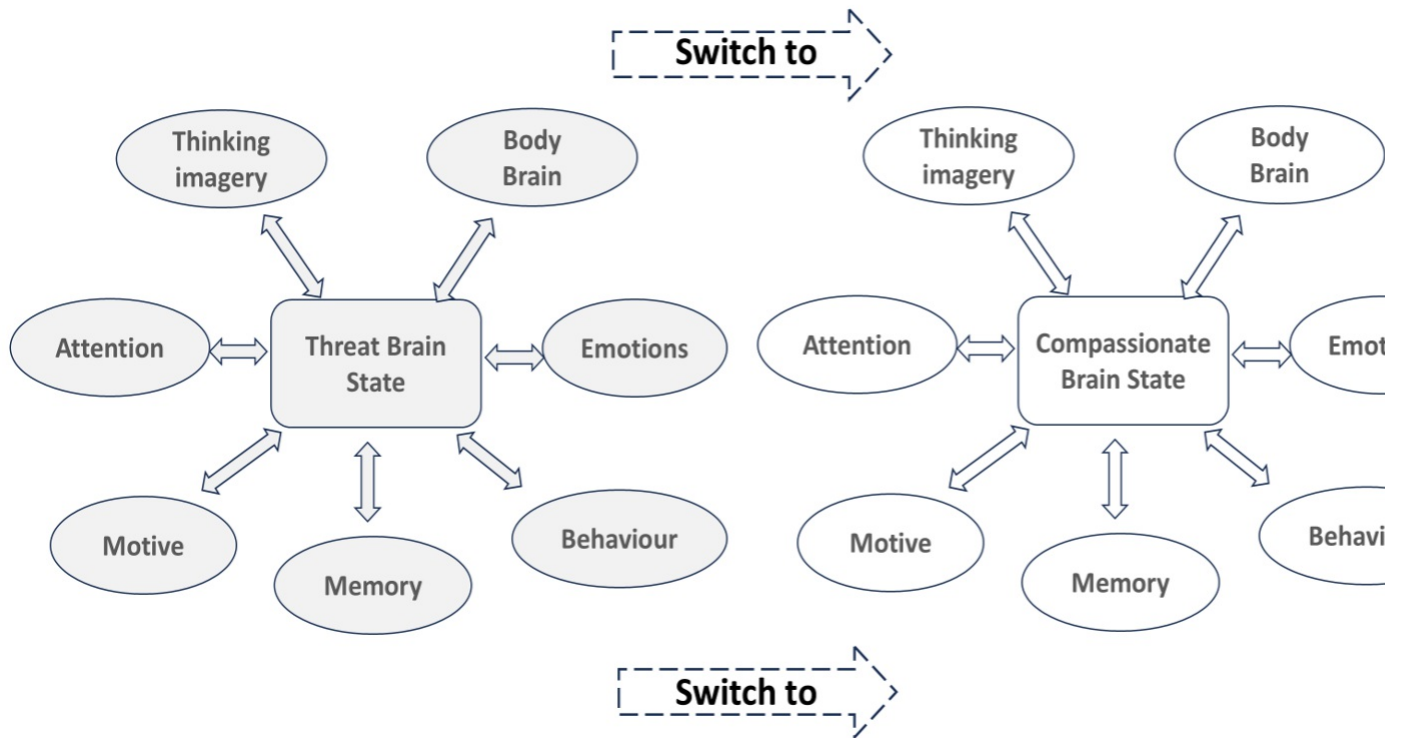
Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 210 & 211

[The nature and process of compassion focussed therapy for the traumatised mind](#)

[Paul Gilbert](#)

This talk will explore the evolutionary and biopsychosocial basis for compassion. Understanding its roots in evolved function enable insight into the physiological regulators or our minds an offer important insight into how compassion can interact with the physiological scars left by trauma. The talk will explore different aspects of motivation- based brain state theory and how we can develop the multiple dimensions of compassion to address more complex states of mind like threat based minds.

Mindful awareness



The talk will then explore threat brain states, using techniques such as dialoguing, guided discovery and mind mapping to help individuals recognise trauma as a multi textured experience. Clarification of the different textures of trauma facilitate specific compassion directed interventions to those textures

11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Symposium: A symposium exploring the intersection of neurodivergence and childhood trauma

Symposium - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 2

This panel discussion will be hosted by Noel Macnamara.

[A symposium exploring the intersection of neurodivergence and childhood trauma.](#)

[Anita Gibbs, Cathy Malchiodi PhD, Noel Macnamara, Wenn Lawson, Rebecca Challoner, Christina Keeble, Naomi Rutten, Siobhan Wilson](#)

A symposium exploring the intersection of neurodivergence and childhood trauma.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Workshop: Comforting the uncomfortable: the heart of trauma-informed care

Workshop - [ICTC](#) - Room 212 & 213

[Comforting the uncomfortable: the heart of trauma-informed care](#)

[Johanna Lynch](#)

This workshop will reflect on the fundamental interpersonal experience of being comforted. It will also allow those of us who are professional or personal carers to reflect on the macro and micro skills required of those who offer comfort to others. We will reflect on how we give comfort when we haven't been comforted ourselves, and how tuning into others can be impacted by our own life story. In the trauma field that often advocates for individualised and professional therapy this session will draw attention to the ordinary communal capacity to offer comfort. It will shift the conversation towards social responsiveness and communal responsibility to those who have been harmed. It will focus our hearts and minds on the wider issues of engaging with injustice where we live, learn, and work. Led by family physician (general practitioner) researcher Dr Johanna Lynch, this session is about a wide whole person vision for health grounded in awareness of the physiological impact of not being alone. It will be a chance to reflect on both the attuned sensitivity of giving comfort, and the whole person physiological relief of receiving comfort that are part of whole person, whole family, and whole community health.

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- 1/ Describe the personal impact of being comforted.
- 2/ Name the potential barriers to offering comfort to others.
- 3/ Reflect on the tensions inherent in communal responsibility towards those who have been harmed.

18 August 2025

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Lunch

Break - [Break](#)

18 August 2025

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Keynote: FASD at the nexus of disability and neuro-divergence, the impacts of trauma, risk and protective factors and the journey to enable a good life for individuals and their whānau

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 2

[FASD at the nexus of disability and neuro-divergence, the impacts of trauma, risk and protective factors and the journey to enable a good life for individuals and their whānau.](#)

[Anita Gibbs](#)

FASD is a complex lifelong neuro-disability impacting body and brain domains as a consequence of pre-natal alcohol exposure. The internationally accepted definition of FASD is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a diagnostic term used to describe impacts on the brain and body of individuals prenatally exposed to alcohol. FASD is a lifelong disability. Individuals with FASD will experience some degree of challenges in their daily living, and need support with motor skills, physical health, learning, memory, attention, communication, emotional regulation, and social skills to reach their full potential. Each individual with FASD is unique and has areas of both strengths and challenges. (<https://canfasd.ca/topics/basic-information/>)

FASD almost always co-occurs with a range of mental health conditions, trauma or adverse childhood experiences and other neuro-disabilities, or neuro-divergent identities, as these terms are often used interchangeably. In my first presentation, I will unpack key terms like FASD, neuro-disability, neuro-diversity, neuro-divergence, neuro-informed, neuro-typicality and neuro-typical humility, as a way to understand the impacts of having FASD on the person, and their whānau (families), as they traverse lifecourse experiences which misdiagnose them, misunderstand them, mismanage them and malign them as deviant. I will also explore FASD screening, diagnosis, primary features and secondary conditions, protective and risk factors. I will consider the importance of the intersections of trauma, colonisation, stigma and systemic abuse on the complexity of understanding FASD, and therefore intervening positively to enable people with FASD, alongside their families, to live their best lives. I will conclude my first presentation with an overview of helping models, interventions and strategies.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Keynote: From crisis to stability: Assessment and stabilisation for complex, dissociative clients

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 3

2:00 pm

[From Crisis to Stability: Assessment and Stabilization for Complex, Dissociative Clients](#)

[Bethany Brand](#)

How do you effectively assess and stabilize clients who are grappling with self-harm, suicidality, and dissociation? In this session, Bethany Brand will share evidence-based strategies for addressing these critical challenges.

Drawing from the insights in her latest book on assessing trauma-related dissociation, we'll explore how to:

- Accurately assess dissociation and its impact on clients' lives.
- Develop stabilization plans tailored to clients struggling with high-risk behaviors.
- Empower clients to move from crisis toward resilience and recovery.

This session will equip you with practical tools to deepen your understanding and enhance your therapeutic impact.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Keynote: The nature and process of compassion focussed therapy for the traumatised mind

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 1

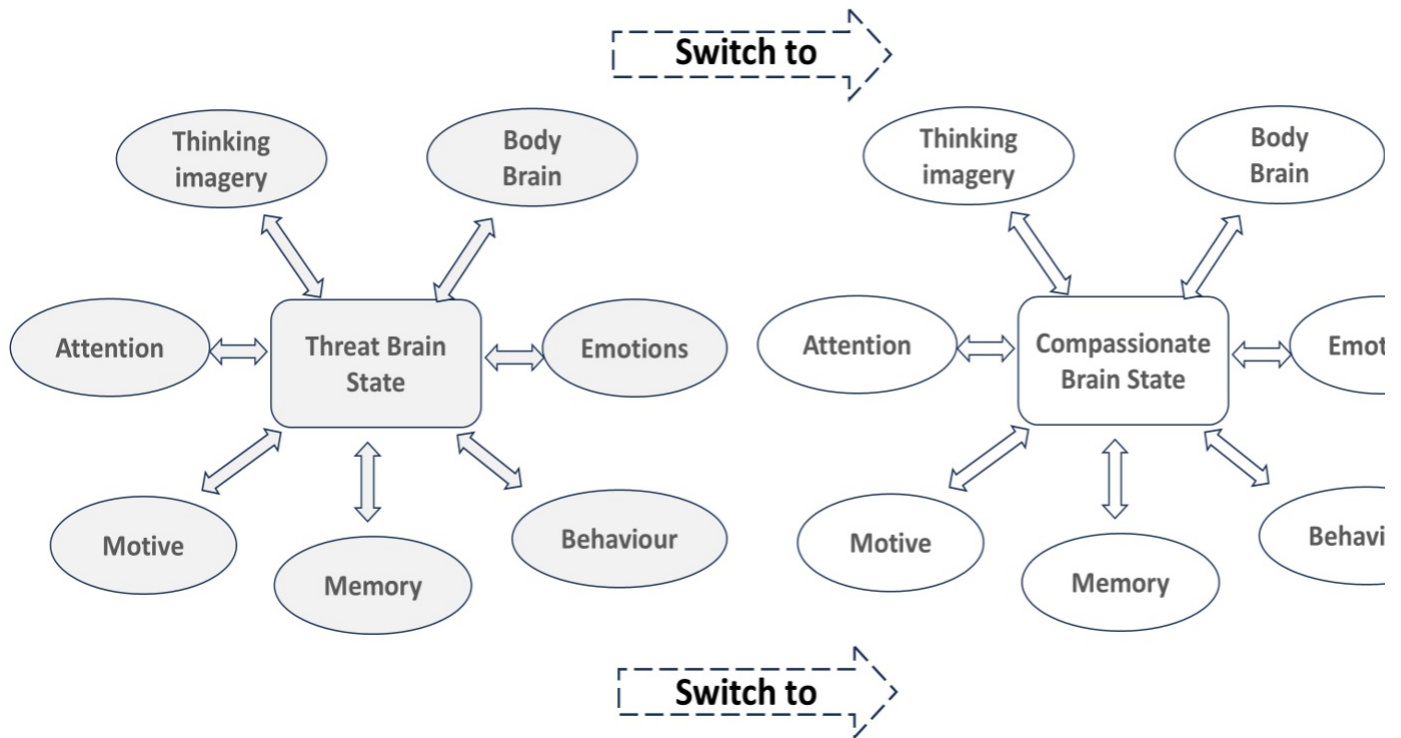
2:00 pm

[The nature and process of compassion focussed therapy for the traumatised mind](#)

[Paul Gilbert](#)

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Mindful awareness



The talk will then explore threat brain states, using techniques such as dialoguing, guided discovery and mind mapping to help individuals recognise trauma as a multi textured experience. Clarification of the different textures of trauma facilitate specific compassion directed interventions to those textures

2:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Masterclass Part 1: Applied polyvagal theory as an embodied approach to psychotherapy

Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 210 & 211

[Applied Polyvagal Theory as an Embodied Approach to Psychotherapy](#) [Arielle Schwartz](#)

The brain cannot think its way out of the symptoms of stress or trauma. It needs a way to work with the body to maximize healing. Polyvagal theory provides us with a transdiagnostic approach to therapy. We are addressing the physiological roots that underlie a wide range of physical and mental health conditions. This approach allows therapists and clients to compassionately understand and treat the imbalances within the autonomic nervous symptom that form the basis of most mood, anxiety, or traumatic stress related disorders. Traditionally, talk therapy focuses on the narratives specific life events or losses. While interventions that focus on telling the story about distressing or traumatic experiences can be beneficial, they are often insufficient to facilitate a rebalancing of the autonomic nervous system. Join Arielle Schwartz, PhD, CCTP-II, E-RYT, internationally sought-out teacher, therapeutic yoga instructor as she guides you through applied polyvagal theory as an embodied approach to psychotherapy. Within this program you will:

Discover how to fine-tune the nervous system moment-by-moment to help clients come out of chronic stress

Discover the power of positive neuroplasticity

Address client's health with simple breath, movement, and awareness practices

Learn the fastest ways to reduce stress and regulate the nervous system

Teach clients to naturally stimulate their vagus nerve to enhance their physical and emotional health

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Masterclass Part 1: Restorative attachment with children and caregivers: Expressive arts and sensory processing approaches to repair and restoration

Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 203 & 204

[Restorative Attachment with Children and Caregivers: Expressive Arts and Sensory Processing Approaches to Repair and Restoration](#) [Cathy Malchiodi PhD](#)

This masterclass emphasizes sensory-based and capacity-building practices through expressive arts therapy and sensory integration that can be applied to restoring and building foundations of attachment. Restorative Attachment highlights strategies to support connection and attunement between caregivers and children through sensory-based, curiosity-driven approaches rather than talk alone. Neuro-affirming models that complement P.A.C.E. are explained in this hands-on learning experience, including: the MSSS Model (Movement, Sound, Storytelling, and Silence); S.A.G.E (Synchrony, Attunement, Grounding, and Engagement); and the Circle of Capacity Model (expanding empowerment, enlivenment, and creativity through expressive arts therapy). Practices and interventions are not only appropriate with children and young people and caregivers, but also adult attachment issues that result from traumatic stress or other challenges.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Masterclass Part 1: Unlocking the Power of Traumatic Brain Adaptations: Breaking New Ground in Trauma Recovery

Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 212 & 213

[Unlocking the Power of Traumatic Brain Adaptations: Breaking New Ground in Trauma Recovery](#)
[Ruth Lanius](#)

In this masterclass, we will dive deep into the powerful world of traumatic brain adaptations and their pivotal role in shaping the course of treatment for traumatic stress. You will discover how the brain's response to trauma creates unique pathways that dictate the most effective therapeutic approaches. We will explore how these adaptations act as keys to unlocking personalized entry points for therapy, helping us tailor treatment to the individual at every stage of recovery. From understanding the science behind trauma's effects on the brain to learning how to strategically apply the right therapeutic interventions, this session will provide you with actionable insights that could transform healing of the traumatized self.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Workshop: [How the healing began: Using Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander painting to heal trauma](#)

Workshop - [ICTC](#) - Room 219 & 220

2:00 pm

[How the healing began: Using Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander painting to heal trauma](#)

[Stacey Dellow](#)

Let's talk about how the healing began and continues to grow through art. Once I felt safe enough to Get Up, Stand Up and Show Up (NAIDOC theme 2022) I started a journey of healing. Through this journey I reconnected with my cultural mentors who guided me through the discovery of art.

On reflection my new understanding of the neurobiology of trauma and the impact trauma has had on my connection to others and things I did not understand where missing from my world until I acknowledged that I had experience trauma and it was this part of my early journey that impacted my developing brain, and it was not anything I did.

Painting can be a powerful tool for processing and healing from trauma. It provides a non-verbal way to express emotions, explore memories, and make meaning in our lives. I would like to invite you to join me on a 90-minute interactive art workshop to explore your inner artist. I believe that there is an artist in us all.

18 August 2025

3:30 pm - 4:00 pm

Afternoon Tea

Break

18 August 2025

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Keynote: [Applying trauma transformative practice using a developmental lens](#)

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 1

4:00 pm

[Applying trauma transformative practice using a developmental lens](#)

[Janise Mitchell](#)

Applying trauma transformative practice using a developmental lens

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Keynote: [Autism: Intersectionality and the trauma that comes from being different](#)

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 3

[Autism: Intersectionality & the trauma that comes from being different](#)

[Wenn Lawson](#)

Belonging, fitting in and feeling connected are important human rights and needs. Being autistic predisposes us to being monotropic. Monotropism means our attention, when captured, occupies us totally and there is no spare attention for 'generalising concepts, thinking beyond the literal, joining the dots to the bigger picture, having timely recognition of information from our external and internal senses, comprehending the two sides of Object Permanence and much more. This can negatively impact social connecting and human interaction. It can heighten feelings of 'being stuck' in porn, feelings of inadequacy, poor mental health and suicidality. For Autistic individuals trauma is an ongoing experience because it feels like we are in a desert without any signposts. This talk explains the concepts above with helpful examples and important strategies to heighten self-compassion and lower trauma.

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Keynote: [Benangying Dangalang, Picking Everlastings – a story to listen and learn](#)

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 219 & 220

4:00 pm

[Benangying Dangalang, Picking Everlastings – a story to listen and learn](#)

[Glenda Kickett](#)

This presentation is titled *Benangying Dangalang, Picking Everlastings – a story to listen and learn*, which is a metaphor for my story of my earliest memories as a child going out and picking everlastings with my girl cousins, and the cultural knowledge I learned from them. This memory stayed with me during my journey through foster care in a non-Indigenous foster home and through the years growing up trying to find 'who I am and where I belong' and to reconnect to family and country.

My story is the basis of my PhD research, applying storytelling and Indigenous Life Story as my methodology, and positions *Noongar Katitjin* as cultural knowledge in the forefront of my research, and draws upon *Dangalang* as a cultural framework, and *Kaadaninny*, to listen and learn as the basis of cultural practice to work with First Nations children, young people and families. It also considers my learnings while completing the research appropriate to my lived experiences, becoming a Social Worker and an Indigenous Social Workers, an Indigenous Researcher and Academic, and the main themes of my learning and practice which are:

- Indigenous Storytelling is important in research, learning and practice
- The place of Indigenous knowledges and worldviews in research and practice
- Connections and Relationships
- Culture is Healing
- *Katitij* - Reflecting the 'self' in the Story

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 2

4:00 pm
[From Crisis to Stability: Assessment and Stabilization for Complex, Dissociative Clients](#)
[Bethany Brand](#)

How do you effectively assess and stabilize clients who are grappling with self-harm, suicidality, and dissociation? In this session, Bethany Brand will share evidence-based strategies for addressing these critical challenges.

Drawing from the insights in her latest book on assessing trauma-related dissociation, we'll explore how to:

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This session will equip you with practical tools to deepen your understanding and enhance your therapeutic impact.

Masterclass - [ICTC](#)

4:00 pm
[Applied Polyvagal Theory as an Embodied Approach to Psychotherapy](#)
[Arielle Schwartz](#)

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- Discover the power of positive neuroplasticity
- Address client's health with simple breath, movement, and awareness practices
- Learn the fastest ways to reduce stress and regulate the nervous system
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Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 203 & 204

4:00 pm
[Restorative attachment with children and caregivers: Expressive arts and sensory processing approaches to repair and restoration](#)
[Cathy Malchiodi PhD](#)

This masterclass emphasizes sensory-based and capacity-building practices through expressive arts therapy and sensory integration that can be applied to restoring and building foundations of attachment. Restorative Attachment highlights strategies to support connection and attunement between caregivers and children through sensory-based, curiosity-driven approaches rather than talk alone. Neuro-affirming models that complement P.A.C.E. are explained in this hands-on learning experience, including: the MSSS Model (Movement, Sound, Storytelling, and Silence); S.A.G.E (Synchrony, Attunement, Grounding, and Engagement); and the Circle of Capacity Model (expanding empowerment, enlivenment, and creativity through expressive arts therapy). Practices and interventions are not only appropriate with children and young people and caregivers, but also adult attachment issues that result from traumatic stress or other challenges.

Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 212 & 213

4:00 pm
[Unlocking the Power of Traumatic Brain Adaptations: Breaking New Ground in Trauma Recovery](#)
[Ruth Lanius](#)

In this masterclass, we will dive deep into the powerful world of traumatic brain adaptations and their pivotal role in shaping the course of treatment for traumatic stress. You will discover how the brain's response to trauma creates unique pathways that dictate the most effective therapeutic approaches. We will explore how these adaptations act as keys to unlocking personalized entry points for therapy, helping us tailor treatment to the individual at every stage of recovery. From understanding the science behind trauma's effects on the brain to learning how to strategically apply the right therapeutic interventions, this session will provide you with actionable insights that could transform healing of the traumatized self.

19 August 2025

Morning Movement - [ICTC](#) - Room 212 & 213

8:00 am
[Breathwork with Caroline Brunne – The Survivor Coach](#)
[Caroline Brunne](#)

Join Caroline for a short breathwork experience focused on stress relief and deep relaxation. Be guided through an exploration of your breath, focusing on a long, slow and deep (LSD) breathwork technique combined with breath retentions. This session is open to all and is an inclusive and welcoming space, participants will be provided with a yoga mat and bolsters or cushions but can participate seated if needed. Participants are encouraged to bring a water bottle and a journal or notepad with a pen if they wish.

Morning Movement - [ICTC](#) - Room 210 & 211

8:00 am

[Morning Yoga with Tina and Briar](#)
[Tina Icaro, Briar Arnel](#)

This session is for delegates, aiming to help you find space each morning through the middle of the conference week, to ground and regulate your nervous system, with a focus on achieving a relaxed state and embodiment.

8:00 am - 8:30 am

Morning Movement and Wellbeing: Playful moves: Moving with self, moving with others, moving in groups

Morning Movement - [ICTC](#) - Room 203 & 204

8:00 am

[Playful moves: Moving with self, moving with others, moving in groups](#)

[Sally Denning](#)

Join Dance Movement Therapist Sally Denning as she guides you through short trauma informed playful movements that can also be implemented with children.

19 August 2025

9:00 am - 11:00 am

Plenary

Plenary - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 2

Insights from the Cave: A Teen's Path of Trauma and Neurodiversity - **Siobhan Wilson**

Somatic Therapies in Trauma Recovery - **Arielle Schwartz**

9:00 am

[Insights from the cave: A teen's path of trauma and neurodiversity](#)

[Siobhan Wilson](#)

In this plenary session, Siobhan Wilson, a 15-year-old youth advocate with lived experience of Generalised Anxiety Disorder, PTSD, depression and Non-Verbal Learning Disorder (NVLD), shares valuable insights into the strategies that supported her at different stages of her development, as well as those that proved unhelpful.

Structured across four developmental stages: infancy (0 - 2); early childhood (2 - 5); middle childhood (5 - 10) and adolescence (10 - 15), this workshop explores how her experiences and needs evolved over time. Siobhan's reflections provide an honest perspective, offering participants ideas to consider when supporting children facing similar challenges.

In addition to practical strategies, attendees will gain a deeper understanding of the complex neurodiverse world of NVLD, a condition that overlaps with aspects of ASD and ADHD while presenting unique deficits in visual-spatial awareness and understanding abstract concepts.

While these insights are drawn from Siobhan's lived experience and may not suit every child, they can guide professionals and caregivers in tailoring their approaches to traumatised and neurodiverse children.

By the end of the session, participants will walk away with:

- Practical strategies to better support children through various developmental stages.
- Greater awareness of the challenges faced by children with NVLD and other types of neurodiversity and the need for multidisciplinary approaches.
- Inspiration and tools to foster resilience, connection, and healing in children navigating trauma and neurodiversity.

This workshop invites reflection, understanding, and action, empowering participants to make a meaningful impact in the lives of the children they support.

10:00 am

[Somatic therapies in trauma recovery](#)

[Arielle Schwartz](#)

An emergence of respect for somatic psychology has helped therapists and clients understand the impact of traumatic events on the body. The body has been said to "keep the score" (van der Kolk, 2015) and "bear the burden" (Scaer, 2014) of trauma. As a result, the therapeutic community is increasingly recognizing that stressful and traumatic events need to be processed with embodied awareness, movement, and breath. Within psychotherapy, clients often remain disconnected from the body unless the therapist has the training and skills to integrate embodied awareness and movement into treatment. The interventions in this experiential presentation aim to enhance the embodiment of the therapist as a foundation for somatic interventions you can bring into your work with others.

19 August 2025

11:00 am - 11:30 am

Morning Tea

Break

19 August 2025

11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Keynote: Building sense of safety: A transdisciplinary framework for trauma-informed and healing-oriented care in health, education, and public policy.

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 219 & 220

11:30 am

[Building sense of safety: A transdisciplinary framework for trauma-informed and healing-oriented care in health, education, and public policy.](#)

[Johanna Lynch](#)

This session will draw attention to the integrative miracle that is sensing that we are safe. It will answer questions such as: What do all humans need when we are distressed? How widely do we need to see to be able to understand and respond? What patterns will help us to discern the next steps towards healing? and What practitioner skills and attitudes are fundamental to facilitate healing from trauma? This conversation will focus on the ordinary phrase 'sense of safety' and the transdisciplinary evidence for its usefulness in practice. It is about a big wide vision for community wellbeing relevant across the disciplines. It is about health across the whole person in their culture and context, and about microskills of developing shared language and therapeutic goals centred on building sense of safety. This paradigm shifting work is grounded in generalist whole person ways of seeing, and influenced by First Nations understanding of connections to country, community, and spirit. It is unifying vision emerging from fifteen years of clinical work as a family physician (general practitioner) offering trauma specific care and ten years of transdisciplinary doctoral and post-doctoral research searching for

ways to integrate trauma-informed care into everyday health, education, and public policy.
At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the transdisciplinary value of the ordinary English phrase 'sense of safety'.
2. Name the seven Sense of Safety Whole Person Domains relevant to whole person wellbeing
3. Describe five dynamics that build sense of safety.
4. Name five practitioner skills and attitudes that facilitate a sense of safety.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Keynote: Intergenerational Trauma

Session - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 2

11:30 am
[Intergenerational trauma](#)
[Arielle Schwartz](#)

When the wounds of one generation remain unresolved, they can be passed on as a legacy. In this engaging and experiential presentation, you will be introduced to an integrative, mind-body approach to working with collective and generational wounds. We will discuss intergenerational traumas in the context of developmental attachment wounds as well as the collective, historical contexts that held within the psyche and somatic experience. You will gain tools to unwind the impact of these events and discover sources of ancestral resilience as resources within therapy.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Keynote: Neurodivergence intersecting with justice, care, education and mental health systems: lessons to learn for better life course outcomes for those living with FASD.

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 203 & 204

11:30 am
[Neurodivergence intersecting with justice, care, education and mental health systems: lessons to learn for better life course outcomes for those living with FASD.](#)
[Anita Gibbs](#)

In this keynote, Anita will focus on the systemic experiences and impacts for children, youth and adults primarily living with FASD, but also other neuro-divergent identities like ADHD and autism. Systems impacts and failures to accommodate neuro-divergence across health, welfare, education, justice, disability and mental health systems have led to catastrophic and abusive outcomes for people who are neuro-divergent. We will explore these systems and identify common issues across the systems, as well as, how professionals can be better trained and supported to accommodate neuro-divergent children, young people and adults. To realise healthy outcomes and wellbeing for people living with neuro-divergence we need to address the systemic factors that promote ableism, criminalisation, and racism towards vulnerable and disadvantaged populations. It is only in recent times that those belonging to neuro-minorities have been recognised, and have their own voices and needs understood. This presentation will ensure the living experience of people from neuro-minorities is prioritised.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Keynote: Neurodiversity Affirming Practices and Expressive Arts Therapy

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 210 & 211

11:30 am
[Neurodiversity affirming practices and expressive arts therapy](#)
[Cathy Malchiodi PhD](#)

When we cannot "name it to tame it," we need strategies to help children, young people, and neurodivergent individuals of all ages "express it to address it." Expressive arts therapy provides action-oriented practices that bypass language, giving children and youth restorative ways to communicate their lived experiences in "neuro-affirming" ways. These approaches also support capacity-- moments of resiliency, mastery, confidence, curiosity, self-compassion, joy, and self-agency. They are essential experiences for those who may not necessarily feel comfortable with or respond to neurotypical ways of expressing, relating, learning, or interacting. This keynote will also introduce the presenter's own lived experiences with neurodiversity and how this personal narrative supported a restorative life journey to develop and research arts and sensory-based neuro-affirming interventions and programming.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Keynote: Whole again: Reconnecting brain and body after trauma

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 3

11:30 am
[Whole again: Reconnecting brain and body after trauma](#)
[Ruth Lanius](#)

This lecture will describe the clinical and neurobiological manifestations of the brain-body disconnect after trauma and how to overcome this rift using an integrative approach, consisting of bottom-up and top-down therapeutic techniques. Case examples and practical skills will be discussed throughout the lecture.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Symposium: A symposium on therapeutic Out of Home Care

Symposium - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 1

This panel discussion will be hosted by Kelly Roysds.

11:30 am
[A symposium on therapeutic out-of-home care](#)
[Jon Baylin](#), [Kim Golding](#), [Dan Hughes](#), [Kelly Roysds](#), [Noel Macnamara](#), [Lynne McPherson](#), [Jordan Brown](#)
A symposium on therapeutic out-of-home care

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Workshop: "A Place To Talk Peacefully" Children And Young People's Experience Of Receiving Support To Heal From Family Violence And Sexual Violence In Aotearoa New Zealand. What Helps And What Gets In The Way.

Workshop - [Working with traumatised children and young people](#) - Room 212 & 213

11:30 am
["A Place To Talk Peacefully" Children And Young People'S Experience Of Receiving Support To Heal From Family Violence And Sexual Violence In Aotearoa New Zealand. What Helps And What Gets In The Way.](#)
[Hannah Mccaleb](#), [Peter-Clinton Foaese](#), [Isabel Lemanutau](#)
From May to July 2024, Mana Mokopuna—the Aotearoa New Zealand Children and Young People's Commission—led a series of engagements to capture the voices of 41 children and young people, 24 family members, and 46 practitioners from 14 organisations across Aotearoa New Zealand. Our goal was to understand "what good looks like" when engaging with services and supports aimed at helping individuals heal from family violence and/or sexual violence. We published a report in October 2024 called "A place to talk peacefully": what helps and what gets in the way - Mokopuna voices on healing from family and sexual violence in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Through these engagements, we heard powerful stories of bravery, hurt, resilience, and persistence. Children and young people shared their preferences for support—who they want to be supported by and how. They also shared their thoughts on what needs to change and provided holistic, innovative ideas for how the sector can better care for those seeking help, reflecting the diverse voices we engaged with.

In this presentation, we will share the voices, stories and experiences of the children and young people we engaged with. Key themes and findings will be introduced along with our call to action. We will also discuss our methodology for ensuring we conducted this work ethically, safely and authentically. Deep consideration and care with the support of an external ethics committee of experts has allowed us to genuinely hear and amplify the views shared with us.

19 August 2025

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm
Lunch

Break

19 August 2025

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Keynote Part 1: BEATS Workshop

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 219 & 220

Elliott Gann and Team

2:00 pm
[Therapeutic Beat Making \(TBM\) and Applications of Hip Hop for Engaging Trauma-Affected Youth](#)
[Scott Griffiths \(aka Optamus\)](#), [Elliot Gann \(aka Phillipdrummond\)](#), [Alexander Crooke](#), [Sam Rhook \(aka Rhooka\)](#)

These two 90-minute sessions will introduce participants to the Therapeutic Beat Making (TBM) model from both theoretical and applied perspectives. Grounded in interpersonal neurobiology and polyvagal theory, the sessions will explore how TBM fosters regulation, connection, expression, and empowerment.

Participants will experience a live beat-making demonstration that simulates the process used in schools and community programs to engage young people. The workshop will highlight how TBM is used in diverse settings—ranging from primary and secondary schools to community and forensic contexts such as juvenile halls and prisons—as well as bilingual programs across Latin America.

Sam Rhook (aka Rhooka) of Thrive Outreach Australia will share his work supporting youth through therapeutic mentoring and Hip Hop-based creative practices in Australia and the U.S., including his collaborations with Today's Future Sound. The session will also include footage from real-world classroom applications and explore Hip Hop's origins and links to multiple intelligences and trauma-informed practices.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Keynote: Neurodiversity Affirming Practices and Expressive Arts Therapy

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 210 & 211

2:00 pm
[Neurodiversity affirming practices and expressive arts therapy](#)
[Cathy Malchiodi PhD](#)

When we cannot "name it to tame it," we need strategies to help children, young people, and neurodivergent individuals of all ages "express it to address it." Expressive arts therapy provides action-oriented practices that bypass language, giving children and youth restorative ways to communicate their lived experiences in "neuro-affirming" ways. These approaches also support capacity-- moments of resiliency, mastery, confidence, curiosity, self-compassion, joy, and self-agency. They are essential experiences for those who may not necessarily feel comfortable with or respond to neurotypical ways of expressing, relating, learning, or interacting. This keynote will also introduce the presenter's own lived experiences with neurodiversity and how this personal narrative supported a restorative life journey to develop and research arts and sensory-based neuro-affirming interventions and programming.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Keynote: Resilience and post-traumatic growth

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 3

[Resilience and Post-Traumatic Growth](#)
[Arielle Schwartz](#)

Resilience and post-traumatic growth rely upon the opportunity to work through difficult life experiences. The deep, inner work of healing from trauma eventually can help clients to realize that they are stronger than they previously believed. In turn, they are more likely to accept themselves as they are, have an increased appreciation of life, develop new interests or passions, or discover new spiritual frameworks for their lives. As they feel stronger, they are more likely to see themselves as able to bring their gifts and contributions to the world. As therapists, we foster post traumatic growth when we invite clients to take personal responsibility for the narrative that defines their lives. If their voices are full of disappointment and resignation, we can assist them to revise their stories until they arrive at satisfactory conclusions that support growth after trauma. This does not mean that they can change what happened in the past. However, they can work through the pain of the past until they find resolutions in the here and now.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Keynote: Whole again: Reconnecting brain and body after trauma

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 2

2:00 pm
[Whole again: Reconnecting brain and body after trauma](#)
[Ruth Lanius](#)

Join us for a keynote delving into the aftermath of trauma, focusing on the disconnect between the brain and body, and exploring pioneering methods to mend this division. Therapists will learn to seamlessly blend bottom-up and top-down therapeutic approaches. Participants will gain practical strategies and real-life case examples to enhance their therapeutic practice and foster healing and integration.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Masterclass Part 1: Cultivating compassion: Four essential practices that will increase your ability to be open to the suffering of others, and in ourselves, and act to alleviate that suffering.

Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 212 & 213

2:00 pm
[Cultivating compassion: Four essential practices that will increase your ability to be open to the suffering of others, and in ourselves, and act to alleviate that suffering.](#)
[Paul Gilbert](#)

This workshop will guide participant through 4:00 practises that are designed to cultivate the biopsychosocial properties of compassion.

- Using the body to support the mind
- compassion focused mindfulness
- compassion focused imagery
- compassion focused behaviour

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Masterclass Part 1: Dan Hughes

Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 1

2:00 pm
[Masterclass - Dan Hughes](#)
[Dan Hughes](#)
Masterclass - Dan Hughes

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Masterclass Part 1: Unmasking Dissociation: Mastering Diagnosis in a Complex Landscape

Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 203 & 204

2:00 pm
[Unmasking dissociation: Mastering diagnosis in a complex landscape](#)
[Bethany Brand](#)
Dissociation is often "hidden in plain sight," with its diverse and confusing presentations frequently leading to misdiagnosis and ineffective treatment. Many highly dissociative clients report hearing voices, often resulting in a misdiagnosis of psychosis, while others are misdiagnosed with bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder, or even malingering. These missteps can demoralize clients and clinicians alike. Adding to the complexity, record numbers of youth are now self-diagnosing with "dissociative identity disorder" after exposure to social media portrayals. Clinicians face the difficult task of distinguishing genuine dissociative disorders from malingered, factitious, imitative, or mixed presentations. In this interactive master class, Dr. Bethany Brand will provide the evidence-based training clinicians urgently need to differentiate trauma-related dissociation from other disorders and challenges. Attendees will learn how to use key assessment tools, explore critical diagnostic distinctions, and navigate therapeutic approaches to discussing assessment results with clients—including those whose self-diagnosis isn't confirmed by clinical evaluation. Fictionalized case studies will illustrate practical strategies for assessment, diagnosis, and treatment planning, equipping you to untangle the complexities of dissociation and provide more effective, compassionate care.

19 August 2025

3:30 pm - 4:00 pm
Afternoon Tea

Break

19 August 2025

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Indigenous wisdom supporting trauma recovery in non-Indigenous families: A new single session approach to cross cultural healing

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 210 & 211

4:00 pm
[Indigenous wisdom supporting trauma recovery in non-Indigenous families: A new single session approach to cross cultural healing](#)
[Alison Elliott, Zoe Cloud](#)

This presentation introduces *Workin' with the Mob*, a First Nations-led adaptation of the *Walk-in Together (WIT)* Single Session Family Therapy framework. Led by First Nations' family therapists, this project integrates cultural knowledge into family therapy, offering a new model for supporting trauma recovery within families regardless of cultural background and safer, meaningful, strengths-based conversations while encouraging deeper engagement with First Nations' perspectives. Through qualitative analysis of family and therapist experiences, we will explore how First Nations reflections shape therapeutic outcomes and relational healing for First Nations and non-First Nations families. Emerging findings will be presented, highlighting the impact of culturally embedded practices in creating safer, more inclusive family therapy experiences for families, clinicians and researchers. The session will discuss implications for systemic family therapy, reconciliation, and cross-cultural learning in mental health services.

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Keynote Part 2: BEATS Workshop

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 219 & 220

Elliott Gann and Team

4:00 pm
[Therapeutic Beat Making \(TBM\) and Applications of Hip Hop for Engaging Trauma-Affected Youth](#)
[Scott Griffiths \(aka Optamus\), Elliot Gann \(aka Phillipdrummond\), Alexander Crooke, Sam Rhook \(aka Rhooka\)](#)

These two 90-minute sessions will introduce participants to the Therapeutic Beat Making (TBM) model from both theoretical and applied perspectives. Grounded in interpersonal neurobiology and polyvagal theory, the sessions will explore how TBM fosters regulation, connection, expression, and empowerment.

Participants will experience a live beat-making demonstration that simulates the process used in schools and community programs to engage young people. The workshop will highlight how TBM is used in diverse settings—ranging from primary and secondary schools to community and forensic contexts such as juvenile halls and prisons—as well as bilingual programs across Latin America.

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4:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Keynote: Jon Baylin

- Plenary 3

4:00 pm

[Keynote: Jon Baylin](#)

[Jon Baylin](#)

Keynote: Jon Baylin

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Keynote: Rebecca Challoner and Christina Keeble

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 2

4:00 pm

[ADHD and Generational Trauma](#)

[Rebecca Challoner](#)

In this 90 minute co-presented session, Rebecca Challoner and Christina Keeble will successively present their lived experience insights and professional expertise on the intersection of Autism, ADHD and Trauma – a must see presentation for those working with children and young people with dual diagnoses/experiences looking to learn more.

Rebecca's presentation 'ADHD and Generational Trauma' will explore how the generational experience of ADHD and the associated impact of anger and dysregulated emotion can lead to family violence.

Following Rebecca, Christina will be speaking on 'Autism and trauma - the importance of accurate diagnosis'. Using insights from her own story, she will explore the importance of understanding your own neurotype, strengths and challenges, showing how this impacts on the wellbeing, understanding of self for survivors and leads to increased self-advocacy and facilitates more effectively taught protective behaviours.

4:45 pm

[Autism and trauma - the importance of accurate diagnosis](#)

[Christina Keeble](#)

In this 90 minute co-presented session, Rebecca Challoner and Christina Keeble will successively present their lived experience insights and professional expertise on the intersection of Autism, ADHD and Trauma – a must see presentation for those working with children and young people with dual diagnoses/experiences looking to learn more.

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4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Masterclass Part 2: Cultivating Compassion – four essential practices that will increase your ability to be open to the suffering of others, and in ourselves, and act to alleviate that suffering.

Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 212 & 213

[Cultivating Compassion – four essential practices that will increase your ability to be open to the suffering of others, and in ourselves, and act to alleviate that suffering.](#)

[Paul Gilbert](#)

This workshop will guide participant through 4:00 practises that are designed to cultivate the biopsychosocial properties of compassion.

- Using the body to support the mind
- compassion focused mindfulness
- compassion focused imagery
- compassion focused behaviour

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Masterclass Part 2: Dan Hughes

Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 1

4:00 pm

[Masterclass: Dan Hughes](#)

[Dan Hughes](#)

Masterclass: Dan Hughes

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Masterclass Part 2: Unmasking Dissociation: Mastering Diagnosis in a Complex Landscape

Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 203 & 204

4:00 pm

[Unmasking Dissociation: Mastering Diagnosis in a Complex Landscape](#)

[Bethany Brand](#)

Dissociation is often "hidden in plain sight," with its diverse and confusing presentations frequently leading to misdiagnosis and ineffective treatment. Many highly dissociative clients report hearing voices, often resulting in a misdiagnosis of psychosis, while others are misdiagnosed with bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder, or even malingering. These missteps can demoralize clients and clinicians alike. Adding to the complexity, record numbers of youth are now self-diagnosing with "dissociative identity disorder" after exposure to social media portrayals. Clinicians face the difficult task of distinguishing genuine dissociative disorders from malingered, factitious, imitative, or mixed presentations. In this interactive master class, Dr. Bethany Brand will provide the evidence-based training clinicians urgently need to differentiate trauma-related dissociation from other disorders and challenges. Attendees will learn how to use key assessment tools, explore critical diagnostic distinctions, and navigate therapeutic approaches to discussing assessment results with clients—including those whose self-diagnosis isn't confirmed by clinical evaluation. Fictionalized case studies will illustrate practical strategies for assessment, diagnosis, and treatment planning, equipping you to untangle the complexities of dissociation and provide more effective, compassionate care.

19 August 2025

6:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Left Write Hook film screening & Panel presentation

Session - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 1

6:00 pm
[Left Write Hook film screening & Panel presentation](#)
[Donna Lyon](#), [Julie.](#), [Lauren.](#), [Nikki.](#), [Shannon Owen](#), [Janise Mitchell](#)
Left Write Hook film screening & Panel presentation

20 August 2025

8:00 am - 8:30 am
Morning Movement and Wellbeing: Breathwork with Caroline Brunne – The Survivor Coach

Morning Movement - [ICTC](#) - Room 212 & 213

8:00 am
[Breathwork with Caroline Brunne – The Survivor Coach](#)
[Caroline Brunne](#)
Join Caroline for a short breathwork experience focused on stress relief and deep relaxation. Be guided through an exploration of your breath, focusing on a long, slow and deep (LSD) breathwork technique combined with breath retentions. This session is open to all and is an inclusive and welcoming space, participants will be provided with a yoga mat and bolsters or cushions but can participate seated if needed. Participants are encouraged to bring a water bottle and a journal or notepad with a pen if they wish.

8:00 am - 8:30 am
Morning Movement and Wellbeing: Morning Yoga with Tina and Briar

Morning Movement - [ICTC](#) - Room 210 & 211

8:00 am
[Morning Yoga with Tina and Briar](#)
[Tina Icaro](#), [Briar Arnel](#)
This session is for delegates, aiming to help you find space each morning through the middle of the conference week, to ground and regulate your nervous system, with a focus on achieving a relaxed state and embodiment.

8:00 am - 8:30 am
Morning Movement and Wellbeing: Playful moves: Moving with self, moving with others, moving in groups

Morning Movement - [ICTC](#) - Room 203 & 204

8:00 am
[Playful moves: Moving with self, moving with others, moving in groups](#)
[Sally Denning](#)
Join Dance Movement Therapist Sally Denning as she guides you through short trauma informed playful movements that can also be implemented with children.

20 August 2025

9:00 am - 11:00 am
Plenary - [Conor Pall](#) and [Sue-Anne Hunter](#)

Plenary - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 2

9:00 am
[Plenary - \[Conor Pall\]\(#\)](#)
[Conor Pall](#)
Plenary - [Conor Pall](#)

10:00 am
[Plenary - \[Sue-Anne Hunter\]\(#\)](#)
[Sue-Anne Hunter](#)
Plenary - [Sue-Anne Hunter](#)

20 August 2025

11:00 am - 11:30 am
Morning Tea

Break

20 August 2025

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Working in schools](#) - Room 210 & 211

11:30 am
[Kimberley Space: Exploring Social And Emotional Learning With Primary School Students In Remote Locations](#)
[Jennifer Knoll](#)
Recently, there has been significant growth in research exploring the effects of incorporating social and emotional learning (SEL) programs in schools. A broad range of studies point to the worth of schools incorporating SEL programs in their curriculum. Findings suggest that not only does SEL result in pro-social growth for students, such as motivation to learn and improved relationships with peers, it also offers effective protection from negative outcomes, such as reducing emotional distress and conduct

problems.

The Kimberley SPACE program was delivered to 6 regional and remote primary schools across the East and West Kimberley education districts in Western Australia. It was a collaboration between the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) and the WA Department of Education. It was a pilot study that implemented a culturally responsive program to promote social competence and emotional maturity (regulation) capabilities in primary school aged students, including those with diverse learning needs.

The program had links to a pre-existing ACF school support program, 'Making Space for Learning'. 'Making Space for Learning' draws on neurobiological evidence related to trauma and considers principles and strategies to support students to learn and manage social and emotional relationships at school. Kimberley SPACE translated and expanded this framework into an accessible, child friendly, whole of school program of activities for students, that allowed cultural contexts to be easily included into the curriculum.

The concepts of social competence and emotional regulation were considered in relation to the experience of children with experiential and developmental vulnerabilities such as FASD, neurodevelopmental delays and the experience of trauma.

Findings from the program's learning and evaluation report will be shared as well as insights into the program's set up, codesign and delivery.

12:00 pm

["Loog Afdaimbud Dem Propuwai" - Teaching Community Hands-On Trauma Informed Care](#)

[Roisin Maguire, Delvene Green, Danielle McKivett, Deeta Kimber](#)

This presentation explores a community-led model of trauma-informed care in the Kimberley, Western Australia, addressing intergenerational trauma stemming from colonisation and the Stolen Generations reflected in high suicide rates and psycho-social adversity across the community. High workforce turnover among health professionals necessitates innovative, sustainable solutions.

Our project, implemented through the Rural Health West Outreach in the Outback program, draws inspiration from Vikram Patel's community development approach. Recognising the limitations of traditional mental health service delivery in remote settings, we focus on building capacity within the community.

Initially, we provided specialist training to teachers in trauma-informed care, using Stephen Porges' Polyvagal Theory. This involved practical strategies like individual child stress mapping and co-regulation plans, implemented across the classroom to reframe behaviours as "triggered not bad", and build safety, connection and regulation assistance at the school. While teacher turnover remained high, Aboriginal education assistants (AIEOs) provided crucial continuity.

This established the school and classroom as a haven of safety, connection and co-regulation 30 hours a week, enabling growth and healing in a holistic setting.

Significantly, AIEOs organically integrated the trauma-informed framework into the wider community, offering support to families outside of school hours, leading to transgenerational healing and trauma-informed parenting that emphasises the importance of safety and connection. This culturally grounded adaptation aligns with Patel's emphasis on community co-creation.

This model is visual, and the storytelling approach is unique, incorporating local knowledge systems and observation-based learning to promote stress regulation. This presentation highlights the program's successes, emphasising the critical role of AIEOs in fostering culturally relevant, sustainable, trauma-informed care.

12:30 pm

[School Communities, Creative Arts Therapy And The Materiality Of Working Alongside Trauma](#)

[Eliza Gibbons](#)

Contemporary research describes trauma as being experienced through, and living in bodies (van der Kolk, 2014). As a Western therapist and academic, my worldview and education have often privileged human bodies over other-than-human bodies and entities. Working alongside children (most often whom are Māori and/or Pasifika) in Aotearoa has supported a shift in my understanding, renewing an innate sense for me that mauri (life force) flows through everything and that human to human therapy is seldom enough when working with children and communities affected by trauma.

This presentation will offer insight into working in school communities where the affects of trauma are present. Natural disaster, grief, and attachment disruptions will be explored through the power of collective storytelling and (k)new materialist theory (Meyer, 2013) in alignment with Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Aotearoa's founding document. Art materials, products and the various stuff and things (Bennet, 2009) present in the therapy room have agency and become strong allies for children as they find ways to support their healing journeys. As a therapist, my aim is not to teach skills or direct, rather, it is to support the agency of all beings and bodies in space, human and other than, empowering children to access the resources in their everyday worlds to support their healing. To āta, gently slow down, to notice, reflect and reignite what is already known deep in the bodies of these incredible little beings is where the magic of creative arts therapy comes alive.

Consent has been granted to share anonymous stories, vital art works and materials to offer a close in, tangible taste of the vibrant matter (Bennet, 2009) ever present in the lives of the children and school communities I have the privilege of working alongside.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Working with families](#) - Plenary 2

11:30 am

[Bringing Home In Focus: How Can We Work With All Members Of The Family Where There Is Violence In The Family?](#)

[Allison Wainwright, Tony Johannsen](#)

The Home in Focus program is a whole of family approach where people using family violence remain living in the family home. A key aspect of the project is to elevate the child's voice and emphasise the importance of ensuring children and young people's perspectives are central to decision-making.

The program aims to promote safety, connection and wellbeing that in turn supports children to thrive in their families and communities and reach their full potential. Practitioners use play as one option to create safe spaces for children to express their feelings and experiences. The insights gained from children and young people are used to contribute to fostering awareness for parents about how family violence can impact their children.

This presentation draws on the collective expertise of the Home in Focus team, applying attachment-based principles in program development. The presentation will showcase the types of families the program works with and demonstrate how creative, child-centered approaches—such as play and the Three Houses methodology—enable children to articulate their lived experiences. These techniques empower children and young people to express their 'hopes, dreams, and worries', offering critical insights that guide therapeutic interventions.

The main takeaway for the audience is that in elevating children's voices within all family violence-based interventions, allows for their perspective to contribute to what supports are put into place for the family. Children and young people have valuable insights about their life and what they experience on a day-to-day basis.

12:00 pm

[Secondary Traumatic Stress: Challenges Of Working With High Needs Families](#)

[Clara Woon, Fion Teo, Charmain Tan](#)

Anchor is a home visitation programme to support Singaporean children aged 0–3 years who have experienced early childhood maltreatment and disrupted attachments. The programme is delivered by Home Visitors who work primarily with these caregivers and their children to support the child's well-being, strengthen the caregiver-child dyad, and promote caregiver mental wellness. These families often face adverse situations ranging from domestic violence, poverty and mental health concerns. Home Visitors in turn experience distress through their work with these families that can lead to secondary traumatic stress (STS). STS arises when professionals are indirectly exposed to the trauma experienced by the families they serve and can manifest in several forms. Research indicates that nearly 30% of individuals working in trauma-related fields may experience STS, which can impair their ability to function effectively in both personal and professional domains.

Two case studies provide an overview of Anchor's Home Visitors' work with caregivers experiencing psychological abuse and mental health concerns, and how these interactions manifest in different forms of STS. These cases will showcase the impact and effects of STS on Anchor Home Visitors, such as the toll on their mental health, possible effects on their physical health, as well as their struggles between empathetic engagement and self-preservation.

Anchor incorporates the use of reflective supervision as an important support mechanism for Home Visitors to reduce the impact of STS. The safe and supportive environment provided allows them to process their feelings, gain insights into their emotional responses and develop coping strategies to counter STS. An overview of this collaborative and introspective process between supervisors and Home Visitors will be explored. The value of organizational support in prioritising reflective practices and improving risk

reduction protocols will also be presented in the work to mitigate STS and improve outcomes for the families under Anchor.

12:30 pm

[Understanding And Overcoming Silencing Mechanism: Seeking Social, Interpersonal And Sub-Cortical Connections For Transformation \(With Yoga As An Example\)](#)
[Lynn Romeo](#)

Trauma wisdom and therapeutic approaches that bring us safely into our body are expanding our ability to become a connected whole after childhood trauma. There are, however, impediments to healing that require more attention, such as entrenched mechanisms that silence children and adult survivors, especially those who experienced childhood sexual abuse.

This presentation explores the layers of silencing inherent in the world around us, our foundational relationships, and our inner, private spaces. It is based on a three-part article, 'Silenced, Not Silent' published by Blue Knot Foundation, July 2023, and a related model developed for the Boston International Trauma Conference, May 2024. This distillation of lived experience, trauma wisdom and underlying social dynamics brings clarity to the complex in 'Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder'.

Being silenced, through subtle or overt, unintended or systematic means, is traumatising, in itself. Breaking the silence is not a simple, one-off choice. The child/inner child often needs to take on the world whilst having no words for what happened; challenge caregivers/multiple generations invested in pretence or cover-up; and become their own parent/therapist while others strive to perpetuate the silence.

The truth, however, can not hide for long within our bodies or behind our emotional weather patterns when our subconscious knows we are safe. To balance the cognitive load of the content, this presentation will offer a seated, gentle experience of yoga.* This will give signposts to subcortical connections/pathways that nurture us physically, mentally and emotionally – ways that yoga and other somatic therapies work with various systems to help us transform trauma, at our own pace, with protective guidance from the sub-conscious. We can all become more authentic, whole and clearer about what happened to us, and, if we wish, more vocal about it.

*A separate submission for a workshop will extend this experience

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Working with traumatised children and young people](#) - Room 209

11:30 am

[Exploring Life Story Work Done Therapeutically Across The Lifespan: Understanding "This Is Me, This Is You, This Is Us"](#)
[Therapeutic Life Story Work Australia, Amy Payne](#)

This 1.5-hour workshop brings members of the Therapeutic Life Story Work (TLSW) Australia community of practice together to explore and enhance the evidence-based TLSW tiered model (Rose, 2012) with a focus on therapeutic applications.

The core idea of "Transforming Trauma: Connection and Healing" is pivotal in the context of TLSW as a guiding process that enables children to reconstruct their stories in a relational way that encourages meaning-making, curiosity, connection, and healing.

This approach can be adapted to different environments, ensuring that the child's perspective is respected, and their experiences are acknowledged. It acknowledges the varied practices of different practitioners and also emphasises the uniqueness of each child and families narrative. This inclusive approach is practiced throughout the out of home care, multicultural services, adoption, disability, early intervention and youth justice systems. It ensures that every child and story is valued, and individuals are listened to, supported and lead the way in shaping their narratives and imagining their future.

With all of this in mind, the participants will delve into the knowledge, skills, stories and practices integral to TLSW, gaining hands-on experience with tools and resources designed to support individuals across the lifespan.

To the participants, at the end of this collaborative and practitioner-led workshop, you will leave feeling equipped to implement these therapeutic strategies in your professional settings. You will leave feeling connected to the TLSW Australia community of practice. And we imagine and hope that you will have deeper understanding, confidence and ability to effectively apply 'Life Story Work done Therapeutically' in your ongoing and future endeavours.

12:00 pm

[Pathway To Healing Through Connection And A Sense Of Belonging](#)
[John Cardamone](#)

I have found as a childhood sexual abuse survivor that connection and having a sense of belonging critical as a foundation for children and those experiencing trauma. It is my belief that connection and a sense of belonging is vital if we want our children or adult survivors to thrive. Strong research and evidence support that consistent and positive connections are related to positive mental health and well-being, especially in times of trauma.

Cultivating a sense of belonging is a powerful protective factor for children and adult survivors. All trauma victims need to feel protected and always cared for, to develop their confidence and resilience. This provides them the ability and capacity to manage their emotions, to communicate and share any concerns or worries they may have about anything.

I believe that trauma survivors spell 'love' a different way, another four-letter word T-I-M-E. They say time is money, however, I want to create a new phrase, 'TIME IS LOVE'. Spending time and being present in the moment with our children and adult survivors is one of the best protective factors we can create, making them to feel safe, happy, and mentally healthy. I understand time is precious and with our life commitments it can be very hard, when there is a choice, the investment in spending time with children and adult survivors is an important one.

For me, the best antidote has been feeling connected. Creating, and having a sense of belonging with family, friends, and sporting groups.

I want to give people hope and remind them that the greatest gift they can give themselves is time and attention. Building your village to strengthen your connectedness and a sense of belonging has been my antidote to finding a pathway to healing.

12:30 pm

[Stoy-Based And Bottom-Up Accountability With Children Who Have Experienced Trauma: Practices That Focus On Response](#)
[Daniel Moss](#)

From 2020 to 2023 Emerging Minds National Workforce Center for Children's Mental Health worked intensively with sixteen practitioners across Australia to better understand their therapeutic practices with children who experience trauma and their strategies for supporting mental health. These practitioners worked in both specialist trauma and generalist services and described the multiple presenting issues affecting the children who visited them and competing imperatives for their work. This presentation describes the trauma informed practices and policies that have been designed by these therapists to effectively meet the needs of children and families.

As part of work with the sixteen practitioners, key themes and strategies emerged. These themes included practitioner efforts to understand the context of children's stories, helping them to connect with their resilience in the wake of trauma, and helping them to create meaning of the actions they took in keeping themselves or others safe. Rather than only diagnosing and correcting the effects of trauma on the child's body and brain, the therapists described their work in helping children to describe their responses to experiences of trauma. This led to new understandings and reinterpretations of past experiences for many of the children and young people in their services.

This presentation examines therapy that recruits children as co-researchers in the meaning-making of their life's experiences, including both the effects and their responses to experiences of trauma. In this way, therapists are accountable to a fascination with what is not yet known, rather than to the reproduction of dominant discourses of correction. It provides specific and practical therapeutic examples from different services and professionals across in Australia in accordance with the practice themes that we identified. The presentation will provide case examples and practices gleaned from practitioners as part of an Emerging Minds paper published in The Journal of Systemic Therapies.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Working in schools](#) - Room 208

11:30 am

[Finding The Path Forward Adolescent Group](#)
[Tamara Wolan, Laura Clements, Alice Lieshout](#)

Finding the Path Forward Adolescent Group is a program developed for young people engaging in relational violence in the home and school environments. This program is an initiative developed alongside therapeutic programs run across the state of Victoria providing specialist outreach support for young people and their families with relationship violence occurring. The group program aims to provide an early intervention with at-risk young people to provide them with a space to develop their emotional and physical regulation skills, explore the concept of safety and boundaries, and explore their roles and engagement in important relationships in their lives. The group program has been successfully run across several metropolitan and regional school settings, in collaboration with school well-being teams. Key outcomes after completing the group program for these young people included a greater understanding of emotions and body awareness; capacity to track and identify dysregulation; an improved sense of safety within the group and in relationships with each other and extended family members; a felt sense of boundaries and the impact of breaching or having these boundaries breached and increased connection, attendance and participation in school. The positive outcomes of this group speak to the overwhelming need this cohort of young people have for a space in which they can develop key skills such as communication, safety in relationships and emotion regulation. The hope is that continued early intervention and participation in this therapeutic group helps prevent at-risk behaviours for these young people and keeps them engaged in the school system and with key protective relationships in their world.

12:00 pm

[Liminal Spaces: Trauma, Counselling, And Education](#)
[Amanda Martinez](#)

This study utilised a hermeneutic approach to investigate the literature about school disengagement through the lens of trauma and to see how the implementation of primary school counsellors in Aotearoa New Zealand could support trauma-informed school practices. A hermeneutic methodology suited this study for several reasons: research on trauma-informed schooling is in its infancy, there is a disconnect between discourse about helping young people and the resources available to support them, trauma-informed literature predominantly comes from Western perspectives and cannot readily be applied in Aotearoa, and such a methodology honours the engagement of researcher-as-participant, making use of their experiences in these contexts. Poetry was employed as an additional research method to express the dialogical encounters and embodied meaning-making that clarified the critical need to decolonise academic spaces. The findings are presented as a journey from considering the existing school system as one that is "broken" and "failing" children to one that is functioning as designed under the influences of colonisation, assimilation, power, and neoliberal ideas. The study ponders ideas of claimed knowledge and explores the resilience of young people in the face of marginalisation. Implications from these findings include the need and prospect for decolonising school counselling practices by centring the voices of disenfranchised young people to shape a mana-enhancing and context-specific approach to their trauma. This research calls for school counsellors to exist in the liminal spaces between trauma, counselling, and education.

12:30 pm

[Regulate, Relate, Reason - Practical Strategies To Support Co- And Self-Regulation In Students](#)
[Stephanie Curtis](#)

Educational facilities are in a perfect position to implement trauma-aware early intervention strategies to reduce the long-term outcomes and associated public health costs of complex childhood trauma. Recent developments in neuroscience have provided significant understandings to support why trauma-informed practice in schools and education facilities is important and necessary. If we put on our neuroscience lens, what are the practical strategies that will help build self-regulation in our students and promote calm, safe and engaging classrooms?

Many of the challenging behaviours seen in schools are a result of maladaptive behaviours forming in response to early childhood trauma. As these behaviours have been formed as a defence mechanism, they are largely automated, governed by the brain stem to keep us safe. Unfortunately, a top-down approach is often seen in schools, with a focus on the analytical thinking brain needed for learning.

Dr Bruce Perry coined the terminology 'Regulate, Relate, Reason' as part of a bottom-up approach to support children impacted by trauma. First, we Regulate to provide a sense of safety and calm, and to support the child through their fight, flight or freeze response. Then we can Relate by connection and attunement, supporting co-regulation. All this needs to happen before we can Reason with the child, to support them to understand their emotions, their responses, and ultimately reengage in learning.

Join this fun and engaging workshop to discuss and experience a broad range of proactive and practical strategies to utilise in your classroom to Regulate our brain stems – the important first step before we can Relate and Reason. Participants will walk away with some practical ideas to use in their classrooms to support self- and co-regulation.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Neurodivergence and trauma](#) - Plenary 3

11:30 am

[The Protective Role Of Parent And Child Autistic And Adhd Identification, Identity, And Connection In Reducing The Impact Of Social Trauma](#)
[Sarah Harrower, Liam Spicer](#)

Autistic and ADHD individuals are a valid minority group, with consistent research demonstrating higher prevalence of adverse childhood experiences and social trauma including bullying, discrimination, and exclusion (Spicer et al., 2024). These experiences are key contributing factors for higher rates of mental health challenges seen in Autistic and ADHD individuals (Lai et al., 2019; Frank et al., 2018). In aim of creating change, greater awareness and utilisation of protective factors for Autistic and ADHD individuals aligned with the Neurodiversity Affirming paradigm is needed, shifting the view to be centred on valuing the importance of individual differences and diversity (Walker, 2014). This presentation delivered by two Autistic and ADHD Psychologists focuses on the protective role of neurotype identification, positive identity, and connection to the neurodivergent community across the lifespan from pregnancy to adulthood.

There will be a key emphasis on how the utilisation of protective factors can provide a buffering effect from social trauma and highlight the use of affirming trauma focused interventions, such as Eye Movement Desensitisation Reprocessing (EMDR). It will explore contemporary research including Double Empathy (Milton, 2012), self-compassion (Neff, 2003), early identification and identity (Barbaro et al., 2022), and peer connection (Crompton et al., 2020) as vital components in building attunement, understanding, and positive experiences within Autistic and ADHD families. The historical and current challenges faced by Autistic and ADHD individuals, including how previous interventions and societal attitudes have caused trauma will be included. Importantly it will cover how both social change and direct support can be provided to not only reduce trauma's impact but reduce the occurrences in future generations. This session aligns with trauma-informed practices by focusing on protective elements that support recovery and resilience in Autistic and ADHD families, reinforcing the need for systemic change at individual and societal levels.

12:00 pm

[Understanding And Supporting Defiance Using A Whole Person, Trauma Informed, Interpersonal Approach Utilising The Internal Family Systems Model.](#)
[Naomi Rutten](#)

Defiance, opposition, pathological demand avoidance, are symptoms rather than diagnoses. They are behaviours resulting from a mix of genetic, physiological and psychological protective mechanisms. Understanding how these mechanisms function and interact is essential to learning how to best support these individuals throughout their development and ongoing lives.

Utilising the Internal Family Systems model I provide an understanding of the psychological protective process of defiance which is helping parents, educators and support services to support these individuals. Through understanding, external and self expectations can be restructured and appropriate supports can be provided for the individual and those caring for them.

12:30 pm

[Who I Am: The Intersectionality Between Precognitive Trauma, Neurodiversity, And Practitioner Experience.](#)
[Kimberleigh Hooper](#)

Our self-concept is shaped from our early childhood, developmental, and relational experiences. But what if your existence or sense of 'self' was traumatically, genetically, and environmentally marked from the antenatal developmental period in addition to generationally? Kimberley has spoken about her lived experiences as the product of a rape at the UNCC in Bangkok Thailand as well as other platforms, highlighting the transformative power that can come from sharing and embracing stories of adversity. Importantly, her story is one that is shared through her Mother's strength and resilience.

Embarking on a journey to explore the impact precognitive trauma; trauma experienced before 18 months of age including during conception and birth, has had on her worldview, Kimberley draws from her knowledge of trauma, attachment, and neuroscience to narrate the healing, purpose, and meaning she has begun to discover including the questions she still has in relation to the human condition. Her story includes the turning point from early exposure to domestic violence, developmental delays, regressive and problematic behaviours that occurred during her primary and secondary schooling as well as the impact this had on her mental wellness, to becoming a global youth ambassador for Humanitarian Affairs Asia.

As an adult, Kimberley received diagnoses of Autism Spectrum Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder which added another layer of shame and understanding in her lifelong journey. Importantly, Kimberley reflects on how her lived experiences have benefited and challenged her as a mental health practitioner who often works with complex developmental and relational trauma.

Kimberley dedicates this presentation to the strong mothers, parents, caregivers, educators, and professionals who serve as the role models, mentors, and attachment figures for vulnerable children and young people. That one adult who believes in you as a child when you cannot believe in yourself truly makes a difference.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Working with families](#) - Room 219 & 220

11:30 am

[Did I Leave Myself Behind? The Impact Of Immigration On Intergenerational Traumatized Children.](#)

[Moara Prado](#)

What happens when you cross intergenerational trauma and immigration? When faced with a chance of opportunity, financial stability and growth, how much is too much, to pay for a new life?

'Interimmigrational' trauma is more than a theory; it's a lived experience for many families and children, including myself. Emotional scars of past generations, carried into the present through emotional silences, patterns repeated and cultural disconnections.

This presentation explores the never ending cycle of parents, who choose to migrate away from their intergenerational trauma and into the land of unfamiliarity – Where the aftermath of forced displacement, leave children with a hijacked sense of self. Not knowing where they begin or end, as they look for safety in foreign territory, while grieving the loss of their previous life.

Drawing on research from psychology, neuroscience and personal experience, I will explain the painful process of change through the eyes of a child. Suggesting that the immigration process, further develops intergeneration trauma.

Together we will explore ways to minimise 'interimmigrational' trauma in children. Reminding ourselves that DNA also brings intergenerational strength and resilience. Trauma is only one part of the story. The presentation uses beautiful storytelling to help people reconnect with the lost part of themselves, where they can begin to heal inherited wounds. For many, it is a lifelong journey of breaking cycles and reclaiming identity.

This presentation will offer insights for counsellors, psychologists, mental health occupational therapists, teachers and parents. Addressing and supporting trauma recovery across families, with a focus on the compounded effects of immigration and loss. Together, we can rewrite the narrative across generations.

12:00 pm

[Strengthening Outcomes For Adopted Children And Families By Being Able To Stay Present And Open In Challenging Conversations: Lived Expertise Learnings From An Adoptive Parent And Adoptee](#)

[Kayla Curtis, Linda Cooke](#)

Adoption is a lifelong journey. Join Linda, an adoptive parent of a Chinese intercountry adoptee in conversation with Kayla, a Korean intercountry adoptee as they engage in a robust dialogue about their adoption related lived experiences discussing the nuanced and complex challenges of intercountry and transcultural adoptions. Together they explore the different but connected journeys for parents and adoptees, reflecting on the 'growing up' life stages and adverse events that adoptees and their families continually navigate.

Hear about how Linda and Kayla's professional practice combined with their personal experience of adoption provides a peer, lived expertise lens in the work they do to support their community. Kayla and Linda's presentation highlights the importance of acknowledging and discussing adoption related trauma, and how having conversations together helps communities and families heal together. By working together in sharing their unique parent-adoptee perspectives, challenging conversations can feel rewarding, psycho-educational and help in growing safe, connected spaces across adoption communities.

Professionals will have the opportunity to grow their adoption awareness in learning from lived expertise, to gain an understanding of how-to best support adopted children to process and heal from adoption related trauma and attachment injury. Additionally, learn how to support important family conversations about adoption and the complex intersections of race and racism, birth families and belonging. Hear Kayla describe her learned ways of living with adoption related trauma and how disenfranchised grief and loss of birth family, country and culture impact on identity development and experiencing secure relationships. Linda will share the importance of parent self-work using a therapeutic parenting approach that is trauma informed and child centered.

Finally learn what their collective lived experiences have taught them - collaboration is key- no one single experience can carry the expertise of this community.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Working in out-of-home care](#) - Room 205

11:30 am

[Therapeutic Foster Care In Wa- Delivering A Therapeutic Foster Care Service To Carers And Children In Out Of Home Care Using Evidence-Based Frameworks And Innovative Approaches.](#)

[Clare Allen](#)

Children and young people in out of home care have experienced adversity and they deserve to feel safe, connected and have attuned relationships with their carers and care team.

Australian Childhood Foundation Foster Care WA team comprise of Care Coordinators and Therapeutic Specialists who practice using the Doolann Therapeutic Model of Care which is a comprehensive care response for children and young people in out of home care. Our aim is to provide inclusive, culturally strong therapeutic care and support to vulnerable children and young people, and their foster carers. Using this model, the team positions children and young people at the centre of all practice.

Following the Out of Home Care reform in WA, delivering a therapeutic foster care program as a new provider to carers who have already been caring for numerous years has brought an array of learning. Some interventions include supporting carers with a history of conflictual relationships with stakeholders involved in the child's life, supporting carers with their understanding of trauma related behaviours and behaviours that challenge, and supporting children and young people with placement moves. We practice with the child at the forefront and have surrounded their care team with trauma informed therapeutic knowledge and interventions.

The children and young people that we are working with are starting to achieve outcomes that have been seen as too hard to achieve in the past. We have examples of children using their own words to articulate how they feel, and care teams who work together for the best interests of the child now there is a shared understanding of care.

12:00 pm

[Young People's Lived Experience Of Relational Practices In Therapeutic Residential Care In Australia](#)

[Lynne McPherson, Janise Mitchell](#)

Young people living in therapeutic residential care can face major challenges that may prevent them from forming healthy relationships and connections within the community, which are critical building blocks for their wellbeing and safety. As a response to these challenges, Australia has introduced 'therapeutic residential care' (TRC) models in a number of states and territories. In Australia, TRC was developed to respond to highly complex levels of need, for those young people who were unable to live in a family or other home-based care arrangement.

This paper presents research which explored whether and how relational practices in TRC enable the experience of positive, trusting relationships for young people. Young people between the ages of 12 and 18 years (N = 38) reported developing trust when staff genuinely invested time in their wellbeing, demonstrated care and respect, and made them feel valued. Conversely, the lack of these practices and/or particular organisational and systemic conditions were considered barriers by some, that could lead to 'misrecognition'. Drawing directly from the lived experience as recounted by young people currently living in residential care, the researchers conceptualise and introduce a new dimension of relational practice in residential care settings.

Session - [Working in out-of-home care](#) - Room 206

11:30 am
[Be The Village, Thrive Together. Drawing On The Strengths Of Families To Offer Meaningful Foster Carer Peer Support.](#)
[Natalie Costello](#)
Thrive Together is Lutheran Care's (LC) innovative, co-designed peer support initiative developed to meet the unique challenges and diverse needs of SA's Foster Care Village. The program draws on the existing strengths of fostering families and their peers, equipping and empowering them to create organic and long-lasting peer connections independent of LC.

Listening and responding to the voices of carers who called for the facilitation of meaningful peer support activity, LC invited local carers on an 8-month journey led by The Australian Centre for Social Innovation to design and establish a peer support model specifically for South Australian's, with plans to expand across agencies.

Unlike traditional models imported from overseas that do not meet the varied needs of a community of 250+ households dispersed by 186km and representing numerous cultures and backgrounds; local foster carers are integral to this approach. Drawing from unique strengths, lived experiences, and perspectives, Thrive Together is a strength-based peer program that is organic and uncomplicated.

The localised program is relevant, practical, and deeply rooted in nurturing shared participation and sustainable connections through peer-led support groups, niche workshops, and community-building events designed to enhance resilience and wellbeing among carers.

Supported by a full-time Family Engagement Worker with 10+ years of lived carer experience, Thrive Together is resonating with more families. Early feedback and outcomes have suggested that Thrive Together is setting a new standard for responsive, inclusive, and sustainable foster care support systems, reducing isolation and ultimately improving outcomes for carers and the children in their care.

12:30 pm
[Relationship Stability, Why Relationships Matter For Young People In Care](#)
[Jennifer Gay](#)

Relationships that can accompany young people throughout their life and provide them with social networks of support are a core component of success for those in out of home care.

This presentation will discuss the importance of ensuring sustainable relationships are nurtured for young people in care that can outlast the professionals involved in their lives and will focus on case studies that highlights positive outcomes from this approach from the perspectives of the young people, carers and workers.

Session - [Culture and healing](#) - Room 218

11:30 am
[Ganydjarr'Mirriyam Yuta'Ny Miyalk Nha – Empowering Young Girls To Lead Strong Lives. We Will Explore How Connection To Culture Can Start The Pathway To Healing And The Challenges Our Team Experiences When Walking Alongside Young Girls Who Are Healing From The Pain And Trauma Of Sexual Abuse.](#)
[Annie Cain, Litisha Baker, Jasmine Yunupingu](#)
The most isolating experience that can happen to you as a child or young person is sexual abuse. Perpetrators of sexual abuse not only use tactics to isolate you from everyone and everything that you love, but you isolate yourself, because how could anyone understand what has happened to you? Was I to blame? What do people think when they see me?

Healing from the trauma of sexual abuse and making sense of what has happened to you cannot happen in isolation. The more you are isolated the further you are separated from your pathway that leads to healing.

In Yolngu culture, our pathway to healing is Gurrutu.

Gurrutu is our Kinship system and tells the story of who we are, how we fit and where we belong.

Gurrutu is about connection and relationship.

Gurrutu paints an expansive worldview that not only links us to the here and now but recognises that in the Yolngu world, everything and everyone is intertwined and interconnected. Gurrutu predetermines and identifies a Yolngu person's Clan, Moiety, Songlines, cultural responsibilities and relationships with everyone and everything.

Gurrutu means you are part of something much bigger; your trauma does not define you, and most importantly, you are not alone.

At Yalu, one of our young, strong cultural leaders started the Girl Power group after working with young survivors of sexual abuse. She wanted them not just to survive but to thrive and flourish. Girl Power works to restore dignity, take away shame and reconnect young women through Gurrutu. Girl Power recognises that we live better lives when we are accepted and connected to our healing pathways. Our team walks alongside our young women, building their resilience while navigating the complexities of walking in two worlds, addressing intergenerational trauma and supporting them on their healing journey.

12:00 pm
[A Journey To Deliver Culturally Responsive And Appropriate Care In A Tertiary Level Mental Health Services – Development Of The Several Ets Aboriginal And Torres Strait Islander Social And Emotional Wellbeing Resources.](#)
[Warren Bergh](#)

National child protection data show a consistent pattern of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children being substantially over-represented in every area of the child protection system - almost 8 times as likely as non- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Within Queensland Evolve Therapeutic Services (ETS), a specialist Child and Youth Mental Health Service (Queensland Health), has been set-up to therapeutically support children and young people with care experience only. Since ETS commenced, paralleling national data, the ETS program has seen an increase in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children being referred.

However, despite the strong evidence and need for all mental health services to be culturally safe and appropriate, attempts to foster a stronger appreciation of the socio-cultural determinants of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children Wellbeing has been challenging. With this in mind, ETS embarked on a journey to deliver culturally responsive and appropriate care. Part of our journey, through the amazing work and support of past and current 'Indigenous Program Coordinators', has been exploring, developing and embedding resources based around the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander world view of Social Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) and health, as defined by Gee, Dudgeon, Schultz, Hart, and Kelly.

The presentation will outline several critical and practical resources that have been developed with the intent to assist, educate and informed the ETS Program and sector about the SEWB framework, in particular the SEWB domains, possible contributing / risk factors, and possible protective factors that can consider in treatment planning and intervention. During the trial and implementation of these resources, there has been an increase in staff understanding of SEWB and enact SEWB responsive treatment planning and care, increasing the positive outcomes for those accessing the program.

12:30 pm
[From Behaviour Management To Cultural Healing - A Collaborative Work With Burrun Dalai Aboriginal Corporation Using D D P To Shift The Narrative And Focus Of Interventions For Aboriginal And Torres Strait Islander Families And Their Children Who Are Engaged In The Care System.](#)
[Alberto Veloso, Lorren Arezio](#)

This collaborative project with Burrun Dalai Aboriginal Corporation aims to shift the focus of interventions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and children in

care. By integrating Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP), we seek to transform traditional behaviour management plans into Cultural Healing Plans.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families remain over represented in our care system. Through Australia's difficult history, Aboriginal families have been impacted through intergenerational trauma, cultural disconnection, powerlessness, and poor health outcomes. Health systems frequently propose changes through a Western lens, which fails to resonate culturally or yield meaningful results for these communities. Consequently, many interventions, such as NDIS Behaviour Support plans, become mere formalities, lacking cultural relevance.

DDP offers a framework that facilitates deep listening and understanding of the stories and experiences of these families. It encourages exploration without haste or predefined agendas, fostering outcomes that are meaningful and culturally aligned. This approach emphasizes connection with culture and identity.

Our work involved collaborating with Burrun Dalai staff to understand the narratives of the children and families they support. Together, we reviewed existing behaviour management plans and co-created Cultural Healing Plans that incorporate DDP principles.

This presentation highlights our process with Aboriginal families in regional NSW, detailing how we reshaped NDIS Behaviour Support Plans into Cultural Healing Plans through DDP conversations. We will discuss our methods, outcomes, lessons learned, and future goals to enhance healing and recovery for these families. Additionally, we will share reflections from the families involved.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Working with traumatised children and young people](#) - Room 207

11:30 am

[A Journey Of A Domestic Violence Survivor In Supporting Her Traumatized Son](#)
[Priscilla Green](#)

Surviving domestic violence (and coercive control) is challenging, isolating, demoralizing. In many ways however it is just the beginning. When escaping with children, phase 2 of abuse, post separation begins. The devastating impact on children who suddenly find themselves in shared custody with the perpetrator, alone and parented for the first time by the abuser is undeniably retraumatizing. It catapults children into a world of conflict, confusion and danger. Mothers suddenly find themselves living their worst nightmare (and the very reason they often 'didn't leave'), their children will be going back to the abuser alone without the protective parent. For boys this begins the grooming and coercion of the 'patriarchy-facilitated' (Applin, Simpson and Curtis 2022) phase, where the new focus of coercive control is the impressionable and vulnerable young male searching for masculine identity.

As a mum of a traumatize teen boy whose life, health, education and mental wellbeing spiraled whilst 'choosing' to live with the abuser post separation once he hit the rebellious puberty stage. My journey is one of self-education digesting Dr. Bessel van der Kolk theory on the profound affect of trauma on teenage boys including disrupting emotional regulation, leading to increased anxiety, depression, and difficulties in relationships, behavioural issues, such as aggression or withdrawal, and coping with their feelings. I read, unpacked, summarised and published Maggie Dents writings on boys risky behaviour, confusion and depression followed by Louise Kaplans assertions that the prologue to male pubescence is a violent turning away from females which post domestic violence can contribute to the teen boys aligning with the perpetrator. And finally my opportunity to gain insights from Professor Michale Salter on the impact of domestic violence on teen boys during the Ideas & Society Program: Domestic Violence: Why? What is to be done?

12:00 pm

[Coercive Control - What Does It Mean For Children?](#)
[Mary-Ann Delaney](#)

There is an increasingly shared discourse and understanding about the centrality of Coercive Control in experiences of family violence. Coercive Control is broadly conceptualised as a range of tactics and/or behaviours intended to intimidate, humiliate, degrade, exploit, isolate and control, usually an intimate partner. And we have come to understand Coercive Control as an assault on autonomy, liberty and equality. However, most definitions have tended to describe adults' experiences of this construct. Yet this is the world that children living in family violence have to navigate.

Children are of course mentioned as being impacted, even used as a tool of control, but the discourse has remained strongly focused on how children experience being exposed to the violent and abusive tactics used by one adult toward another, rather than how they experience the behaviours themselves. This presentation will consider Coercive Control in terms of its meaning for and impact on children, alongside some of the ways that we at the Australian Childhood Foundation think that as adults and practitioners we can respond to their hurt. Within this presentation, we will articulate:

- A framework for understanding the ways in which children experience coercive control.
- Describe some ways in which children resist coercive control.
- Consider the impacts of coercive control for children.
- Explore the meaning of coercive control for children and what this requires us to consider for how we therapeutically support children to heal?

12:30 pm

[Hidden Voices: What Children And Young People Are Telling Us About Their Experiences Of And Exposure To Coercive Control And Domestic Abuse In Western Australia.](#)
[Marilyn Metta](#)

This paper focuses on children and young people who are often the hidden voices of the social crisis of coercive control and domestic abuse in our community. The paper draws from a recent research project, Hidden Voices, which is the first focused study on children and young people's experiences of coercive control and domestic abuse in Western Australia. The research study maps the nature and prevalence of children and young people's experiences of and exposure to coercive control and domestic abuse, and the trauma they experience as a result.

The paper brings into focus the voices of children and young people and what they have to say, their experiences in the family and in their communities, their interactions with the education, health, and justice systems. Our research findings provide important and nuanced insights into how children and young people from Culturally, Ethnically, and Linguistically Diverse (CELD) backgrounds experience and witness coercive control and the different types of abuse within the family contexts.

Our research also provides important data on the trauma and mental health impacts of coercive control on children and young people, with those who witnessed coercive controlling behaviours having higher anxiety and depression symptom scores. Importantly, this study highlights children and young people's stories of resistance, resourcefulness and resilience, and the myriads of ways they keep themselves and their families safe in the face of coercive control and abuse. Children and young people are not passive victims; they are often active agents in responding and managing their own safety and wellbeing. Children and young people have clearly spoken in our research about what is important to them, and what is needed to protect and support them to stay safe and heal from the trauma they experience.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Working with traumatised children and young people](#) - Room 212 & 213

11:30 am

[Olivia's Journey: As It Was, And As It Can Be](#)
[Olivia Jarvis](#)

Journey Mapping is one way to capture the lived experience of people who use services in depth, including both their practical experience of interactions with services, and its emotional impact. Findings are recorded as maps or charts in order to make these experiences vivid and accessible to policy makers and service developers. For example, the Victorian Family Violence Action Plan used perpetrator journey mapping to capture the risks posed by perpetrators, and where doors to accountability across the whole system are needed, and ANROWS has mapped the journeys of Victim-Survivors and perpetrators of intimate partner and sexual violence. Olivia Jarvis and Morag MacSween developed Olivia's Journey, mapping Olivia's experience of harmful sexual behaviour and sexual assault in Tasmania as it was, and as it should have been and could be for other Victim-Survivors. Ophelia's Journey includes two maps:

- the As It Was map includes the family and community response to sexual violence as well as the service response
- the As It Can Be map demonstrates how significantly recommendations made by the Commission of Inquiry, by children in Tasmanian institutions, by Tasmanian Victim-

Survivors and by Olivia herself would have changed her experience.

Our presentation has two main aims:

- to share our learning on how to pace and scaffold the process of Journey Mapping so that it embodies trauma-informed principles of safety, trust, choice, collaboration and empowerment, and is a genuinely co-designed product; and
- to share how the Journey Map has been used to support the Child Sexual Abuse Reform Strategy and Action Plan recommended by the Tasmanian Commission of Inquiry into institutional child sexual abuse.

12:00 pm

[Rethinking Speech Pathology: Beyond Speech Sounds – The Overlooked Role Of Speech Pathologists In Trauma-Informed, Multidisciplinary Care](#)
[Kizzy Searle](#)

Effective trauma-informed care requires collaboration across disciplines, yet speech pathologists are often overlooked as key contributors to these teams. This presentation aims to raise awareness of the critical role speech pathologists play in supporting individuals with trauma, emphasising the need for greater collaboration and communication between professionals.

Speech pathologists are often perceived as focusing solely on speech sounds or stuttering, but their expertise in language and communication is much broader, especially when working with trauma survivors. Trauma can significantly impact communication abilities, including language comprehension, expressive language, and social interaction. By understanding these impacts, professionals from all disciplines—whether educators, psychologists, or allied health practitioners—can better identify when to involve a speech pathologist and how this collaboration enhances care outcomes.

This session will explore how trauma affects communication and language skills, highlighting real-world examples of how speech pathologists bring specialised tools to support recovery. Attendees will gain strategies for working together with speech pathologists to create more comprehensive, trauma-informed care plans for children, young people, and adults.

Key Takeaways:

- Learn how and when to involve speech pathologists in trauma-informed care.
- Understand the unique role speech pathologists play in addressing trauma's impact on communication and language.
- Explore practical strategies for collaborating with speech pathologists to enhance recovery outcomes.
- Recognise how speech pathologists' specialised tools complement the work of psychologists, educators, and other allied health professionals.

12:30 pm

[Safe Enough To Sleep](#)
[Noel Macnamara](#)

The range of problems, challenges, and disorders among children and young people in the out of home care system (OOHC) is well-documented and spans virtually every domain of functioning. Sleep, however, has received minimal attention among this vulnerable group. Given the myriad ways sleep is both impacted by and affects children's development, health, and behaviour, this is both notable and concerning.

Due to the crucial role of restorative sleep in regulating neurobiological stress response activity implicated in trauma exposure, better understanding of the nature of children's sleep experiences and environments in the aftermath of trauma is an essential element in the trauma recovery process for children and young people in OOHC.

This paper will explore the ways in which children experience sleep in the context of their social and physical sleep environments following exposure to violence and trauma. It will examine how children experience their social and physical sleep environments to facilitate or impede restful sleep. This paper will describe the lived experiences of trauma-exposed children and young people navigating sleep and sleep environments in the aftermath of trauma and propose interventions to address the impact of this issue.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Working with traumatised children and young people](#) - Room 216

11:30 am

[Looking Beyond The Behaviour](#)
[Tina Lomax](#)

Kingslea is a specialist, composite school (aged 7-19 years) for children and youth in state care and youth justice residences in Aotearoa, New Zealand. We also have community campuses for those in care and the edge of care.

We are located in eight locations throughout New Zealand. Typically most of our students have not attended school since Year 7 due to suspension, exclusion and truancy. Most of our students are Māori.

It is predicted that up to 50% of our students have Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and other comorbidities exacerbated by exposure to complex trauma and attachment issues. Our Māori students and families have experienced collective, cumulative and intergenerational trauma of racism and discrimination.

To build staff capability and capacity in responding authentically to trauma, culture and neurodiversity we created our Mana Ako Practice Framework, our formal and documented approach to implementing responsive teaching strategies.

Responding Authentically to Trauma will be the focus of this presentation. This pou emphasises understanding and ensuring all interactions with our students integrate knowledge about trauma. Relationships are core to a trauma sensitive approach and responses to students are focused on increasing their capacity to regulate, relate and reason.

We will explore the challenges our students encounter and examine how our teachers respond in ways that mitigate the effects of trauma and actively prevent retraumatisation, an essential aspect of creating a supportive learning environment

We think deeply about what works for Aotearoa New Zealand's most marginalised learners. The framework offers guidance and practical advice to help staff to focus on and build specialist capacity within their learning spaces, their teaching and their pedagogy. The suggestions within the framework will ideally stimulate thinking, lead to action, and provide inspiration to experiment with different ways of approaching teaching and learning.

12:00 pm

[Trauma Responsive Care Model: An Aotearoa New Zealand Research Informed Practice Model For Children Who Have Experienced Trauma](#)
[Andrea Greer](#)

INTRODUCTION: The Trauma responsive care model is a New Zealand based research-informed model for use in practice with children and young people. The model was first developed in a master's qualitative project which sought to address the research question "Does the quality of relationships with staff members have a positive impact on outcomes for children who reside in group home settings?" Weaving together a Te Ao Maori worldview and neuroscience lens, this presentation covers practical ways practitioners can implement a trauma responsive approach to their practice.

METHODS: Using semi-structured, in-depth interviews, eight children were interviewed regarding their experience of relationships while living within residential group homes. In order to gain multiple perspectives on this topic, six biological parents and two legal guardians of children were interviewed and focus group discussions were held with staff members from three residential group homes. Thematic analysis was used to identify key themes identified from the findings.

FINDINGS: Five dominant themes were identified from the children's and parent's interviews. The central theme was the importance of relationships; that relationship is the key when working with children who have experienced trauma. Children who have experienced trauma need to feel safe in the context of relationships and benefit from bottom-up interventions in order to heal from their traumatic experiences.

CONCLUSION: A research-informed model of trauma responsive practice was constructed from study findings informed by two principal bodies of knowledge: (1) attachment

theory; and (2) neuroscience. The trauma responsive care model is represented using a wharehūi, a Māori meeting house where each part of the model tells a story of the cultural significance of the wharehūi and how it relates to the healing of trauma. The trauma responsive care model provides a framework of strategies for anyone working with children who have experienced trauma and/or attachment difficulties.

12:30 pm

[Trauma Responsive Early Learning Environments- A Practical Approach](#)
[Amandah Taylor](#)

This presentation offers practical strategies for working in Early Learning contexts to support young children who have experienced trauma. This approach has been developed after many years of study and working with children at Yuille Park Community College which is situated in highly vulnerable area of Ballarat, Victoria. This school caters for a majority of children and families from trauma backgrounds, as does the kindergarten which is located on campus with the primary school. The kindergarten has a National Quality Standard Exceeding rating.

Initially, participants will gain an insight into behaviours that indicate trauma in young children, and will be encouraged to think about their actions and interactions with children who have experienced trauma. The aim is to introduce a pedagogical approach that outlines practical ways to support inclusion and belonging that can counter the negative effects of trauma.

Secondly, the overarching leadership model that has been developed in a cooperative approach between the school, the kindergarten and allied health services, and the importance of investing in the early years, will be discussed.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Culture and healing](#) - Room 217

11:30 am

[Healing Through Connection To Culture And Country: The Kuop Maaman Djinaning-Bo Program In Family And Domestic Violence Prevention](#)
[Alira Kelly](#)

The Kuop Maaman Djinaning-Bo Program ("Good Men Looking Forward") is a culturally grounded, primary prevention initiative designed to address family and domestic violence (FDV) and trauma within Aboriginal communities on Nyungar (Perth) Country. Delivered in partnership with led by Dooga Waalitj Healing, the program centers on the empowerment and healing of male caregivers and young men, reconnecting them with culture, country, and community to foster both individual and collective resilience. Aligned with the Western Australia Path to Safety Strategy 2020–2030 and the Aboriginal Family Safety Strategy, Kuop Maaman Djinaning-Bo addresses key risk factors and traumatic histories that contribute to violence, supporting a safer environment for Aboriginal women and children.

Utilising Yarning Circles and On Country trips, the program offers safe, culturally significant spaces for male caregivers and young men to process trauma, explore their roles within family and community, and restore cultural pride and identity. Yarning Circles provide separate spaces where participants can speak openly about the challenges and responsibilities of being an Aboriginal man in today's world, allowing them to safely express emotions, share stories, and begin to process intergenerational trauma. On Country trips further deepen this healing process by connecting participants to traditional Nyungar practices, where they engage in cultural customs, reawakening a connection to ancestral lands and heritage that strengthens mental and emotional well-being.

This trauma-informed approach helps participants develop stronger relationships with Elders and community leaders, offering mentorship and reinforcing cultural protocols. These connections aid in reframing trauma through cultural pride, kinship, and shared values, building a foundation of respect and accountability. By addressing the underlying drivers of violence and fostering community support networks, the Kuop Maaman Djinaning-Bo Program aims to create a generational shift in attitudes towards safety, identity, and healing, advancing primary prevention by empowering Nyungar men to lead with resilience and compassion.

12:00 pm

[The Inequality In Aboriginal Children'S Cultural Plans Leading To Their Lost Knowledge About Mob And Traditions: Ourspace Aboriginal Therapeutic Specialist Perspectives](#)
[Jen Mitchell, Angel Gould](#)

Let us share our perspectives on how a meaningful cultural plan, enriches the life and growth of the child/young person in the hope this can lead to creating pathways back to kin and community.

We know for Aboriginal children and young people to start their healing journey, there needs to be a meaningful connection to culture and identity. This can be achieved through cultural plans that are created for the individual child in collaboration with their own mob and highlighting their rights for relational connections.

Cultural plans are a requirement for all Aboriginal children in out of home care. These plans are not all the same and we need to ensure that the children's kinship connections are well researched and documented to reflect their own relational attachments. The impact of not researching a child's cultural connections through family and community takes away personal cultural connections. This causes disconnection and loss of the child's Aboriginal identity.

In developing therapeutic cultural support plans, we encourage and support collaboration with everyone who is important in the child's life. Within the OurSPACE program, we work with the whole care team to gather as much information about the child's cultural journey, so that we can shape our therapeutic approaches to foster healing within a culturally safe space.

12:30 pm

[Walking Together](#)
[Sue Buratti, Stacey Dellow](#)

It is rare for two thirds of the leadership within a mainstream organisation to be First Nations staff. It shouldn't be but often it is. How are the leadership of the NSW Therapeutic Services team for ACF walking together. To acknowledge our different cultural lenses and becoming an integrated team. A team that works together and walks this journey not alone.

Hear from the reflections of the three Australian Childhood Foundation NSW Team Leaders about their experience of walking together and how they prioritise the needs of their team, children and young people to support their journey's. The team leaders will share how team culture and safety is created and maintained. They will explore what works and where they face the challenges while holding their teams in this unique space.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Keynote: Sue-Anne Hunter

- Plenary 1

11:30 am

[Keynote - Sue-Anne Hunter](#)
[Sue-Anne Hunter](#)

Keynote - Sue-Anne Hunter

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Workshop: Emerging from the Cave: Strategies to Support Traumatized and Neurodiverse Children

Workshop - [ICTC](#) - Room 203 & 204

11:30 am

[Emerging from the cave: Strategies to support traumatised and neurodiverse children](#)
[Siobhan Wilson](#)

In this workshop, Siobhan Wilson, a 15-year-old youth advocate with lived experience of Generalised Anxiety Disorder, PTSD, depression and Non-Verbal Learning Disorder (NVLD), shares valuable insights into the strategies that supported her at different stages of her development, as well as those that proved unhelpful. Structured across four developmental stages: infancy (0 - 2); early childhood (2 - 5); middle childhood (5 - 10) and adolescence (10 - 15), this workshop explores how her experiences and needs evolved over time. Siobhan's reflections provide an honest perspective, offering participants ideas to consider when supporting children facing similar challenges. In addition to practical strategies, attendees will gain a deeper understanding of the complex neurodiverse world of NVLD, a condition that overlaps with aspects of ASD and ADHD while

presenting unique deficits in visual-spatial awareness and understanding abstract concepts. While these insights are drawn from Siobhan's lived experience and may not suit every child, they can guide professionals and caregivers in tailoring their approaches to traumatised and neurodiverse children. By the end of the session, participants will walk away with:

- Practical strategies to better support children through various developmental stages.
- Greater awareness of the challenges faced by children with NVLD and other types of neurodiversity and the need for multidisciplinary approaches.
- Inspiration and tools to foster resilience, connection, and healing in children navigating trauma and neurodiversity.

This workshop invites reflection, understanding, and action, empowering participants to make a meaningful impact in the lives of the children they support.

20 August 2025

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm
Lunch

Break

20 August 2025

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Culture and healing](#) - Plenary 1

2:00 pm
[The Anangu Superhero Project](#)
[Alexandra Liddle](#)

In line with the conference theme, our presentation will highlight a transformative approach to healing that has been taking place in the small, remote community of Imanpa in the Northern Territory. This project has seen our NPYWC Walytjapiti team collaborating with the local primary school as well as the NPYWC Youth and Child Nutrition teams to build connection and community by centering the voice of young people and their stories.

The work of our program aims to engage with families through an integrated lens that synergises trauma informed practices with principles of cultural safety and respect. This project is the perfect example of translating this theory into practice.

The Anangu Superhero Project was developed to give young people an opportunity to take charge of the narrative surrounding Indigenous youth and showcase their 'powers' of wisdom, strength, safety, courage, love and culture. In doing so, the Imanpa superheroes were created and painted onto the Youth recreational hall as a mural during a weeklong program.

Amplifying the voices and perspectives of Anangu, these narratives, through the mural have left behind a sense of pride, strength and resilience for the entire community. Our presentation explores the workshop process and the development of story lines for each character that allowed for authenticity to emerge through the recognition of the deep wisdom of the Anangu young people involved.

The presentation will also highlight the critical role played by Anangu voices and service collaboration throughout the project which enhanced its impact and offered opportunities for extended learning through exploring superfoods for strength and connecting themes of 'superpowers' to everyday life.

The ultimate power of the superheroes is the voice of the children who created them. This project shows the healing and connection that can be built within communities when Anangu voices are centered and heard.

2:30 pm
[The Bullet That Shook The World, Healing After The Modern-Day Massacre: A Journey Through Trauma And Resilience](#)
[Lukas Williams](#)

On a day of mourning in the remote Indigenous community of Yuendumu, tragedy struck again. A single bullet, fired by officer Zackery Ralph, claimed the life of a young Warlpiri man, kumanjayi walker, which sent shockwaves through the community and across the globe. This modern-day massacre took place as the community laid one of their own to rest, igniting a deep and widespread trauma.

Gan'na Healing, an organisation devoted to the well-being and healing of Indigenous communities, arrived just two days later, sitting with the Elders and community members to process the unspeakable loss. As fear, grief, and anger filled the air, fifty service providers gathered—many unfamiliar with the local cultural protocols, some even making racial judgments against the men whose lives were now overshadowed by violence.

The community grappled with their pain, asking the essential questions: How does healing begin after such a horrific event? What steps must be taken to rebuild, and who will lead the way?

For years on end, Gan'na Healing worked tirelessly, living alongside the community, deeply listening to their stories and walking with them through their shared grief. It became clear that healing must begin where the fatal shooting occurred and trace back to another haunting chapter of history: the Coniston Massacre, which happened 100 years earlier. By revisiting this past, the community began to weave together their journey of healing, combining traditional Warlpiri practices with the support of Gan'na Healing.

In this powerful keynote address, you will hear firsthand accounts of how the community faced these traumas head-on, how they rebuilt their sense of unity and strength, and how the police officer's acquittal added yet another layer of pain to an already devastated people. This presentation will challenge the way we understand healing in the face of violence and trauma.

3:00 pm
[Transforming Cultural Trauma Through The Process Of Making A Documentary, Using A Decolonised Lens](#)
[Yemi Penn](#)

This study examines the transformative potential of documentary filmmaking in addressing and transforming cultural trauma, with a specific focus on employing a decolonised lens. Recognising the historical context in which trauma is embedded, particularly within marginalised communities, this research aims to uncover how the process of documentary production can serve as a transformative conduit for the filmmakers, participants and audience. By adopting a decolonised approach, the study challenges conventional paradigms of storytelling and representation of the stories. Advocating for a shift towards more inclusive, equitable, and contextually sensitive narrative practices.

Methodologically, the research employs a qualitative framework, incorporating art based practice that have engaged with themes of trauma and transformation. Through semi-structured interviews with the filmmaker who holds the dual role of researcher and researched alongside participants, as well as an analysis of the documentary itself, the study seeks to understand the nuanced ways in which the act of documentary creation can facilitate personal and communal healing. The theoretical foundation of this research is rooted in trauma theory and decolonial methodologies, drawing upon scholars such as Cathy Caruth (1996) on trauma, Elliot Eisner (2011) on arts based research and Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2022) on decolonising methodologies, to critically analyse the intersection of trauma, healing, and decolonisation.

Preliminary findings suggest that documentary filmmaking, when approached through a decolonised lens, can significantly contribute to the process of trauma transformation by providing spaces for voice, recognition, empowerment and contribution. This research contributes to the broader discourse on decolonial methodologies in qualitative research and the arts, proposing documentary filmmaking as a powerful medium for social change and healing.

Session - [Working with traumatised children and young people](#) - Room 209

2:00 pm

[Challenging Our Responses To Children: The Creative Arts In Groupwork With Children Who Have Experienced Family Violence](#)

[Elly Scrine, Michelle Johns](#)

Children impacted by family violence and other traumas frequently present to services with highly pathologised behaviours, and the psychological literature is quick to label this cohort as aggressive (Zarling et al., 2013), emotionally dysregulated and incompetent (Callaghan et al., 2017), and difficult to include and accommodate (Orr et al., 2023). Group work is often locally developed 'on the ground'; however, there is a paucity of literature on effective child-focused group interventions, children's voices is routinely absent from the research, and this work is underfunded and under-evaluated (Bunston et al., 2016). Consequentially, while many practitioners are attempting to support children's relational worlds, few are informed by documented practice examples of meaningful groupwork.

While children referred to our service may present with behavioural challenges that position them as either 'too aggressive' or 'too withdrawn' to attend group programs, this presentation describes a model of group work that actively resists these discourses. Our group intervention integrates the creative arts to address themes of safety, connection, and growth with 'challenging' children who have experienced relational violence. The program is co-designed by art, music, and drama therapists and aims to honour children's capacity to communicate what has happened to them through their creative voices. The paper will elucidate the following processes and outcomes: adapting Lahad's (2017) 6-part-story model into an intervention for children to tell their stories; employing response art (Fish, 2012) and therapeutic songwriting (Fairchild & McFerrin, 2019) to hold children's disclosures of violence; challenging the expectation that children need to be regulated in order to belong in the group; and supporting children's acts of resistance and sharing. We aim to initiate a dialogue that supports practitioners to amplify and listen to children's creative voices as they share, resist, and make sense of the traumatic experiences in their lives (Halliwell & Shannahan, 2024).

2:30 pm

[Global Insights Into Youth-Centred Crisis Responses](#)

[Chelsea Tobin](#)

The effects on young people of witnessing or experiencing family violence can be life-long. As Safe Steps seeks to align family violence practice with state and national policy focussed on providing services to children and young people as victim survivors in their own right, it is critical to recognise the diverse needs and experiences of young people.

Thanks to a Churchill Fellowship, Chelsea Tobin, CEO of Safe Steps, engaged with diverse organisations, academics, commissioners, governments and services specialising in crisis response for young people affected by violence in more than a dozen countries.

This session will showcase innovative and effective responses that acknowledge and respond to the distinct challenges that young people face – including transformative approaches to working with trauma. Drawing on hundreds of conversations, Chelsea will offer fresh perspectives, sharing insights into co-design, recognising unique needs and vulnerabilities to tailor services and ensuring systems, programs and clinical responses share a trauma-informed philosophy.

3:00 pm

['See What I Made Him Do': A Survivor'S Reflections On The Antecedents, Abyss, And Aftermath Of Near-Miss Filicide/Mass-Murder](#)

[John Woods](#)

One Saturday morning long ago, a deranged 52-year-old man attempted to shoot the family of a suburban squash centre manager at their home, and then to destroy the nearby crowd-filled centre using his car's jerrycan-loaded cabin and brimming fuel tank as an improvised explosive device. Through the combination of an over-ambitious endgame, the extraordinary courage and decisiveness of several bystanders, and an abundance of blind serendipity, only the perpetrator himself was killed.

'Armed man amok, dies in car blaze', screamed the tabloid headline.

Precipitating this rampage was a seemingly minor (squash-related) disagreement between this man and his own fifteen-year-old son—the principal intended target.

I was (and remain) that son. Later, I became (but for mental health reasons am no longer) a medical doctor.

For my two siblings and me, trauma ensued less from the day of denouement than from our shared preceding early-life subjection to unremitting domestic tyranny, ever-hidden from the wider world. We had faced incessant hostile scrutiny from (within an ambience of intractable and increasingly murderous hatred imposed by) a singularly paranoid, misanthropic monster—our father. Devoid of psychotherapy-seeking insight and (notwithstanding occasional police interventions) never having crossed the criminal sanction threshold, he had evaded mental health and judicial system constraints. While he lived, my physical survival had necessitated continuous self-surveillance and self-straitjacketing, despite which the inevitability of mortal violence had crescendoed.

And the aftermath? Since my father's ostentatious demise, my self-doubts have been perpetuated by the shame of cascading failures in attaining rites of passage, life skills and personal goals. A life constrained by complex post-traumatic stress, anxiety/depression, and avoidant personality traits has been compensated by glimmers of redemption.

Enduring an act of overt ultraviolence may constitute merely the 'iceberg-tip' in a parental abuse survivor's experiential journey involving lifelong vulnerability to further (including occupational) trauma—along with healing opportunities.

Session - [Neurodivergence and trauma](#) - Room 218

2:00 pm

[Supporting A Neurodiversity-Affirming Childhood](#)

[Claire Britton](#)

Overview

With disability advocates, current research and practice guidelines for neurodivergent people indicating that using a neurodiversity-affirming approach is morally imperative, more opportunities for all members of the community are needed to support the success and quality of life for neurodivergent children at home, therapy clinics, educational settings and the wider community across the lifespan. Claire Britton will provide a presentation to teach the basics of utilising this framework in a practical manner that gives the attendees practical tools and strategies to implement and trial as soon as possible.

Objectives

1. Develop an understanding of Neurodiversity-affirming practice by learning the key principles
2. Exploring how neuronormative expectations, environments and occupations disable neurodivergent people
3. Learn about the Dr Damian Milton's Double Empathy Problem and how this informs our support for social skills with neurodivergent children
4. Identify the values and qualities of Neurodiversity-affirming parents/caregivers, educators, family members, therapists and community members
5. Share her clinical and lived experiences throughout her childhood and how Neuroinclusion is based on what she wished she had experienced as a neurodivergent child
6. Provide reputable resources of this approach including journal articles and supports that are created by neurodivergent children for neurodivergent children

2:30 pm

[Strategy Vs. Practice: Cultivating Reflective Capacity In Supporting Families/Educators At The Intersection Of Trauma And Neurodiversity](#)

[Hanif Jaberipour](#)

There is a spectrum of parenting program approaches, ranging from behaviorist programs focused on prescribing techniques and strategies to those aimed at cultivating social and emotional development in families. In working with traumatised parents and children, particularly those who also face neurodivergence, our experience in training parenting facilitators and running Bringing Up Great Kids parent groups has shown that increasing parents' reflective capacity is key to transformative change. While strategies and techniques can be helpful in specific encounters, the complexity of trauma, especially when coupled with neurodiversity, demands an approach that cultivates parents' ability to reflect on their children's needs, their own responses, and the dynamic, evolving nature of their family situation.

Trauma is inherently diverse, and when neurodiversity is also present, the diversity becomes even greater. It is crucial, then, not to rely on a one-size-fits-all strategy. Instead, we support parents to develop reflective capacities that empower them to adapt to their unique and changing circumstances. Families affected by trauma and neurodiversity experience fluid situations shaped by various factors over time. By helping parents build their reflective capacity, we enable them to find their own way of responding to each challenge, facilitating long-term growth and resilience in their families.

This presentation will explore how increasing reflective capacity can shift practice from relying on pre-set strategies to fostering deeper, more adaptive responses in traumatised families. It will provide insights into how this approach creates lasting, transformative change for parents and children dealing with the complex intersection of trauma and neurodiversity.

3:00 pm
[Breaking Barriers: A Journey Through Generational Trauma And Neurodiversity In Aboriginal Leadership](#)
[Maree Bisby](#)

As a neurodiverse Aboriginal woman living with the compounded weight of generational trauma, my journey through leadership is both a challenge and a testament to resilience. This paper explores the intersection of neurodiversity, cultural heritage, and trauma, and how these elements shape leadership experiences and practices. Drawing on personal narratives and community stories, I highlight the unique strengths and perspectives that neurodiverse individuals bring to leadership roles within Aboriginal communities.

By addressing the historical and ongoing impacts of colonisation, systemic discrimination, and cultural displacement, I shed light on the specific obstacles faced by neurodiverse Aboriginal leaders. These challenges include navigating a world that often misunderstands or overlooks neurodiversity, while simultaneously contending with the deep-seated trauma inherited from generations of marginalisation and oppression.

This presentation underscores the importance of understanding and validating these experiences to foster a supportive and inclusive leadership environment. It advocates for the integration of trauma-informed practices and culturally sensitive approaches in leadership development programs. Such practices are essential in acknowledging the complex realities of neurodiverse Aboriginal leaders, enabling them to lead with authenticity and strength.

Through this lens, I propose strategies to break down barriers, promote healing, and empower neurodiverse Aboriginal leaders to thrive. These strategies include community-driven support systems, mentorship programs that recognise and honour cultural backgrounds, and policy changes aimed at inclusivity and representation. By sharing this journey, I aim to inspire a deeper appreciation of the resilience inherent in our communities and the transformative potential of embracing diversity in leadership.

Ultimately, this paper calls for a paradigm shift in leadership perspectives, one that values and leverages the unique contributions of neurodiverse individuals within Aboriginal communities. By doing so, we can create a more equitable and dynamic leadership landscape that benefits all.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Working with families](#) - Plenary 2

2:00 pm
[Connecting With The Community To Build A Collaborative Child And Family Hub: The Story Of A Multi-Modal Co-Design Process At First Steps Count In Taree, Nsw](#)
[Toni Carson, Sophie Nicholls, Rebecca Witchard](#)

There is increasing evidence that supporting families with place-based, integrated or collaborative, multi-sector service provision can mitigate some of the key systemic barriers families face in accessing support at times when they need it most (Calik et al., 2024; Glover et al., 2021; Hodgins et al., 2022). Key to a successful child and family hub is working closely with the local community and service providers (Moore, 2024).

This is the story of working together with our local community and service providers to co-design the First Steps Count Child and Community Centre using several different modes of community engagement. First Steps Count is an independent, collaborative hub that provides a safe and welcoming space for families with children aged 0-12 years to play, connect and access supports. It is a beautiful, purpose-built space on Biripi Country Taree, in rural NSW.

Over the 12-year period of bringing the First Steps Count vision to life, the committee and team have used many different approaches to include the community and service providers in determining the direction of the centre. This co-design process has built a sense of ownership and partnership in our local community. The process has included collaborative community art projects; consultation and discussion with Biripi Elders and the community; developing working together agreements with service providers; and using Facebook and online platforms to share information and receive feedback.

Key to this process are the principles of non-judgement, deep listening and valuing each person's voice (Miriam-Rose et al., 2022). As part of this story, a community member will tell her story of working together with First Steps Count and how this has influenced her life and family.

2:30 pm
[Marurra-U Family Camp: A Community-Led, Therapeutic And Capacity-Building Camp For Aboriginal Families And Children With Early Life Trauma Or Complex Needs In The Remote Fitzroy Valley.](#)
[Jadnah Davies, Stephanie Worrigal, Dagney Hopp, Vondella Berrinagel, Bea Sawers, Mel Elvery, Anita Pickard, Clare Hickey](#)

Aboriginal communities in the remote Fitzroy Valley, Western Australia, have been internationally recognised for their leadership in supporting children with early life trauma (ELT) and other complex neurodevelopmental needs. Previous research has identified an increased prevalence of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, ELT, and developmental delays among children born in 2002/2003, with limited access to healthcare and supportive services in the Fitzroy Valley. In 2015, Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre invited Royal Far West, a specialist developmental paediatric health service, to the community. They formed the Marurra-U partnership, which implements a community-led, trauma-informed, culturally appropriate, wrap-around model of care for children with ELT and other complex neurodevelopmental needs, and their families. One aspect of the wraparound model is the Marurra-U Family Camp. The camp aims to improve therapeutic outcomes for children through recreation-based activities, alongside parent workshops focused on understanding children's brain development, emotion regulation, and supporting child needs. The family-centred approach also aims to strengthen family relationships and child-parent interactions through dedicated time for connection and shared positive experiences. Parents and carers participated in yarning sessions at the end of the 2024 camp to capture their experiences. Results showed parents valued knowledge gained in understanding and responding to their children's needs. Parents also felt the Marurra-U Family Camp created opportunities for their children to grow in confidence, independence, build social skills, and strengthen connections with other children, their siblings, and their parents. The Marurra-U partnership presents a unique model of care for supporting children with ELT that is community-led, culturally appropriate, and family-centred. The Marurra-U camp builds developmental paediatric allied health expertise into the recreation- and family-centered care evidence-base, and to the best of our knowledge, is the first family camp designed and delivered to support Aboriginal children and families with complex neurodevelopmental and psychosocial/emotional needs.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Lived experience and trauma](#) - Room 217

2:00 pm
[Relationships Are Essential To Healing](#)
[Beck Thompson](#)

Relationships are essential for healing. We thrive and grow when we are loved, guided, and nurtured by others. For a long time, I didn't fully understand the importance of this connection, but my own lived experience taught me how crucial it is. I grew up abused by 2 family members and absolutely no support from my own mother. I longed for security and understanding, often feeling disconnected from the support I desperately needed. The pain I carried made me believe that I had to face life on my own, that vulnerability was a weakness, and trust was a risk not worth taking.

But over time, I was fortunate to encounter people who helped shift this perspective. Whether it was a teacher who took the time to truly listen, or a friend who saw me for who I was, these relationships offered a lifeline. They became examples of what it meant to be loved and valued. Slowly, I began to understand that I didn't have to carry everything alone. With guidance and support, I started to believe in myself.

This vital connection to growth was the key to learning how to stand on my own. As I developed resilience, belief, and a sense of worth, I realized that people need one

another to heal and thrive. It's through meaningful relationships that we find the strength to overcome, to rebuild, and to grow into our true selves. While independence is important, the foundation of that independence is built through connection.

No one heals in isolation. We need people in our lives who show us that we are worthy of love and that we are capable of rising above even the deepest pain.

2:30 pm
[Resisting And Redefining Narratives: Overcoming Trauma Through Writing, Boxing, And Peer Support](#)
[Donna Lyon](#)
This presentation offers audiences a compelling exploration of the transformative process behind the grassroots project 'Left Write Hook' that has now become a film, charity, and medical research project. This initiative is rooted in the lived experience of childhood trauma. As an academic and a survivor, Dr Lyon has navigated the intricate intersection of personal healing and professional development, utilising creative practices to redefine narratives and resist the enduring impacts of trauma.

Left Write Hook began as a modest seed funding grant and has grown into an industry-facing feature documentary and a survivor-led charity. This narrative showcases the power of writing and boxing as instruments of empowerment and recovery. Writing has been a means to articulate and process experiences, while boxing offers a physical outlet for releasing pent-up emotions and building resilience. Supported by a community of peers, these practices have been crucial in Lyon's journey toward overcoming trauma.

In her capacity as a creative practice researcher, Dr. Lyon has employed a mixed methods approach to maximise the impact of her work. By integrating film, video diaries, quantitative data, and psychological qualitative data and working with researchers across disciplines, including lived experience researchers, she has translated research into practical, impactful outcomes. This approach has enriched an academic understanding of trauma and recovery and is a powerful case study of community engagement and support.

Through this presentation, Dr. Lyon underscores the importance of creative practices in trauma recovery and their potential to foster resilience and empowerment. By sharing her personal journey and the evolution of Left Write Hook, she aims to inspire others to explore innovative approaches to trauma recovery and research. Ultimately, this work contributes to a more comprehensive and empathetic understanding of lived experiences, demonstrating how creative practices can pave the way for profound personal, academic and societal transformation.

3:00 pm
[Truth, Power & Connection - The Value Of Peer Support As A Child Sexual Abuse Survivor](#)
[Caroline Brunne](#)
As a lived experience survivor of child sexual abuse (CSA), I know the isolation that shame creates. CSA survivors are told not to speak of the trauma they have been subjected to, and when they do choose to disclose, they often still find themselves unable to speak openly about their experiences.

This silence creates a unique echo chamber where their self-doubt, blame and lack of worthiness are heightened creating poor mental health outcomes and further isolation.

When seeking support, CSA survivors are provided with clinical and therapeutic offerings, and though they help understand and process the trauma, they are often provided by professionals who do not have a lived experience understanding, creating a gap between the survivor and the practitioner.

I believe this gap can be filled with the support of peers. Empathy and understanding occur when we spend time with others who have similar experiences to our own. We connect through a commonality but also bring our vast lived experiences accompanied by our lens of gender, ethnicity and stages of life.

Peer support, defined as a form of social-emotional support, offered by an individual with a shared lived experience is an effective tool in positive mental health outcomes. Removing clinical elements and focusing on the parallel relationship dynamics of peers lowers the barrier to accessing these services when compared to traditional mental health services.

At INSupport Community our peer support events and workshops are co-designed by CSA survivors for CSA survivors. In our online and in-person programs, we have begun to identify improved skills and mental health outcomes for members. Including increased decision-making and problem-solving abilities, reduction of stress and improved communication skills when seeking support. Most importantly members have noted significant reductions in feelings of isolation and disconnection, a key goal for all members.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Working in out-of-home care](#) - Room 205

2:00 pm
[First Nations Children's Lived Experiences Of Therapeutic Residential Care](#)
[Kylie Day, Lynne McPherson](#)
First Nations children and young people are overly represented in residential care in Australia. This is due to the historical legacy of colonialism and the assimilation policies which have had lasting impacts on Indigenous families. This presentation explores the lived experiences of First Nations young people living in Therapeutic Residential Care (TRC) in New South Wales (Australia). Findings from qualitative in-depth interviews with 16 young people between the ages of 12 and 17 years showed that these Indigenous young people experienced a lack of culturally sensitive and safe practices within TRC, and were culturally disconnected from wider kin and community networks. The research design was guided by a theoretical framework which linked recognition theory, social capital theory and the theory of practices architectures (TPA) within a broader decolonial and childist ontology which served to challenge interlocking systems of oppression embedded in coloniality. This research thus seeks to bring to the fore the voices and lived experiences of some of the most marginalised young people in society, to reflect on ways to improve the interpersonal practices and institutional conditions that enable positive, trusting relationships and connections for Indigenous young people living in Therapeutic Residential Care.

2:30 pm
[From F**K You To Thank You: A Clinician And Young Person'S Joint Reflections On A 10-Year Therapeutic Journey](#)
[Barry Morris](#)
This presentation explores the complex journey of a young person who has graduated from out-of-home care, highlighting the flexible and adapting role of clinical support throughout their experience. Co-presented by the clinician and the young person, the session will examine key moments in their relationship, illustrating the dynamics of support that were both beneficial and, at times, met with resistance.

The young person will share personal narratives that reflect the challenges faced while navigating the care system, including issues of trust, autonomy, and emotional well-being. Concurrently, the clinician will provide insight into their approach to support, discussing strategies employed to foster engagement, as well as moments of disconnect that arose.

By exploring these interactions, the presentation aims to offer valuable lessons for practitioners in the field of childhood trauma. It will underscore the importance of understanding the perspectives of young people in care, emphasizing the need for flexibility and responsiveness in clinical practices. Attendees will gain a deeper appreciation of the dual nature of support—its potential to empower as well as the necessity for practitioners to adapt to the evolving needs of young people in care. It is hoped that this collaborative reflection can inform future policy and practice and enhance outcomes for youth transitioning out of care.

3:00 pm
[Improving Experiences In Care: Fostering Family Connections And Navigating Transitions](#)
[Candice Alusiola, Frieda Bou Diab](#)
This presentation will demonstrate Jo's Therapeutic Residential Care's practical application of family work and transitions in care.

Children and young people in residential care frequently report a lack of contact with their families throughout their care experience. Research indicates that, while safety concerns related to previous abuse and neglect in the family home are paramount, maintaining connections with parents, siblings, and extended family members is vital for a child's overall development (AIFS, 2020; O'Neill et al., 2018). These familial relationships are fundamental to fostering a sense of identity, belonging, and emotional well-being (McGhee et al., 2021).

At Jo's Therapeutic Residential Care Program, our service model and practice framework prioritises family engagement as an integral component of our care approach. By actively promoting family connections, we aim to facilitate healing and enhance the well-being of the children and young people in our care. Where safe to do so, this is primarily with the biological parents, but also extended family, grandparents, siblings and cultural connections.

Moreover, transitions in care—such as moving to a new house—can be particularly traumatic for children and young people in out-of-home care, regardless of whether it is their first or they have had multiple placements. These transitions often result in additional trauma, grief, loss, and disrupted relationships (Woods & Houghton, 2019). To reduce additional trauma, Jo's model employs a planned approach to transitions, focusing on the emotional needs and experiences of both the incoming child or young person and those already residing in the home. This approach reduces anxieties, fosters ongoing relationships and maintains stability in other areas of their lives (Pettigrew et al., 2020).

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Working with traumatised children and young people](#) - Room 206

2:00 pm

[Guiding Professional Reasoning And Embodied Reflection: Enhancing Trauma Interventions Through Individualized, Child-Led, Sensorimotor Play](#)
[Breanne Kearney, Cara Sheekey, Lisa Porter](#)

Play is a motivational force that drives healthy neurodevelopment and the dynamic interplay of sensorimotor, cognitive and social-emotional processing. Recent research associates a lack of differentiation between sensorimotor and memory brain networks with traumatic re-experiencing. This contributes to a growing body of evidence suggesting that sensorimotor or 'body-based' play therapy may be an effective approach for helping children process trauma.

Sensorimotor input directly influences a child's arousal level and perceptual experience which are foundational for felt-safety, bodily awareness, and agency. While play therapy has long been a trauma-specific intervention for children, it often overlooks the contributions of sensorimotor engagement to the child's sense of safety, which may impede their capacity to stay present and connected. Sensorimotor interventions are garnering research support and clinical traction in working with children and adolescents who have experienced trauma. However, guidance on how to engage in clinical reasoning and reflection when implementing sensorimotor play-based approaches remains limited.

In addition to the guided use of sensorimotor interventions, it is essential that clinicians are mindful of their own role in the therapeutic process when implementing individualized trauma-focused interventions. Attunement to their own physical, physiological and social-emotional responses allows clinicians to be present and connected, reducing the risk of retraumatization. This ability to reflect on one's role in the therapeutic dyad is key in increasing a therapist's confidence in the use of sensorimotor play-based interventions.

This presentation focuses on PROOF (Professional reasoning and Reflection on Observation: an Organizational Framework) a framework that guides sensorimotor play-based interventions and clinicians' embodied reflection. Through video-based case studies, participants will be guided through an in-depth reasoning process which considers the child's individual differences and preferences across play, praxis (sensorimotor planning), posture, and social-emotional development. Additionally, it will guide clinicians in their own bodily self-reflection, facilitating full participation in co-regulated, co-created play-based interventions.

2:30 pm

[Keys To Interpersonal Resilience: Reimagining Complex Trauma And Personality Disorders](#)
[David Sholl, Selene Foster-Zuluaga, Max Fraser](#)

Complex and developmental trauma has long been linked with personality disorders, but is increasingly understood as being critical to their origin. In this talk, we propose a new model for understanding personality disorders, which links early relational trauma to the basic interpersonal responses to threat (fight, flight, seeking a protector). We aim to show how personality disorders are fundamentally about having a restricted set of options for relating to others, usually as a consequence of complex trauma.

We anticipate that this model will help practitioners and clinicians to make better sense of clients who suffer from personality disorders, more so than focusing on their symptoms which can sometimes feel perplexing or frustrating. Using the analogy of 'keys' as representative of relational strategies to get needs met and 'locks' as relational responsiveness to specific strategies used by others, we can better understand the effects these clients have on others, including ourselves as professionals.

The authors have applied this model across contexts including inpatient and outpatient mental health services as well as out of home care, working with complex young people and their families. The model is helpful in demystifying the effects of complex trauma on relationships, not only in those with a diagnosable personality disorder, but also where the effects are milder but still cause distress and reduced interpersonal flexibility. It also sheds light on the ways that trauma may be passed through generations via relationships. In the process we hope to destigmatise those who suffer from personality disorders.

Delivered by a multi-disciplinary group, this talk is aimed at practitioners and clinicians across contexts who wish to practice more effectively with complex presentations in their current work.

3:00 pm

[The Healing Power Of Sport: A Collaborative Approach To Healing Childhood Trauma Through Sport From A First Nations Lens And A Neurodevelopmentally Informed, Biologically Respectful Perspective.](#)
[Timmy Duggan, Kate Thomas](#)

Childhood trauma presents complex challenges that require innovative, community-driven solutions. This presentation highlights the collaboration between The Center for Healing and Justice through Sport (CHJS) and Hoops 4 Health, a First Nations-led organisation with over 25 years of experience serving NT, WA and SA communities. Hoops 4 Health works across sectors, including community engagement, education, youth justice, and adult prisons, achieving remarkable results by using sport and culture to foster healing and positive behavioural change.

CHJS integrates neuroscience-backed research, showing that sport—an activity that has brought humans joy for millennia—has both physiological and psychological healing effects. Partnering with the Neurosequential Network (NM) and its field-leading Neurosequential Model, CHJS has developed trauma-informed, healing-centred programs that equip coaches and others in sport with simple, brain-based skills proven to have a therapeutic impact on young people. These programs help coaches, program directors, and sports practitioners create environments that promote healing through key elements such as relationships, movement, and resilience-building activities.

Through a dynamic partnership with Hoops 4 Health, these healing-centred principles are integrated into culturally responsive programming. Hoops 4 Health's deep engagement with First Nations communities—particularly within youth justice and adult prison settings—demonstrates how sport can be a powerful force for building positive relationships, critical skills in regulation and resilience, reducing recidivism, and promoting long-term healing for individuals affected by trauma.

This presentation will share real-world examples from our joint programs, illustrating how trauma-informed sport supports individual recovery while addressing systemic challenges in underserved communities. By highlighting the work of CHJS and Hoops 4 Health, we aim to inspire practitioners, educators, and policymakers to see sport as a vital tool for healing and social change, equipping coaches and sports practitioners with the tools and knowledge they need to support all young people everywhere.

<https://www.hoops4health.org/impact-and-strategy>
<https://chjs.org/resources/read-nothing-heals-like-sport-a-new-playbook-for-coaches/>

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Working with traumatised adults](#) - Room 208

2:00 pm

[From Survival To Safety And Connection.](#)
[Blythe McAuley](#)

The Kunga Stopping Violence Program is the only Australian designed and culturally based program being delivered to First Nations women in prison to break cycles of violence in their lives and to keep them out of prison. Developed in partnership with Emeritus Professor Judy Atkinson and Dr Caroline Atkinson (We Al-li), the program is delivered to women in the Alice Springs Correctional Centre. The Kunga Stopping Violence program runs a 4-week course in prison, exploring trauma, grief, loss, violence and anger. The program continues working responsively with women through intensive pre- and post-release supports, home visits referrals, mentoring, a drop in space and social programs.

The Kunga Stopping Violence Program and the Australian Childhood Foundation partnered to develop a culturally strong and trauma informed framework. The goal of the framework was to articulate and build upon the existing practice of Kunga Stopping Violence Program. This presentation explores concepts of Safety and Connection as foundational to the framework's theory of change. The program provides women with repeated invitations to a place of felt safety. Through this experience of relational safety

the women are invited to connect. To connect and reconnect to thought processes, emotions, memories, history, sense of future, ancestors, and country.

Connection is about relationships, being with, connection to children, family, community. A felt sense of belonging. Safety to connect to the past, present and future which is not linear, there is no beginning and no end.

2:30 pm

[You Can't Be What You Can't See - A Trauma-informed Need For First Nations Practitioners And Lecturers In Remote Adult Education](#)
[Rashida Khan](#)

As a First Nations lecturer and therapist working in regional and remote communities across the NT, I see a deep need for First Nations practitioners and lecturers to properly support First Nations people living with trauma and trying to build their lives on country.

Many of the services are provided by ally organizations and sometimes foreign service providers due to the current immigration specs luring people to regional and remote areas. While this is good for overall service availability, it creates a new challenge for First Nations people trying to create functional communities and see value in education investment. Being able to see First Nations people in leadership roles and the general workforce gives context to people who are living with intergenerational trauma to actively engage with education and therapy services.

Trauma-Informed delivery of these services is also vital in increasing engagement and ultimately adding value to the clients. Many remote Indigenous people shy away from services as they have LLN difficulties, and the addition of foreign accents leads to further challenges. In my experience, culturally First Nations people are more comfortable engaging with fellow First Nations people, and we see a marked increase in engagement when a First Nations Practitioner can be present.

The way forward is to have more identified positions available and to highlight the pathways to creating meaningful employment away from the welfare and trauma cycles that persist. Many role models in communities are centered around sports and media, we can effect real change by drawing attention to more mainstream roles and developing a sense of peace and normalcy around a purposeful community life. Many communities lack a sense of purpose and are drawn into the generation trauma, FDV, and substance abuse and have limited chances to see other First Nations people living a different story.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Advanced Masterclass Part 1: Compassion-focussed therapy approaches to shame and self-criticism in children and young people

Advanced Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 212 & 213

2:00 pm

[Compassion-focussed therapy approaches to shame and self-criticism in children and young people](#)
[Paul Gilbert](#)

This workshop will explore an evolutionary based model of self-criticism. Key is to distinguish criticism that is encouraging and rooted in self-correction versus criticism that's rooted in fear frustration and is harsh linked to anger and at times even hatred of the self. We will explore how to conduct a functional analysis of self-criticism, its link to shame and fear of rejection and consider how to generate compassion brain states to deal with the fear and traumas that sit behind harsh self-criticism.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Advanced Masterclass Part 1: Exploring the contextual aspects of Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP) interventions

Advanced Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 203 & 204

[Exploring the contextual aspects of Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy \(DDP\) interventions](#)
[Jon Baylin, Kim Golding, Dan Hughes](#)

How we position people in our relational systems within the brain determines the way we respond to them. Understanding this will inform the way we adapt DDP interventions for the unique child and family we are working with. Within this masterclass we will explore the concept of Location and Re-location of people in our brains as a brain-informed model of shifting from an "un PACEful" state of mind towards another person into a "PACEful, compassionate" state of mind. Jon will explain what this means in terms of brain networks and "interstate travel" and will discuss several ways for therapists and parents and other adults to practice making this core shift in how we hold one another in our brains and minds. Dan will deepen our understanding of PACE (an attitude of playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy) in relation to the contextual aspects of DDP interventions. With this way of being, PACE invites the marginalized experiences of the children and families we support in our therapy sessions into our experience. We create a place where we can influence each other intersubjectively as we get a deeper understanding of the other. The context the other brings to the interventions is an important part of informing the way that DDP interventions will be adapted for the child and family's unique needs. Kim will reflect on some of the specific ways DDP interventions can be adapted for and learn from different cultures.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Advanced Masterclass Part 1: The effect of trauma on the next generation - intergenerational transmission of trauma and healing.

Advanced Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 210 & 211

[The effect of trauma on the next generation - intergenerational transmission of trauma and healing](#)
[Rachel Yehuda](#)

In this half day Masterclass, delivered over 3 hours, Dr Yehuda will explore how molecular biology, genomics, and epigenomics, provide paradigms for understanding the long-term effects of stress. Dr Yehuda will incorporate decades of research on trauma and its impacts, incorporating Vietnam veterans, adult children of holocaust survivors, children of other traumas, children born to pregnant women who survived the 9/11 world trade centre attacks predictors of PTSD to show how early environmental experiences-including parenting- contribute to highly conserved molecular and genomic processes. The masterclass will also present Dr Yehuda's work and research exploring effective treatments supporting healing and recovery.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Keynote: Does this feel dignifying? Considering, telling, and sharing more ethical stories for social and systems change.

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 216

2:00 pm

[Does this feel dignifying? Considering, telling, and sharing more ethical stories for social and systems change](#)
[Morgan Cataldo](#)

Stories shape our imaginations and, therefore, the realities we live in. Some are narratives that are dominant and that dominate. These often serve to perpetuate, reinforce, and entrench stereotypical and stigmatising narratives and norms: that is, the ways we understand social issues and the people experiencing them. There are power dynamics inherent in how stories are told: whose worldviews are being shared, and the frames through which we receive them. If people are the sum of the stories told about them and the stories they then internalise about themselves, whose imaginations are we living in, and what does it take to challenge this?

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Keynote: MERTIL - a universal approach to growing trust in the face of early relational challenges

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 3

2:00 pm

[MERTIL - a universal approach to growing trust in the face of early relational challenges](#)
[Zoe Cloud, Jennifer McIntosh, PhD, AM](#)

MERTIL for Parents is an educational and family conversational approach to building early relational trust.

The paper shares the MERTIL program, from its origins as a national education program for early childhood specialists, through to its current offering of a low cost parent education platform. Jenn will share practice guidelines that merge infant mental health and family therapy constructs with psychoeducational approaches to trauma healing in young families. We focus on the invaluable contributions of the infant's voice to their family's development, including recovery from intergenerational trauma, with early evidence from longitudinal research. Participants will consider the purpose and possibilities of the MERTIL program across multiple contexts of care, with a focus on leveraging the single session framework to safely utilise the infant's voice to support their family to move forward from histories of parenting trauma.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Keynote: [We are not alone: how the Peer Group for Intimate Partner Homicide came together](#)

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 207

2:00 pm

Keynote: [We are not alone: how the Peer Group for Intimate Partner Homicide came together](#)

[Ashton Kline](#), [Beverley Attard](#), [Hannah Morrice](#), [Kathryn Joy](#), [Katitza Marinkovic Chavez](#), [Rebecca Burdon](#)

In this session, the first known Peer Group for people who have lost a parent to fatal domestic violence will share our story of coming together after years of living without the opportunity to connect with others who've had similar experiences. Using creativity and storytelling, we will talk about what knowing each other has meant in our lives. We will share examples of how we use advocacy, activism, research, art, and professional practice to challenge the imposed isolation, silence and taboos around homicide and grief, and invite you to be part of this work to create safe, caring, just and inclusive communities for everyone.\

20 August 2025

3:30 pm - 4:00 pm

Afternoon Tea

Break

20 August 2025

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Abstracts

Session - [Lived experience and trauma](#) - Room 208

4:00 pm

[Carving A New Narrative: Creative Arts For Survivors Of Childhood Trauma \(A Lived Experience Perspective\)](#)

[Rebecca Egan](#)

This presentation will put forward my Lived Experience of using creative writing to help explore the narrative around surviving childhood trauma and subsequent Dissociative Identity Disorder. Stream of conscious poetry and art have been imperative to me throughout my survival of child abuse. I will speak to the concept of counternarrative – that is a tool that originates in critical race theory that aims to amplify the voices of the minority against oppressive dominate narratives. Childhood trauma survivors are often silenced when they share their experiences, their voices too regularly dismissed. This can repeat the damaging silencing that occurred during childhood abuse and is ultimately retraumatising. Through sharing poetry and personal reflections, I hope that people will feel more confident in seeing and using storytelling and creativity as powerful knowledge. It is my aim that this will be a space to explore utilising creative writing to empower. I hope that by sharing my own writing and art processes it may invite people to feel empowered to use creativity to process their own experiences. Creativity can be a powerful reflective practice, and allow us to resist power imbalances. This is true both for workers within the system and consumers. Creativity can be a way to regain power over distressing experiences, and to speak truths that were previously dismissed, or caused punishment. Creativity is available to every person – everyone is a creative. No academic experience is required in sharing our collective humanity through the arts. It is for everyone. Stories are powerful change agents, both internally and collectively and can be explored both through the written word and other creative arts pursuits. This presentation will also speak to the process of creating a Lived Experience creative zine aiming to honour expressions that are often oppressed.

4:30 pm

[Empowering Children's Voices Through Therapeutic Storytelling- Introducing Bella's Story: A Co-created, Therapeutically Supported Story Written By A Young Person And Her Counsellor. The Young Author Hopes The Story Will Support Other Children To Be "not So Scared To Tell Their Story."](#)

[Skye Bekaert](#)

In this session we will explore how therapeutic storytelling can provide a space to empower children's voices. You will learn about Bella's Story- a co-authored narrative created in a therapeutic space by a young person, Makeysa, and her counsellor Skye. Bella's Story has been published by the Australian Childhood Foundation.

Through this story Makeysa voices a powerful message:

"Now Bella can tell the whole world her story. Then she can get more help and people will understand her. Bella thinks that this story will help other children to tell their story... Maybe it will make them not so scared to tell their story."

Imaginary storytelling does not just provide a space for self-discovery, but also becomes a resource for children and young people who have experienced trauma to talk about their experiences, hopes and needs in a way that feels safe, empowering and authentic to them.

Stories make up the tapestry of our worlds; we seek to understand the world through story, and we create new possibilities through story. Imaginary storytelling, rich in metaphor and symbolism, provides a particularly powerful space for personal and social exploration; it enables us to remove ourselves from the often-harsh restraints of a confronting reality and reflect from a distance. Through metaphor we are able to connect to experiences, challenges and sides of ourselves that may have been pushed from consciousness.

When children speak up, we must listen and listen deeply. In just the same way that creative storytelling creates spaces for children to explore new ways to use their voice, it also provides opportunities for adults to find fresh ways to listen to their voices and create spaces where child/adult power dynamics can be dissolved, and children can tell their own stories in their own way.

5:00 pm

[When I Am Unable To Speak: Finding Voice Through Art](#)

[Jill Samera](#)

Childhood trauma can leave an indelible mark on individuals, shaping their emotional and psychological landscape well into adulthood. This presentation, drawing from lived experience, explores the transformative role of creativity and art in processing and healing from such trauma, including its intergenerational impact.

Live painting will be featured as a dynamic demonstration of how artistic expression facilitates emotional release and personal narrative reconstruction, giving a real-time illustration of art's role in recovery. If space permits, the option of an area where the audience is also invited to make individual marks on a collective art piece throughout the day will also be offered, and the completed work donated to the Australian Childhood Foundation.

Artistic expression through various forms—visual arts, music, writing, and performance—provides a non-verbal path for individuals, including traumatised children and adults, to communicate complex emotions. This is especially beneficial for those who find traditional communication inadequate for conveying their trauma. Art serves as a non-threatening channel, helping individuals navigate and articulate their experiences, fostering resilience, and aiding in overall well-being.

The presentation highlights the unique role of art for children trapped in situations of family and domestic violence, especially those who cannot verbally express their distress. Through creative expression, these children may find a silent but powerful outlet to communicate their inner struggles. This is particularly important for neurodivergent children, who often mask their trauma effectively, making it difficult for teachers, caregivers, and others to recognise signs of abuse. Providing these children with artistic tools gives them a vital means to express themselves, offering hope that their experiences can be acknowledged, even when words are out of reach.

Ultimately, this presentation underscores the need to ensure every child and adult has access to creative tools that allow for safe self-expression, encouraging a path to healing and resilience.

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Working with traumatised children and young people](#) - Room 209

4:00 pm

[Wellbeing Labs: Supporting Families and Enhancing Therapy Engagement](#)
[Danielle Kruger, Alicia San Matin](#)

The positive impact of pet dogs on human wellbeing is well documented. Emerging evidence now highlights the role of therapy dogs in enhancing engagement with traditional therapies and promoting overall family wellbeing.

Guide Dogs Victoria has witnessed the success of our *Wellbeing Labs* program and continues to explore innovative ways to use therapy dogs to support positive client outcomes.

Wellbeing Labs offer far more than companionship. They can bring joy, connection, and motivation to families experiencing daily challenges, including school refusal, difficulties with morning routines, or resistance to therapy. The presence of a therapy dog can help establish routines, promote physical activity, and foster a sense of responsibility, which together support improved emotional and physical wellbeing for the entire family.

Guide Dogs Victoria practitioners are uniquely positioned to integrate Wellbeing Labs into service delivery. Research shows that therapy dogs can reduce acute stress and anxiety, increase client engagement, enhance motivation, and strengthen the therapeutic relationship between families and practitioners.

This presentation will use real-world case studies to illustrate how Wellbeing Labs have been a catalyst for improved family wellbeing and strengthened therapy outcomes, particularly for families navigating the impacts of childhood trauma.

4:30 pm

[Navigating Trauma- From Parent To Child](#)
[Nicki Brunton](#)

In this presentation, I will share my lived experience with childhood trauma, highlighting the profound impact it has had on my journey as both a parent and a professional in the child protection sector. My narrative begins with my own childhood, where I faced challenges that shaped my understanding of trauma and its effects on emotional and psychological development.

As a parent, I encountered significant obstacles, including losing custody of my two eldest children and grappling with the struggles of my middle child, who faced substance use challenges. These experiences were not only heart-wrenching but also enlightening, providing me with a unique perspective on the cyclical nature of trauma within families. I will discuss the feelings of guilt, shame, and hopelessness that accompanied these events, as well as the resilience and strength I discovered in myself along the way.

Drawing from both personal insights and professional expertise, I will explore effective strategies for navigating trauma, emphasising the importance of self-compassion, emotional regulation, and the power of connection. I aim to illustrate how understanding my own trauma caused significant issues, however after healing and support my trauma enabled me to better support my children and other families in crisis.

Attendees will leave with practical tools and a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between trauma and parenting. My hope is to inspire others to embrace their own narratives and to foster healing within their families, ultimately breaking the cycle of trauma and creating a brighter future for the next generation.

5:00 pm

[Interpersonal Neurobiology: How Equine Assisted Therapy Creates A Pathway For Children Who Have Experienced Trauma](#)
[Jane Faulkner, Camilla MOWBRAY](#)

Our presentation aims to identify and explain how equine-assisted therapy (EAT) is an important part of the healing journey for many children who are able to access this form of therapy. We describe what happens when a young person who has experienced complex trauma is given the opportunity to get up close with, and build a relationship with a non-judgemental, non-verbal, affiliative animal, up to ten times their size. Equine Assisted Therapy (EAT) is an interaction between horses and people, provided by registered mental-health professionals with specific training in the field. A central goal of EAT is to strengthen attachment capacities normally established in childhood which may have been significantly disrupted by the experience of abuse and neglect. This is possible because working with horses provides unique biopsychosocial experiences that tap into our social engagement and other neurobiology with positive effects. Synergistic co-regulation between horse, therapist and client encourages the remodeling of arousal pathways and the development of psychosocial skills at all brain levels to build capacity for healthy relationships. The intersubjectivity developed during this experiential, somatically influenced learning can be difficult to replicate in a clinical setting. However, if the inclusion of horses in the therapeutic context provides more than just a buy-in for disconnected young people, then there is an imperative to identify what factors are responsible for generating the significant human-horse relational moments responsible for the therapeutic impact. More importantly, how do we ensure this form of therapy becomes more accessible, affordable, and accountable?

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Neurodivergence and trauma](#) - Plenary 3

4:00 pm

[Creating Safety In The Process Of Neurodivergent Unmasking Following Late Identification: The Importance Of Trauma-Informed Therapeutic Support](#)
[Naomi Malone](#)

Late-diagnosed autistic adults often face significant trauma from years of misunderstanding, alienation, and the pressure to conform to societal norms. Growing up without understanding their neurodivergence, many struggle with sensory overload, often receiving criticism or even punishment for differences in the ways they interact with the world. These experiences frequently lead to chronic anxiety, isolation, and low self-worth, as well as burnout and depression from the constant need to mask their authentic selves. The realisation of neurodivergence later in life can bring both a sense of validation and grief, prompting a re-evaluation of their life and complex emotions associated with what could have been different with earlier understanding and support.

A trauma-informed therapeutic approach is essential for creating a safe space during the process of unmasking. This type of support acknowledges the emotional toll of masking and the accumulated trauma, and it provides the empathy and validation necessary to facilitate healing. Trauma-informed therapy helps individuals explore their identity without fear of being pathologised, empowering them to progress at their own pace while recognising triggers and vulnerabilities.

By understanding the impact of systemic biases, stigma, and social exclusion, trauma-informed care helps reframe past experiences often misattributed to personal failure. It encourages grieving for missed opportunities while fostering self-compassion, acceptance, and resilience. The unmasking process, while liberating, is also deeply vulnerable, requiring careful navigation as individuals let go of long-standing survival strategies. Trauma-informed therapeutic support provides a crucial foundation for this journey, focusing on safety, validation, and building authentic ways of engaging with the world.

This presentation will highlight how fostering safe therapeutic alliances can facilitate self-compassion and self-acceptance, and enhance overall well-being for those experiencing the process of late identification, through both clinical and lived experience perspectives.

4:30 pm

[Where Trauma And Autism Meet - Co-Development Of New Learning Resources.](#)
[Nikki Peapell, Chris Byrne](#)

The Australian Childhood Foundation and Therapy Focus are undertaking a project in Western Australia to co-develop and pilot new training and resources for caregivers, teachers and community workers to better understand and respond to the interface of trauma and Autism.

Autism and trauma often co-occur, yet this intersection remains poorly understood. Autistic children experience more adverse childhood experiences than neurotypical peers and are vulnerable to interpersonal trauma, exploitation, bullying. They face increased challenges at school and are statistically more likely to be in out-of-home care.

Identifying signs/symptoms of developmental trauma in autistic children is challenging as they may overlap and mirror characteristics. Critical gaps include a lack of integrated screening, limited awareness and training of professionals, inconsistent use of trauma-responses.

The project brings together trauma-transformative and neuroaffirming expertise to create resources that support safer, validating environments and richer connections for autistic children and young people.

The project involves three stages:

- Benchmarking – including a literature review of existing/ emerging evidence and direct engagement with autistic young people, caregivers, and professionals to gain firsthand insights.
- Prototyping of learning content- including practice guidance and training resources for professionals and downloadable resources for caregivers.
- Delivery of pilot training - to schools and Out of Home Care settings.

This session will present the insights, video bites, and findings from the project; and a preview of the new resources that are being created.

5:00 pm

[The Cost Of Compliance And Autistic Masking. A Lived Experience Perspective.](#)
[Steph Robertson](#)

Recent studies show that 9 in 10 Autistic women have been sexually victimised in their lives. I am one of them. There needs to be more awareness around the experience of trauma in neurodivergent people.

In this presentation, I explore the impact of interoceptive experiences (how our bodies feel and interpret internal cues and emotions) being invalidated in Autistic individuals. This invalidation can lead to a lack of trust in their own body cues and the implementation of complex masking strategies, such as people-pleasing. Consequently, these adaptations increase the vulnerability of Autistic people to experience trauma.

I will share my personal experience, detailing the process through which I 'learnt' not to listen to my own body and sought external validation for my experiences. During this time, I was repeatedly victimised without recognising it. To cope, I created a part of myself that could perform these tasks, believing that this was necessary to stay safe.

Given these experiences, it is essential that neurodivergent children are supported in developing their interoceptive awareness. Their feelings and sensations need to be validated to create a strong sense of identity and to develop their ability to self-advocate.

This presentation includes lived experiences of neurodivergence and trauma, illustrating why neurodivergence may contribute to the vulnerability of trauma survivors. Furthermore, it highlights how individuals may not be aware of their own trauma due to the intricate and adaptive nature of dissociation and unconscious masking.

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Lived experience and trauma](#) - Room 207

4:00 pm

[Navigating The Waves Of Adversity: Emma's Journey Through Trauma And Resilience.](#)
[Emma Nunan](#)

Emma's life story is a profound testament to the enduring impact of trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) on an individual's lived experience. From a young age, Emma faced a series of harrowing events including domestic violence, parental mental illness, sexual abuse, and the breakdown of her family. These early traumas were compounded by periods of homelessness, the responsibility of caring for siblings with disabilities, and navigating the complexities of teenage pregnancy. Despite leaving high school at the age of 15, Emma's determination led her to eventually earn a Bachelor of Social Work and a Master's degree in Disability Policy and Practice.

As Emma transitioned into adulthood, the challenges persisted. The sudden death of her partner when she was six months pregnant left her as a single mother to a 10-year-old son and an 11-month-old infant. This profound loss was followed by the trauma of a house fire, further destabilizing her already precarious situation. Amidst these trials, Emma also undertook the role of a carer for family members, adding to her emotional and physical burdens.

Emma's narrative illustrates the cumulative and intergenerational effects of trauma, highlighting the resilience required to navigate such an array of adversities. Her experiences underscore the necessity for comprehensive support systems to address the complex needs of individuals affected by prolonged and multifaceted trauma. Emma's journey offers valuable insights into the pervasive nature of ACEs and the critical importance of targeted interventions to foster healing and resilience in similar circumstances.

4:30 pm

[Their Trauma, Our Trauma And Everything In-Between: Reflections On Subjectivity And Objectivity For Professionals And Victim/Survivors In The Reform Of Tasmanian Children'S Services.](#)
[Jack Davenport](#)

In the wake of a major inquiry, Tasmanian child safety is reaching its tipping point for meaningful reform. In 2023, the Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings tabled its final report, outlining devastating findings of abuse and trauma suffered by children in Tasmania, and making dozens of recommendations for change.

However, the Commission of Inquiry is only one piece of a much larger puzzle, where wider issues of child safety, and the ability of the state to provide trauma-informed safety and practice, remain unresolved.

Victim/Survivors and Whistleblowers, many of whom gave evidence and were central to the inquiry's formation, are caught between the urgent hopes of meaningful reform, and the fears of familiar failures by government agencies to deliver on necessary change. Professionals that work directly with children in multiple settings have to find ways to bridge the gap between the abstract reform of service delivery, and the manifest reality of trauma-informed practice with children.

Using Victim/Survivor and Whistleblower perspectives, this presentation explores the progress that has been made towards meaningful reform, the challenges that remain, and how those directly affected by the work of the Commission seek to deliver trauma-informed practice in Tasmanian children's services and the wider spheres of state governance.

5:00 pm

[Trauma Informed Supervision And Lived Experience - Developing A Trauma Informed Care Supervisory Approach](#)
[Kristen Pringle](#)

Trauma-Informed (TI) Supervision merges an understanding of trauma with supervisory practices, highlighting the dynamic interplay between trauma, the supervisor and supervisee, the helping relationship, and the surrounding context of the work environment. Often TI supervision and lived experience go hand in hand, but may not be known, or discussed. What can evolve when lived experience and TI supervision merges, either from the supervisee, supervisor, or both parties, is a compassionate, empathetic, and relational approach to supervision, that recognises the profound effects personal narratives of lived experience can bring into this professional relationship, whilst also emphasising the attention that both parties pay to their relationship.

While the supervisor or supervisee may or may not be actively involved in a role defined by their own experiences, or even directly share their experiences in supervision, their awareness of how these experiences inform supervisory practices is pivotal. From this synergy a Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) Supervisory Approach can develop, characterized by core principles such as safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, and empowerment. These principles not only enrich the supervisory interaction, but can mirror a healthy therapeutic connection between practitioners and those they serve—children, youth, and families affected by trauma. A TIC Supervisory Approach can foster an environment where supervisees feel supported to participate and engage deeply with their work while maintaining a reflective practice that values resilience and healing. A TIC Supervisory Approach can also protect a workforce from secondary or vicarious trauma, as a consequence of the emotional demands of their work, and demonstrate a workplace or organisation's commitment to implementing an integrated, trauma-informed system of care.

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Abstracts

4:00 pm

[Developing The Layered Continuum: A Contemporary Framework For Understanding Sexual Behaviours Displayed By Children And Young People.](#)

[Amanda Paton](#)

Understanding sexual behaviours in children and young people is a complex and evolving field, especially when these behaviours may indicate harmful sexual behaviour (HSB). To address this, the Australian Centre for Child Protection has developed the Layered Continuum for Understanding Harmful Sexual Behaviours, a contemporary framework designed to guide practitioners in assessing and responding to sexual behaviours displayed by children. This framework provides a structured, step-by-step process that helps practitioners determine whether a child's sexual behaviour is harmful and the appropriate level of concern.

This project emerged from the recognition that existing models, while valuable, are not fully fit for purpose in the contemporary Australian context. Key limitations of these models include outdated language and terminology, challenges with implementation by non-specialist practitioners, a lack of focus on key concepts such as consent and reciprocity, and insufficient consideration of children's emotional responses to sexual behaviour.

The Layered Continuum addresses these gaps by offering a more nuanced, developmentally informed approach. It acknowledges that sexual behaviours in children exist on a continuum of severity, intensity, and impact, recognising that not all sexualised behaviours are harmful or concerning. The continuum is designed to help practitioners deepen their understanding of the behaviours by guiding them through a series of layered steps, considering factors such as consent, mutuality, emotional responses, and overall pattern of the behaviour.

This presentation will explore the development of the Layered Continuum, including its theoretical foundation, evidence informed improvements from exploration of expert discussion and a validation study. Using case examples, attendees will be walked through how to use the continuum in practice, helping to equip them with the tools to more effectively assess and respond to sexual behaviours displayed by children and young people.

4:30 pm

[Safe Connections In Remote Communities Across The Northern Territory](#)

[Blythe McAuley, Estella Huppatz, Dan Vicaretti](#)

Safe Connections provides specialist assessment and support services to children engaging in Harmful Sexual Behaviour and their families in the Northern Territory.

There are extensive barriers to delivering meaningful services to remote communities across the NT. Encompassing some of the most remote regions of Australia, the Safe Connections program is committed to providing meaningful responses to small communities dotted up to 14hrs drive from larger towns, many of which are periodically inaccessible due to Cultural Business and unpredictable weather.

Unfortunately, the sustainability of visiting professionals within remote communities are too often short lived due to a range of complex factors. Even with more investment, having a HSB specialist in every community is never going to be a reality. So, how do we ensure these communities have access to these supports?

We started by delivering workshops to remote stakeholders, focusing on the capacity building of families and strong community leaders. After all, it is the community members and their families who are most likely to stay, and in the best position to protect the children of their community. We wanted to move away from focusing on children needing to protect themselves, to empowering the caring adults to take action. Despite many families already managing high levels of systemic disadvantage, including poverty, overcrowding, abuse, food insecurity and intergenerational trauma, we strived for whole of community action.

This paper outlines the considerations and protocols that were taken to ensure that we were delivering the right way. Concepts that will be explored include permission seeking, meaningful consultation, cultural safety, slowing down, shame, distrust, and fear. The content and resources that were developed through this project will also be explored as well as the key outcomes.

5:00 pm

[The Good Way Model: A Trauma-Informed Approach For Young People, Especially Those With Intellectual, Learning Or Neurodiversity Challenges, Who Have Offended, Or Engaged In Harmful Or Concerning Behaviour.](#)

[Lesley Aylard](#)

The Good Way model is a trauma informed approach first developed for young people with intellectual or developmental difficulties who presented with harmful or concerning sexual behaviour. It is an integrative model, drawing on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Narrative Therapy, Good Lives Model, creative therapies and trauma-focussed therapies. Research shows effectiveness with young people aged 11-17 both with and without an intellectual disability, who have engaged in harmful sexual behaviour. It can be used with other types of offending or behaviours of concern. The five components of the Good Way model offer a simple framework that provides young people with a context for their behaviour, skill development and decision making, and for striving for a Good Life. Many young people who have offended or displayed behavioural difficulties have a background of considerable trauma. The Good Way model also assists young people to come to terms with their own experiences of abuse, neglect, grief and loss, to understand the harm they have caused, and supports developmentally appropriate reparation and restoration. The Good Way model is adaptable for use in one-to-one and/or group settings, and is being used in the UK and Japan in early intervention.

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Working with families](#) - Plenary 2

4:00 pm

[Child Protection, The Better Way](#)

[Malarni Graham](#)

Child protection has long been featured in the news for various negative reasons. There have been in excess of 50 enquiries, reviews, commissions, etc. since the turn of the century. The vast majority of outcomes have promoted early intervention and diversion where possible and even now Queensland is again making significant changes with the Enhanced Intake and Assessment roll-out, marking the 3rd significant change this century. There is chronic government under-staffing, challenges recruiting and retaining staff. Nongovernment agencies are now also experiencing staffing challenges and some non-government services are handing back their contracts in the early intervention and fostering services.

My presentation will focus on my lived experiences as a child in care, a kinship carer, foster carer, and as a professional in the sector for the past fourteen years; highlighting my unique perspective of the various challenges and strengths within the child protection system. Many children, parents and extended family members that come into contact with the different services provided by child safety have negative experiences. Whilst our family had several challenge experiences themselves, overall, I believe our family situation is better as a result of the different departmental interventions. I will then propose my learnings from practice, highlighting the best ways of working with families and working with the challenges facing the system. It is my hope to bring a spotlight to success, failure and the need to change the way we respond to issues of child protection to make children, families and communities safer.

My aim is to address these three questions: How do we work with an 'inadequate system' to achieve the best outcomes for individuals and for families? How do we seek to address, and treat the issues of child maltreatment? How do we stop inter-generational trauma from continuing from generation to generation?

4:30 pm

[From Lived Experience To Creating Community: Healing Intergenerational Trauma With Connection And Structured, Science-Based Supports That Are Sustainable For Overwhelmed Families](#)

[Suzie Forbes](#)

Parenting kids with big emotions and who have survived trauma that mirrors your own as a child, is an exhausting and overwhelming challenge. Any healing you have worked on so hard, can quickly fall to the wayside as you see it replayed in the heart, or hearts, that are beating outside our own body.

As you all know, breaking this cycle is harder in reality than in concept; and while it is still a system of awareness and productive rest to manage the triggers of my own trauma, this is a goal I have achieved in my own family - raising my children with principles of neuroscience and attachment from their early childhood trauma into beautiful, kind and brave young adults.

My kids, and the children, teenagers and families I have been honoured to work with over the years have inspired me to be an advocate for child, adolescent, and parent, especially maternal, mental health. Every year I could see this crisis worsening. Through the privilege of my education, I was aware there is so much preventative work that

could be done to turn this around, and wished I'd had a community applying these ideas while I'd been struggling with this across my children's early childhood. These experiences inspired me to build a connected community where parents have a safe space to not only work through their own triggers and healing; but also learn sustainable science-based strategies to help their children grow into happier, healthier, more helpful humans. A system of strategies I learned through direct, lived experiences, and by working with many, many families with similar experiences of trauma and challenging emotions. I'd love to share with you my story of triumph, and how this connected community has brought healing for me and many others.

5:00 pm

[Seen And Heard.](#)
[Emma Podbury](#)

As a mother who has navigated the child protection system, the experience felt akin to Alice in Wonderland tumbling down the rabbit hole.

This journey was merely the beginning, revealing a profound passion for children's rights and trauma-informed approaches while working with children and families.

Emma observed the necessity for interdisciplinary, objective, evidence-based, child-centered assessments. The existing system relied heavily on children verbally expressing their experiences, which often leads to their failure. Instead, children consistently communicate their experiences through their arousal states, behaviors, play, social interactions, health/medical histories, and learning abilities.

Emma created a child-centered framework that aligns with the Convention on The Rights of the Child. This framework was developed from her observations of the gaps in the system that hinder children's voices and expressions from being acknowledged and valued. It encompasses a holistic approach, integrating feedback from children, parents, teachers, experts, and her experience as a trauma-informed pediatric occupational therapist.

Child protection must adopt a rights-based approach to ensure children's safety. The primary framework should be the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). A comprehensive interdisciplinary approach is essential for effective child protection, as the current outdated system is failing the children.

Emma intends to propose the implementation of mandatory trauma training and the use of the Trauma Expression and Connection Assessment (TECA) in educational settings across Australia

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Working in out-of-home care](#) - Room 206

4:00 pm

[Recognising And Supporting The Importance Of Relative/Kinship Care In Oohc In Nsw](#)
[Danielle Campbell](#)

Discussing the current issues kinship/relative carer's face such as insufficient training, lack of support, financial hardship, lack of access to mental health, trauma support and resources, inadequate financial assistance on top of the bureaucratic complexities and inconsistent policies across regions and organisations exacerbate the already difficult challenges that kinship/relative carer's face leading to feeling isolated and overwhelmed. These factors are a contributing cause to "placement breakdown" and "lack of carers".

There is a need to change the current model of care to include better support systems, family finding methods and engagement of family/ community in family led decision making in placements and relational support systems.

The role of kinship/ relative carer's in out-of-home care is pivotal in providing stability and support to children who have experienced trauma and displacement. Despite their critical function, there remains a significant gap in the support services available to these carers.

The recommendations in the recent paper "The Future of Foster Care In NSW" co- authored by the Association of Children's Welfare Agency addresses, current model, service delivery and funding issues and provides some focus points to provide critical intervention to the OOHC sector.

ACF's OurSpace services and how we work to support the trauma needs of the child/young person. We work in NSW face to face, moving with the child regardless of their placement locations. We have a team of Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Therapeutic Specialists who work with children to help support their culturally strong and trauma-informed needs.

ACF Sydney has also employed the first Intern position held by the organisation. The intern initiative is a formal pathway for Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islanders where there is a gap in formal education but lived experience is ever present intern's will receive support and funding to complete the Graduate Certificate in Developmental Trauma (GCDT).

4:30 pm

[When Yes Mean Yes: A Carer's Guide To Consent Conversations With Young People.](#)
[Belinda Lorek, Austin Bell](#)

In 2024, carers, young people, the Australian Childhood Foundation (The Centre for Excellence in Therapeutic Care) and OzChild developed an online training resource for carers about consent. Funded by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing in Victoria this course is aimed at building community-wide dialogues about consent, providing clarity that consent is more about ongoing agreement, than a simple yes, or no. The laws have been reformed to ensure greater protections to keep people safe.

Having meaningful conversations with children and young people about sexual consent, while critically important, can be tricky. Young people are navigating how consent works in relation to social and online environments and carers play a critical role in consent conversations and supporting young people to safely explore concepts.

Young people in Care have had early relationships marked by trauma including abuse, neglect, and loss. Interrupted access to schooling can result in missed opportunities to learn about healthy relationships, boundaries and consent.

Consent conversations with young people in Care must be considered, trauma-informed, sensitive, and build safety and understanding. There is an opportunity to lay foundations, correct myths and build their skills in the practice of seeking and giving consent.

Launched on 1 July 2024, the course was piloted for 4 months. The six modules were designed to enhance carer's understanding and confidence to talk with young people about consent. The modules include creating a safe environment, relationships, boundaries, consent, grooming and online safety. The course has activities just for carers, as well as activities for carers to do with young people aged developmentally 12 to 14 years to explore topics and the issue of consent.

Our presentation will share how the training resource was developed, an overview of the modules, lived experience carer videos, findings from the pilot and next steps.

5:00 pm

[Safe and Connected: Supporting online safety for children and young people in care](#)
[Kelly Royds](#)

Safe and Connected: Supporting online safety for children and young people in care

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Working with young offenders](#) - Room 218

4:00 pm

[A Lived Experience Of Incarceration's Impact On Identity](#)
[Michelle George](#)

Research highlights that children of incarcerated parents often face significant challenges (Martin, 2017). My personal journey with a recidivist father who dealt heroin— but

not to use—has profoundly shaped my identity. The distress of his arrests and the stigma of being treated as a proxy criminal instilled deep feelings of shame and inadequacy within me.

As a pediatric occupational therapist, I became acutely aware of my clients' struggles, which mirrored my own childhood experiences. I connected with children who had witnessed police raids, their homes disrupted, and their parents subjected to violence. I recognized that their trauma stemmed not only from their parents' actions but also from the actions and language of law enforcement.

My experiences have underscored for me the importance of compassionate communication in law enforcement and the lasting shadow of trauma and stigma. If officers approached these situations with humanised language, we could potentially foster better outcomes for children affected by their parents' actions. In my work, I aim to support children in similar circumstances while seeking to overcome my own trauma.

4:30 pm

[Hoofprints On Hearts: Supporting Young People To Change Their Lives Through Equine Assisted Learning, Mentoring, Cultural Support And Employment Opportunities](#)
[Ellie Higgins, Lyn Millett](#)

Between 2022 and 2024, the Australian Childhood Foundation delivered the Off and Racing Youth Support Service in Perth : a successful 18-month program prototype funded by a one-off Federal Government grant , which provided equine-assisted learning and exposure to the racing industry for a group of 14-17 year old young people with involvement in child protection and at high risk of homelessness.

It provided equine-assisted learning and basic horse-handling skills; access to industry training sites and mentors; and a genuine employment pathway into the equestrian industry. Participants were supported to improve mental health, make prosocial connections, develop life skills; and have access to cultural activities and on-country experience. There was a focus on recovery and growth: building on individual strengths, connectedness, and hope for the future. It was underpinned by integrating current thinking in trauma transformative practice and criminogenic need into every day interactions with the young people.

An independent social impact review by the Youth Affairs Council of WA recommended extension of the program and in late 2024, the Equestrian Youth Engagement Service was developed to significantly reframe the focus on young people with current, chronic involvement in the Youth Justice system, including custodial detention. It also broadened the job opportunities to the wider equestrian industry.

The learnings from the pilot, social impact study and extension program will be discussed, including the power of animal assisted interventions, maintaining youth engagement with lived experience support, working within statutory systems, the importance of cultural support and supporting young people to transition to employment.

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Abstracts

Session - [Working with traumatised adults](#) - Room 205

4:00 pm

[Australians Have Limited Understanding Of The Lifelong Impacts Of Child Sexual Abuse And Complex Trauma: Implications For Practitioners To Address This Issue And Enhance Support For Victim-Survivors Across The Life Course.](#)
[Andrea de Silva, Cathy Stirling](#)

More than a quarter of Australians were sexually abused as children, generally experiencing child sexual abuse (CSA) multiple times. Complex trauma often ensues and has been associated with substantial and pervasive long-term emotional, psychological, physical, behavioural, interpersonal, and financial impacts.

The National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse recently conducted the *Australian child sexual abuse attitudes, knowledge and response study*, surveying a nationally representative sample of over 4,000 adults. Data collected using an online questionnaire explored the Australian community's understanding of, and responses to CSA.

In relation to understanding the impacts of CSA, results showed that 80-90% of participants knew that victim-survivors of CSA often experience difficulties with relationships, substance use, and psychological health. However, fewer (60-70%) recognised more distal impacts on basic needs throughout adulthood such as disruptions to job-, housing-, and financial-security, and poorer physical health. Importantly, 13% of respondents thought there were no ongoing impacts of CSA and 33% didn't understand the impacts well enough to respond appropriately to an adult's disclosure of CSA. In responding to a hypothetical regarding an adult friend's disclosure, 24% said they couldn't connect with their friend's pain (another 30% were unsure), and 5% would try to avoid their friend. Overall, these results demonstrate the community's limited understanding of CSA-related complex trauma, which means that victim-survivors may be unsupported or misunderstood at important points in their life.

Victim-survivors may seek therapeutic and support services to aid their recovery. Given the broad impacts, many workforces, not just specialist services, will encounter CSA-victim-survivors. We explore how practitioners can implement evidence-based initiatives to strengthen adults' understanding of the needs of child and adult CSA victim-survivors, foster compassionate and supportive responses, and deepen the community's understanding of the impacts of CSA and complex trauma, thereby enhancing healing and recovery from CSA.

4:30 pm

[Childhood Trauma & Incarceration - Lived Experience As A Prisoner Advocate & Prison Wife To A Lifer - Canada](#)
[Sherri Gordon](#)

The relationship between childhood trauma and incarceration is complex and interconnected. Individuals who experience trauma in their early years from abuse, neglect, or exposure to violence are put at a risk of engaging in behaviours that lead to incarceration later in life. Trauma affects the brain and can lead to mental health issues such as depression, anxiety and PTSD that can contribute to criminal activities. Many who experience childhood trauma develop survival-based coping strategies that can increase the likelihood that they will become involved in the criminal justice system. Adverse Childhood Experiences like abuse and household dysfunction are contributing factors to incarceration. Early exposure to the criminal justice system through juvenile detention leads people to further trauma of being incarcerated as an adult.

Through my professional experience working with youth who are in foster care, some of which are incarcerated in juvenile detention centers and working as a student in parole and as a Prisoner Advocate with many men and women who are incarcerated, I have seen first hand that childhood trauma of contributed to their criminal behaviour. Through my personal experience as a Prison Wife to a Wrongfully Convicted Indigenous Lifer I see that childhood trauma has long-term effects on people later on in life. I watched my husband suffer from his childhood trauma and after years of suffering from his past, growing up in foster care, being wrongfully convicted, serving life and the abuses that he went through in prison he has healed. I share our story of trauma and healing to bring awareness to those who work with incarcerated individuals to be mindful of what brings an individual to engage in criminal activity and to bring hope to those who suffer from childhood trauma hoping to prevent others from going through all that we have endured.

5:00 pm

[Psychedelic Assisted Therapy: Healing Through Integration](#)
[Eli Kotler](#)

Childhood trauma leaves the ego riven and cracked. It shatters our ability to synthesise, to maintain the integrity of experience. To cope with this threat of fracture, parts of our internal world remain unintegrated, repressed into the recesses of the mind so that we can maintain coherence. Yet, this survival strategy always comes at a cost. The mind and body must dynamically and continually hold down what is unintegrated, like a buoy held under the water, ever pushing to rise to the surface. This downward force requires the creation of mechanisms and structures within the developing personality, which both ensure our survival in a challenging world, and lead to chronic and compulsive personality patterns which can restrict growth and cause psychiatric symptoms.

Childhood adversity remains the most consistent risk factor for chronic suffering and mental illness, yet, both psychological and psychiatric treatments tend to focus on the compulsive presenting symptoms rather than the underlying cause. We have created a mental health system whereby we silo suffering into categories that do not exist in nature. Rather than focus on humans as complex systems within a particular environment, we treat symptoms of ever-expanding diagnoses. Rather than encourage integration, we engage in suppression of symptoms.

Psychedelic Assisted Therapy (PAT) offers a different path. PAT allows the long-suffering individual a way through their labyrinthine pain. It allows clarity where there was confusion, and awareness where there was darkness. Neuroscientifically, Friston's Free-Energy Principle lays the foundations for an understanding of psychedelics which far surpasses that of traditional psychiatric medications. Combined with qualitative research, a complex picture emerges of healing and integration, whereby the compulsive and protective aspects of our personalities become malleable, allowing access to the previously unintegrated aspects of our-selves, offering healing rather than treatment, and humanity rather than reductionism.

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Advanced Masterclass Part 2: Compassion-focussed therapy approaches to shame and self-criticism in children and young people

Advanced Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 212 & 213

4:00 pm

[Compassion-focussed therapy approaches to shame and self-criticism in children and young people](#)

[Paul Gilbert](#)

This workshop will explore an evolutionary based model of self-criticism. Key is to distinguish criticism that is encouraging and rooted in self-correction versus criticism that's rooted in fear frustration and is harsh linked to anger and at times even hatred of the self. We will explore how to conduct a functional analysis of self-criticism, its link to shame and fear of rejection and consider how to generate compassion brain states to deal with the fear and traumas that sit behind harsh self-criticism.

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Advanced Masterclass Part 2: Exploring the contextual aspects of Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP) interventions

Advanced Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 203 & 204

4:00 pm

[Exploring the contextual aspects of Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy \(DDP\) interventions](#)

[Jon Baylin, Kim Golding, Dan Hughes](#)

How we position people in our relational systems within the brain determines the way we respond to them. Understanding this will inform the way we adapt DDP interventions for the unique child and family we are working with. Within this masterclass we will explore the concept of Location and Re-location of people in our brains as a brain-informed model of shifting from an "un PACEful" state of mind towards another person into a "PACEful, compassionate" state of mind. Jon will explain what this means in terms of brain networks and "interstate travel" and will discuss several ways for therapists and parents and other adults to practice making this core shift in how we hold one another in our brains and minds. Dan will deepen our understanding of PACE (an attitude of playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy) in relation to the contextual aspects of DDP interventions. With this way of being, PACE invites the marginalized experiences of the children and families we support in our therapy sessions into our experience. We create a place where we can influence each other intersubjectively as we get a deeper understanding of the other. The context the other brings to the interventions is an important part of informing the way that DDP interventions will be adapted for the child and family's unique needs. Kim will reflect on some of the specific ways DDP interventions can be adapted for and learn from different cultures.

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Advanced Masterclass Part 2: The effect of trauma on the next generation – intergenerational transmission of trauma and healing.

Session - [ICTC](#) - Room 210 & 211

4:00 pm

[The effect of trauma on the next generation – intergenerational transmission of trauma and healing](#)

[Rachel Yehuda](#)

In this half day Masterclass, delivered over 3 hours, Dr Yehuda will explore how molecular biology, genomics, and epigenomics, provide paradigms for understanding the long-term effects of stress. Dr Yehuda will incorporate decades of research on trauma and its impacts, incorporating Vietnam veterans, adult children of holocaust survivors, children of other traumas, children born to pregnant women who survived the 9/11 world trade centre attacks predictors of PTSD to show how early environmental experiences-including parenting- contribute to highly conserved molecular and genomic processes. The masterclass will also present Dr Yehuda's work and research exploring effective treatments supporting healing and recovery.

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Interactive Workshop: Dhuralba Wanggaranya (Walk Together): exploring culture and healing

Workshop - [ICTC](#) - Room 216

4:00 pm

[Dhuralba Wanggaranya \(Walk Together\)](#)

[Danielle Cameron, Glenda Kickett](#)

This session, ***Dhuralba Wanggaranya*** (Walk Together), explores culturally grounded, relational, and trauma-aware healing practices with children, drawing upon First Nations knowledge systems. Guided by the understanding that healing is collective, embodied, and deeply rooted in Country, this 90-minute session offers a reflective and practice-oriented journey for educators, practitioners, and community workers who support Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, and Māori children.

Grounded in the principles of connection, rhythm, identity, and relationship, the session unpacks seven interwoven elements of Indigenous healing: connection to Country, cultural identity and strength, relational healing, intergenerational storywork, rhythmic regulation, holistic and collective care, and ceremony as cultural safety. These principles are explored through interactive discussion, grounding practices, storywork, and yarning circles that honour both local knowledge and broader Indigenous worldviews.

Participants are invited to reflect on their own experiences and practice contexts, and to consider how to embed culturally safe and trauma informed approaches that support children's healing. Through small group activities and storytelling, participants develop insights into how First Nations led frameworks can restore safety, strengthen identity, and foster resilience in children affected by trauma, disconnection, or systems of harm.

This session affirms the strength and wisdom of First Nations healing practices, offering practical tools and cultural reflections to support transformative work with children. It centres healing as an act of walking together led by community, grounded in culture, and guided by the voices of children, families, and Elders.

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Symposium: A symposium highlighting expert women in the field of trauma

Symposium - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 1

4:00 pm

[A symposium highlighting expert women in the field of trauma](#)

[Bethany Brand, Deb Dana, Arielle Schwartz, Cathy Malchiodi PhD, Cathy Kezelman AM, Ruth Lanius, Fiona Cornforth, Sue-Anne Hunter, Johanna Lynch, Janise Mitchell](#)

This panel discussion will be hosted by Janise Mitchell.

20 August 2025

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Childhood Wonder Event

Social - [Other](#) - Main Foyer 2 & 3

21 August 2025

8:00 am - 8:30 am
Morning Movement and Wellbeing: Breathwork with Caroline Brunne – The Survivor Coach

Morning Movement - [ICTC](#) - Room 212 & 213

8:00 am
[Breathwork with Caroline Brunne – The Survivor Coach](#)
[Caroline Brunne](#)
Breathwork with Caroline Brunne – The Survivor Coach

8:00 am - 8:30 am
Morning Movement and Wellbeing: Morning Yoga with Tina and Briar

Morning Movement - [ICTC](#) - Room 210 & 211

8:00 am
[Morning Yoga with Tina and Briar](#)
[Tina Icaro](#)
Morning Yoga with Tina and Briar

8:00 am - 8:30 am
Morning Movement and Wellbeing: Playful moves: Moving with self, moving with others, moving in groups

Morning Movement - [ICTC](#) - Room 203 & 204

8:00 am
[Playful moves: Moving with self, moving with others, moving in groups](#)
[Sally Denning](#)
Playful moves: Moving with self, moving with others, moving in groups

21 August 2025

9:00 am - 11:00 am
Plenary - Emma Hakansson and David Kessler

Plenary - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 2

9:00 am
[The adult view of children as lesser humans: How this erodes autonomy and leads to abuse](#)
[Emma Hakansson](#)

As a western adult culture, we deem developing children as 'contributing' less and therefore lesser. In turn, we afford children fewer rights, particularly in relation to their autonomy and voice. These conditions permit ongoing childhood sexual abuse in which children believe that to be an acceptable person, they must obey adults even when it deeply wounds them.

Advocate and Chair of the Australian Childhood Foundation's Lived Experience Advisory Group, Emma Hakansson.

10:00 am
[Releasing the pain of grief and finding meaning](#)
[David Kessler](#)

As a western adult culture, we deem developing children as 'contributing' less and therefore lesser. In turn, we afford children fewer rights, particularly in relation to their autonomy and voice. These conditions permit ongoing childhood sexual abuse in which children believe that to be an acceptable person, they must obey adults even when it deeply wounds them.

Advocate and Chair of the Australian Childhood Foundation's Lived Experience Advisory Group, Emma Hakansson.

21 August 2025

11:00 am - 11:30 am
Morning Tea

Break

21 August 2025

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Keynote: Befriending the nervous system: A polyvagal guide

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 2

11:30 am
[Befriending the nervous system: A polyvagal guide](#)
[Deb Dana](#)

The autonomic nervous system is at the heart of daily living and at the center of therapeutic change. Polyvagal Theory, developed by renowned scientist Stephen Porges, defines the role of the autonomic nervous system in creating experiences of risk and protection, safety and connection. Trauma interrupts the development of autonomic regulation and shapes the system away from connection into patterns of protection. For many of our clients, states of fight, flight, and collapse are familiar, frequent, and prolonged while the state of safety and connection is elusive and scary. Using the organizing principles of neuroception, hierarchy, and co-regulation we have a roadmap to help clients safely tune into their autonomic states and rewrite the trauma stories that are carried in their autonomic pathways. In this presentation we will learn the science behind these principles and explore practices to bring them alive in clinical work. *This keynote will introduce the three organizing principles of polyvagal theory to those who haven't covered it before. It will be a good session for those new to the theory and wanting to learn what it means for their work and the support of children. These fundamentals will be assumed knowledge in Deb's Masterclass and Advanced Workshop Sessions.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Keynote: Healing Relational Trauma and the importance of self-reflection by the DDP therapist.

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 3

11:30 am
[Healing relational trauma and the importance of self-reflection by the DDP therapist Kim Golding, Dan Hughes](#)
Dan and Kim published the 'Healing Relational Trauma Workbook' in 2024. This provides DDP therapists and practitioners with a comprehensive understanding of Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy, Parenting, and Practice (DDP). Within the Workbook, there is an important emphasis on reflection and self-understanding by the therapist. In this presentation we will explore how individual differences, often influenced by past relational and attachment experience, can impact on the therapist's practice of DDP. Self-understanding can help the therapist to develop their practice, understanding their own unique strengths and challenges, so that they can 'sit with the uncomfortable' able to offer co-regulation and co-creation of affective-reflective narratives with the children and families they are working with.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Keynote: Reframing the Biology of Trauma and intergenerational Implications.

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 1

11:30 am
[Reframing the biology of trauma and intergenerational implications Rachel Yehuda](#)
The epigenetics of intergenerational trauma has received a lot of attention with many speculating that epigenetics might offer insights into how trauma is passed through generations. In this talk we'll delve into what these findings can and cannot tell us about the transmission of trauma effects and reflect on what we have learned and how it can be helpful. I'll also suggest that some of the epigenetic changes observed in the context of trauma and intergenerational trauma may be protective, aiding us in coping with challenges, not just compounding their effects. We'll talk about the intergenerational paradox: that parental or ancestral trauma can heighten vulnerability for mental health problems, but that some of the biologic changes may simultaneously facilitate coping mechanisms. We'll discuss studies of Holocaust offspring and babies born to mothers in the months after their exposure to 9/11 to highlight some of these important lessons. I'll show you what I learned so that you can see how I came to some of these conclusions about biology and adaptation. This talk will also focus on how this new understanding can inform treatment, particularly through psychedelic-assisted therapies, which may offer new ways to reframe personal and collective narratives of trauma. Understanding the biological and historical dimensions of trauma can spark positive social change by reshaping how we view mental health, intergenerational healing, and the stories we carry with us. They help inform us about key components of resilience and well-being. While it is undeniable that trauma can damage and wound, we don't need to get stuck in its negative effects.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Keynote: Triple Trouble: A brain based model of developmental trauma

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 219 & 220

11:30 am
[Triple trouble: A brain based model of developmental trauma Jon Baylin](#)
Dr. Baylin will be presenting his "Triple Trouble" brain-based model of developmental trauma describing the effect on the child of damage to core brain networks. "Triple trouble" refers to a child's loss of a sense of safety, fragmentation of sense of self, and suppression of a sense of hope for the future. In this keynote, Dr. Baylin will explain how each of these arises from traumatic damage to developmental processes. He will then shift focus to exploring ways to approach treatment by combining interventions that promote recovery and healing in the child's brain. These include relational processes like social buffering, neuromodulation processes such as low energy neurofeedback, and memory reconsolidation processes that can help to strengthen the "self" system in the brain. Integration of these processes can foster the recovery of a sense of safety, self worth, and hope in children with histories of developmental trauma.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Speaker to be announced

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 203 & 204

11:30 am
[Keynote - Carlie \(Caroline\) Atkinson](#)
Keynote - Carlie (Caroline) Atkinson

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Workshop: Embodying Grief: Moving Through Loss and Trauma

Workshop - [ICTC](#) - Room 210 & 211

11:30 am
[Embodying grief: Moving through loss and trauma Paul Denniston](#)
Paul Denniston leads participants through carefully crafted chair-based easy Grief Yoga® practices that support the processing of healing from the pain of all kinds of heartbreak, trauma and loss through movement. He discusses ways that grief can become stuck in the body and will demonstrate how movement, breath and sound can help clients release accumulated emotions to navigate the complex territory of grief whilst strengthening their capacity for authentic connection with self and others.

Learning Objectives:
1. Demonstrate specific movement practices that help clients process grief and strengthen their resilience
2. Apply understanding of embodied grief work to support clients in maintaining and deepening relationships while honoring their losses
3. Explore and embody how play can help process grief and trauma

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Workshop: Self-Care when Working with Trauma

Workshop - [ICTC](#) - Room 212 & 213

11:30 am
[Self-care when working with trauma Cathy Malchiodi PhD](#)
Your own healing is a powerful contribution to the healing of everyone. As practitioners who witness and experience reparation, restoration, and recovery in others, we often forget our own healing in the process. The workshop introduces several expressive arts therapy practices that will take you through "movement, sounding, silence, and storytelling" and enhance your "circle of capacity" in work with challenging children, youth, and adults. We will explore gentle body awareness through several evidence-informed arts-based approaches to support regulation and rejuvenation of body, mind, and spirit. Using the Expressive Arts Therapy Autonomic Wheel, participants will be able to identify two restorative nervous system states of being—Fun and (Creative) Flow and apply hands-on, sensory-based experiences to "reset your nervous system."

21 August 2025

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm
Lunch

Break

21 August 2025

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Keynote: Building on legacies, ensuring ancestral bonds are held closely: how we know we're taking up our roles in the work of healing

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 3

2:00 pm
[Building on legacies, ensuring ancestral bonds are held closely: how we know we're taking up our roles in the work of healing](#)
[Fiona Cornforth](#)
Many of us have seen the magic that happens when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young peoples are given the space, time and freedom to lead and create, and feel power and momentum behind their voices. Voices that share powerful viewpoints about matters they care about deeply, and that express a level of clarity that adults like us can only dream of having again, in the noisy and complex workforces and systems that we've chosen to serve in. This presentation reflects on some of the political events since our last conference that have given many of us cause for concern and pause for purpose, as we began to experience a not-so-enabling environment. In drawing on the work of Yardhura Walani at the ANU: the National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Wellbeing Research, and at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation previously, Fiona provides insight, knowledge and some tools to take our next most powerful steps in healing roles, in any environment.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Keynote: Learning security after trauma – The integrative growth across the lifespan

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 1

2:00 pm
[Learning security after trauma – The integrative growth across the lifespan](#)
[Dan Siegel](#)
Learning security after trauma – The integrative growth across the lifespan

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Keynote: Reframing the Biology of Trauma and intergenerational Implications.

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 219 & 220

2:00 pm
[Reframing the biology of trauma and intergenerational implications](#)
[Rachel Yehuda](#)
The epigenetics of intergenerational trauma has received a lot of attention with many speculating that epigenetics might offer insights into how trauma is passed through generations. In this talk we'll delve into what these findings can and cannot tell us about the transmission of trauma effects and reflect on what we have learned and how it can be helpful. I'll also suggest that some of the epigenetic changes observed in the context of trauma and intergenerational trauma may be protective, aiding us in coping with challenges, not just compounding their effects. We'll talk about the intergenerational paradox: that parental or ancestral trauma can heighten vulnerability for mental health problems, but that some of the biologic changes may simultaneously facilitate coping mechanisms. We'll discuss studies of Holocaust offspring and babies born to mothers in the months after their exposure to 9/11 to highlight some of these important lessons. I'll show you what I learned so that you can see how I came to some of these conclusions about biology and adaptation. This talk will also focus on how this new understanding can inform treatment, particularly through psychedelic-assisted therapies, which may offer new ways to reframe personal and collective narratives of trauma. Understanding the biological and historical dimensions of trauma can spark positive social change by reshaping how we view mental health, intergenerational healing, and the stories we carry with us. They help inform us about key components of resilience and well-being. While it is undeniable that trauma can damage and wound, we don't need to get stuck in its negative effects.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Masterclass Part 1: A cascade of PACE. Building dyadic developmental practice (DDP) into the fabric of residential care for children.

Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 203 & 204

2:00 pm
[A cascade of PACE. Building dyadic developmental practice \(DDP\) into the fabric of residential care for children](#)
[Kim Golding](#)
Within this master class we will explore the DDP practice model and the context of culture, identity and experience of those working and living within residential homes. We will consider the complexity of supporting these children with histories of developmental trauma and their own unique identity, experience and cultural influences. This will lead us into a consideration of the importance of the key DDP principles of emotional connection, co-regulation and storytelling, and the helpfulness of the attitude of PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy) to achieve this. We will consider how PACE can be cascaded throughout the residential home, bottom-up; top-down and beyond. This will include supporting and caring for the children, the staff, the practitioners and the managers.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Masterclass Part 1: Mind and body tools and techniques for adults and children in grief

Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 210 & 211

2:00 pm
[Mind and body tools and techniques for adults and children in grief](#)
[Paul Denniston, David Kessler](#)
Mind and body tools and techniques for adults and children in grief

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Masterclass Part 1: Navigating the quest for connection

Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 212 & 213

2:00 pm
[Navigating the quest for connection](#)

[Deb Dana](#)

The autonomic nervous system is the foundation for our lived experience. What begins with our biology becomes the story that shapes our days. Polyvagal Theory provides a guide to the autonomic circuits that underlie behaviors and beliefs and an understanding of the body to brain pathways that give birth to our clients' stories of safety and survival. With this updated map we have practical ways to effectively help clients identify and interrupt their familiar response patterns and strategies to shape their systems toward safety and connection. When we look to the autonomic nervous system, we find a path to creating new, resourcing patterns of connection and can reliably lead our clients into the autonomically regulated state of safety that is necessary for successful treatment. When we speak the language of the nervous system, we can help clients safely tune into their autonomic states, reshape their nervous systems, and rewrite the trauma stories that are carried in their autonomic pathways.

In this workshop you'll learn ways to bring the science of safety and connection into clinical application as you accompany your clients on their healing journeys.

Through presentation and experiential exercises you will learn:

- the language of the nervous system and how to tune into the autonomic story
- an autonomic mapping process to guide treatment- practices that engage the nervous system's natural pathways to regulation
- ways to help clients identify and interrupt their familiar patterns of protection
- skills to help clients find, and savor, experiences of safety

* This masterclass will build on an understanding of the foundational principles, so if you're not familiar with these please take the opportunity to attend the Keynote in the morning.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Symposium: A symposium listening to the wisdom of lived experience in service delivery, design and policy development

Symposium - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 2

This panel discussion will be hosted by Cathy Kezelman.

2:00 pm

[A symposium listening to the wisdom of lived experience in service delivery, design and policy development](#)

[John Cardamone](#), [Conor Pall](#), [Cathy Kezelman AM](#), [Morgan Cataldo](#), [Emma Hakansson](#)

A symposium listening to the wisdom of lived experience in service delivery, design and policy development

21 August 2025

3:30 pm - 4:00 pm

Afternoon Tea

Break

21 August 2025

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Keynote: Learning security after trauma – The integrative growth across the lifespan

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 3

4:00 pm

[Learning security after trauma – The integrative growth across the lifespan](#)

[Dan Siegel](#)

Learning security after trauma – The integrative growth across the lifespan

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Keynote: Our Collective Experience: Hear us now, act now: survivors share insights on prevention and intervention of child sexual abuse

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 219 & 220

4:00 pm

[Our Collective Experience: Hear us now, act now. Survivors share insights on prevention and intervention of child sexual abuse](#)

[Caroline Brunne](#), [Deb Howarth](#), [Liz Hudson](#), [Tessa Spowart](#), [Tutie Wilmott](#), [Emma Hakansson](#), [Portia Freeman](#), [Harriet Tscherkasky](#)

In this Keynote, adults offer their lived experience of child sexual abuse to emphasise the findings of Australian Childhood Foundation's survey report, which heard from hundreds of survivors about the topics adults must understand in order to prevent further abuse. The survivors you will hear from are a part of our ongoing work to include mandatory child abuse prevention education in Australia's Working With Children Check.

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Keynote: Speaker to be announced soon

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 2

Keynote: Speaker to be announced soon

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Keynote: Triple Trouble: A brain based model of developmental trauma

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 1

4:00 pm

[Triple trouble: A brain based model of developmental trauma](#)

[Jon Baylin](#)

Dr. Baylin will be presenting his "Triple Trouble" brain-based model of developmental trauma describing the effect on the child of damage to core brain networks. "Triple trouble" refers to a child's loss of a sense of safety, fragmentation of sense of self, and suppression of a sense of hope for the future.

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Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 203 & 204

4:00 pm
[A cascade of PACE. Building dyadic developmental practice \(DDP\) into the fabric of residential care for children.](#)
[Kim Golding](#)
Within this master class we will explore the DDP practice model and the context of culture, identity and experience of those working and living within residential homes. We will consider the complexity of supporting these children with histories of developmental trauma and their own unique identity, experience and cultural influences. This will lead us into a consideration of the importance of the key DDP principles of emotional connection, co-regulation and storytelling, and the helpfulness of the attitude of PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy) to achieve this. We will consider how PACE can be cascaded throughout the residential home, bottom-up; top-down and beyond. This will include supporting and caring for the children, the staff, the practitioners and the managers.

Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 210 & 211

4:00 pm
[Mind and body tools and techniques for adults and children in grief](#)
[Paul Denniston, David Kessler](#)
Mind and body tools and techniques for adults and children in grief

Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Room 212 & 213

4:00 pm
[Navigating the quest for connection](#)
[Deb Dana](#)
The autonomic nervous system is the foundation for our lived experience. What begins with our biology becomes the story that shapes our days. Polyvagal Theory provides a guide to the autonomic circuits that underlie behaviors and beliefs and an understanding of the body to brain pathways that give birth to our clients' stories of safety and survival. With this updated map we have practical ways to effectively help clients identify and interrupt their familiar response patterns and strategies to shape their systems toward safety and connection. When we look to the autonomic nervous system, we find a path to creating new, resourcing patterns of connection and can reliably lead our clients into the autonomically regulated state of safety that is necessary for successful treatment. When we speak the language of the nervous system, we can help clients safely tune into their autonomic states, reshape their nervous systems, and rewrite the trauma stories that are carried in their autonomic pathways.

In this workshop you'll learn ways to bring the science of safety and connection into clinical application as you accompany your clients on their healing journeys.

Through presentation and experiential exercises you will learn:

- the language of the nervous system and how to tune into the autonomic story
- an autonomic mapping process to guide treatment- practices that engage the nervous system's natural pathways to regulation
- ways to help clients identify and interrupt their familiar patterns of protection
- skills to help clients find, and savor, experiences of safety

* This masterclass will build on an understanding of the foundational principles, so if you're not familiar with these please take the opportunity to attend the Keynote in the morning.

22 August 2025

Plenary - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 2

9:00 am
[Ngagagee Ngulu Murrup Durra - Hear us, our voices, spirit and heart](#)
[Graham Gee](#)

Child sexual abuse is one of most harmful forms of human violation, and despite four decades of global public awareness, it remains a human rights and public health issue across nations and cultural groups worldwide. Legal systems rarely result in just outcomes and survivors the world over too often experience isolation and the stigma of not being believed. Specialist workforces in this complex area are also at risk of burnout, vicarious trauma and working within fragmented systems.

Associate Professor Graham Gee will present on the efforts of 6 Victorian Aboriginal specialist services and his research team to strengthen workforce wellbeing and prevent burnout, and their recent work on engaging Aboriginal survivors with a lived experience of child sexual abuse to build new initiatives that support healing.

10:00 am
[Finding safety in an uncertain world](#)
[Deb Dana](#)

Nervous system to nervous system, we are connected around the planet. Our biology is at the heart of our capacity to come into connection, see with compassion, and find our way into safe communication. When the world feels unsafe, cues of danger activate survival responses, and we struggle to hold on to hope. When we are anchored in the safety of a regulated nervous system, pathways of connection come alive, and we can travel those pathways in service of healing. Polyvagal Theory gives us a roadmap to find our way to regulation and offers a way forward in uncertain times. Join Deb Dana to look through the lens of the nervous system and explore ways to listen with curiosity as we answer the essential question, "What does the nervous system need in this moment to find safety in connection?"

22 August 2025

Break

22 August 2025

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Advanced Workshop: Deb Dana

Workshop - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 3

11:30 am
[Engaging the Rhythm of Regulation: Polyvagal Skills to Deepen your Practice](#)
[Deb Dana](#)

Building on a foundational understanding of the organizing principles of Polyvagal Theory, we move into exploration of advanced practices that help clients safely engage with states of dysregulation and gently expand states of regulation. This experiential workshop will offer participants the opportunity to learn the techniques of using continuums to bring awareness to the multiple expressions of a state and reshaping practices to change autonomic patterns. You'll learn how to create continuums with clients, see the clinical application in a live demonstration, and be guided in using image, language, and movement to shape new pathways and write new stories. Explore these practical skills and integrate the organizing principles of Polyvagal Theory into clinical practice.

*This will be a more advanced workshop, for delegates who already have a foundational understanding of PVT is important.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Keynote: Caroline Welch

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 212 & 213

11:30 am
[Keynote - Caroline Welch](#)
[Caroline Welch](#)
Keynote - Caroline Welch

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Keynote: Traumatic grief, guilt, transgenerational and collective grief.

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 1

11:30 am
[Traumatic grief, guilt, transgenerational and collective grief.](#)
[David Kessler](#)
Traumatic grief, guilt, transgenerational and collective grief.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Masterclass Part 1: The role of mindfulness in integrating the brain after developmental trauma

Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 2

11:30 am
[The role of mindfulness in integrating the brain after developmental trauma](#)
[Dan Siegel](#)

The term, "mindfulness" actually does not have an absolutely fixed definition in the research world. From a clinical point of view, however, the COAL state of being curious, open, accepting, and loving, offers a practical way to describe the key features of what "being mindful" entails. Investigations reveal that three pillars of mind training leads to this mindfulness state: focusing attention, opening awareness, and developing kind intention or compassion and caring. We will explore how this three pillar mind training leads to five physiological mechanisms of bodily health and an enhancement of neural integration in the brain. Three pillar mind training for traumatized individuals offers a strategy for developing the very aspects of neural integration that have been compromised in developmental trauma: Prefrontal cortex, hippocampus, corpus callosum and the overall connectome are the areas that grow with this therapeutic intervention.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Symposium: A symposium exploring culture and healing

Symposium - [ICTC](#) - Room 203 & 204

This panel discussion will be hosted by Fiona Cornforth.

11:30 am
[A symposium exploring culture and healing](#)
[Danielle Cameron](#), [Judy Atkinson](#), [Graham Gee](#), [Glenda Kickett](#), [Fiona Cornforth](#), [Sue-Anne Hunter](#)
A symposium exploring culture and healing

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Workshop Part 1: BEATS

Workshop - [ICTC](#) - Room 219 & 220

[Therapeutic Beat Making \(TBM\) and Applications of Hip Hop Education for Working with Trauma-Affected Populations](#)
[Scott Griffiths \(aka Optamus\)](#), [Elliot Gann \(aka Phillipdrummond\)](#), [Alexander Crooke](#), [Sam Rhook \(aka Rhooka\)](#)

This three-hour masterclass expands on the content presented in Tuesday's sessions, offering a deeper dive into Therapeutic Beat Making (TBM) and its research-backed applications. Dr. Alexander Crooke will present data from several youth-focused beat making studies, including a school-wide Hip Hop initiative in Sydney, co-developed with Today's Future Sound. Results highlight the impact of beat making on psychosocial wellbeing, identity, regulation, and positive youth development.

The session will also include a live beat-making demonstration and detailed exploration of the TBM model's theoretical underpinnings and practical use by Dr. Elliot Gann of Today's Future Sound. Scott Griffiths (aka Optamus) will share his work delivering Hip Hop-based programming in schools, community centers, prisons, and remote Indigenous communities across Australia. He'll also lead an interactive rhyme writing exercise and speak on a juvenile justice program that achieved a 50% drop in recidivism.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Workshop: Embodying Grief: Moving Through Loss and Trauma

Workshop - [ICTC](#) - Room 210 & 211

11:30 am
[Embodying grief: Moving through loss and trauma](#)

[Paul Denniston](#)

Paul Denniston leads participants through carefully crafted chair-based easy Grief Yoga® practices that support the processing of healing from the pain of all kinds of heartbreak, trauma and loss through movement. He discusses ways that grief can become stuck in the body and will demonstrate how movement, breath and sound can help clients release accumulated emotions to navigate the complex territory of grief whilst strengthening their capacity for authentic connection with self and others.

Learning Objectives:

1. Demonstrate specific movement practices that help clients process grief and strengthen their resilience
2. Apply understanding of embodied grief work to support clients in maintaining and deepening relationships while honoring their losses
3. Explore and embody how play can help process grief and trauma

22 August 2025

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm
Lunch

Break

22 August 2025

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Advanced Workshop: Deb Dana

Workshop - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 3

2:00 pm

[Engaging the Rhythm of Regulation: Polyvagal Skills to Deepen your Practice](#)
[Deb Dana](#)

Building on a foundational understanding of the organizing principles of Polyvagal Theory, we move into exploration of advanced practices that help clients safely engage with states of dysregulation and gently expand states of regulation. This experiential workshop will offer participants the opportunity to learn the techniques of using continuums to bring awareness to the multiple expressions of a state and reshaping practices to change autonomic patterns. You'll learn how to create continuums with clients, see the clinical application in a live demonstration, and be guided in using image, language, and movement to shape new pathways and write new stories. Explore these practical skills and integrate the organizing principles of Polyvagal Theory into clinical practice.

*This will be a more advanced workshop, for delegates who already have a foundational understanding of PVT is important.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Keynote: Caroline Welch

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Room 212 & 213

2:00 pm

[Keynote - Caroline Welch](#)
[Caroline Welch](#)

Keynote - Caroline Welch

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Keynote: Traumatic grief, guilt, transgenerational and collective grief.

Keynote - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 1

2:00 pm

[Traumatic grief, guilt, transgenerational and collective grief.](#)
[David Kessler](#)

Traumatic grief, guilt, transgenerational and collective grief.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Masterclass Part 2: The role of mindfulness in integrating the brain after developmental trauma

Masterclass - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 2

2:00 pm

[The role of mindfulness in integrating the brain after developmental trauma](#)
[Dan Siegel](#)

The term, "mindfulness" actually does not have an absolutely fixed definition in the research world. From a clinical point of view, however, the COAL state of being curious, open, accepting, and loving, offers a practical way to describe the key features of what "being mindful" entails. Investigations reveal that three pillars of mind training leads to this mindfulness state: focusing attention, opening awareness, and developing kind intention or compassion and caring. We will explore how this three pillar mind training leads to five physiological mechanisms of bodily health and an enhancement of neural integration in the brain. Three pillar mind training for traumatized individuals offers a strategy for developing the very aspects of neural integration that have been compromised in developmental trauma: Prefrontal cortex, hippocampus, corpus callosum and the overall connectome are the areas that grow with this therapeutic intervention.

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Symposium: A symposium on integrating whole person care in childhood trauma treatment - hosted by the Australian Society for Psychological Medicine

Symposium - [ICTC](#) - Room 203 & 204

2:00 pm

[A symposium on integrating whole person care in childhood trauma treatment - hosted by the Australian Society for Psychological Medicine](#)
[Karen McLean, Will McIntosh, Thomas Dickson, Johanna Lynch, Naomi Rutten, Siobhan Wilson, Katherine Watson](#)

A symposium on integrating whole person care in childhood trauma treatment - hosted by the Australian Society for Psychological Medicine

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Symposium: Lessons from Survivors: From Prevention to Healing

Symposium - [ICTC](#) - Room 210 & 211

Symposium: Lessons from Survivors: From Prevention to Healing

2:00 pm

[Symposium: Lessons from Survivors: From Prevention to Healing](#)
[Emma Hakansson](#), [Portia Freeman](#)

Symposium: Lessons from Survivors: From Prevention to Healing

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Workshop Part 2: BEATS

Workshop - [ICTC](#) - Room 219 & 220

2:00 pm

[Therapeutic Beat Making \(TBM\) and Applications of Hip Hop Education for Working with Trauma-Affected Populations](#)
[Scott Griffiths \(aka Optamus\)](#), [Elliot Gann \(aka Phillipdrummond\)](#), [Alexander Crooke](#), [Sam Rhook \(aka Rhooka\)](#)

This three-hour masterclass expands on the content presented in Tuesday's sessions, offering a deeper dive into Therapeutic Beat Making (TBM) and its research-backed applications. Dr. Alexander Crooke will present data from several youth-focused beat making studies, including a school-wide Hip Hop initiative in Sydney, co-developed with Today's Future Sound. Results highlight the impact of beat making on psychosocial wellbeing, identity, regulation, and positive youth development.

The session will also include a live beat-making demonstration and detailed exploration of the TBM model's theoretical underpinnings and practical use by Dr. Elliot Gann of Today's Future Sound. Scott Griffiths (aka Optamus) will share his work delivering Hip Hop-based programming in schools, community centers, prisons, and remote Indigenous communities across Australia. He'll also lead an interactive rhyme writing exercise and speak on a juvenile justice program that achieved a 50% drop in recidivism.

22 August 2025

3:30 pm - 4:00 pm
Afternoon Tea

Break

22 August 2025

4:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Closing Plenary - Dan Siegel

Plenary - [ICTC](#) - Plenary 2

4:00 pm

[The seven fundamental needs of a thriving life](#)
[Dan Siegel](#)

By exploring the key needs that we have from birth onward, we can understand how trauma impacts our capacity to thrive. The first core three needs are Agency, Bonding, and Certainty. Sub-cortical neural networks involved in these needs create a "vector" that may underlie how personality emerges from temperament early in life. This view enables us to understand how sub-optimal attachment may intensify temperament in the pathway toward personality. We can see this in a "PDP" view of our lives: Patterns of Developmental Pathways. Trauma makes these PDPs less integrated and therefore more prone to chaos and rigidity. A second set of three needs developing later are ETC: Esteem, Trust, and Control. These secondary needs are also challenged with trauma and are a focus of therapeutic interventions. A seventh, overall need is for Wholeness: a sense of coherence, being grounded, feeling complete. When the first six needs are fulfilled, a sense of Wholeness begins to emerge. We will explore this exciting new view of how temperament, attachment, and personality intertwine in response to trauma and how to use this PDP framework for the healing of trauma.
