

The Kinship Carers Victoria podcast series is directed at the rapidly increasing number of kinship carers across Victoria and brings news, information and advice relevant to all kinship carers, be they formal or informal carers, and be they grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, siblings or close family friends.

[You can access the podcasts series via the QR code here.](#)



PODCAST #38 – LIANA BUCHANAN: A LEGACY OF ADVOCACY FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE (APRIL 2025)

Liana Buchanan has been a tireless advocate for children and young people. Appointed Principal Commissioner for the Commission for Children and Young People in Victoria in 2016, Liana was responsible for key initiatives like the Reportable Conduct Scheme and Child Safe Standards.

In March 2025 she was appointed Deputy Commissioner of the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC).

On her last day as Children's Commissioner, Liana spoke with KCV about the work of kinship carers and about the challenges and successes in her nine years in the role.



PODCAST #37 – NEW RULES GOVERNING THE CIMS (MARCH 2025)



The Client Incident Management System (CIMS) is the program that investigates reports of incidents made against carers who may have mistreated children in their care. Reports are made against kinship carers, but not very often. Over the years, KCV has witnessed some serious breaches of carers' rights, particularly when a report is not upheld. Carers and children have been seriously affected by the unfairness of the processes over the years.

In this podcast, lawyer Fleur Ward talks about how the DFFH has undertaken a review of CIMS procedures and has released a new set of guidelines. Carers need to be aware that it is quite easy for a report to be made and that if one is made, they need to listen to this podcast and contact their support agency immediately.

PODCAST #36 – PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT IS HARMFUL TO AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN (DECEMBER 2024)

Evidence indicates physical punishment can lead to increased anxiety or depression in adulthood, and the likelihood of people engaging in violence in later life.

There are alternative effective discipline practices that don't involve physical punishment and can help increase children's understanding of why certain behaviours are not desirable.

In this podcast we speak with Professor Daryl Higgins, Director of the Institute of Child Protection Studies at Australian Catholic University (ACU) and member of Ending Physical Punishment of Australian Children (EPPAC).



PODCAST #35 – UNDERSTANDING/EMBRACING AUTISM & NEURODIVERSITY IN AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN (SEPTEMBER 2024)



In this podcast, KCV speaks with researcher, writer and educator Dr Emma Goodall, the inaugural Director of South Australia's Office for Autism. Dr Goodall, who is the parent of an autistic adult, has worked extensively in the area of autism, education, research and public policy, and teacher training.

Dr Goodall explains how autism can present differently in different genders, and outlines key things carers need to understand about neurodivergence in order to better support the children and young people in their care.



PODCAST #34 – COMBATTING LONELINESS (JULY 2024)

The effects of loneliness have been studied extensively worldwide, with research showing that being socially isolated or lonely is as bad for your health as smoking, obesity, substance abuse and other mental health issues.

In previous studies by Kinship Carers Victoria, some carers have described feeling almost complete isolation from their former social circles once they became carers.

In this podcast, clinical psychologist Dr Michelle Lim, considered the leading Australian scientific expert on loneliness, discusses the physical and psychological effects of loneliness, the stigma around speaking about it and what carers can do to deal with their own social isolation.



PODCAST #33 – GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS NEED OUR SUPPORT (JUNE 2025)



In this podcast, Director of Grandparents Victoria and Kinship Carers Victoria Anne McLeish speaks with Trevor Cobbold, national convener of Save our Schools. Before retiring, Trevor was an economist with the Australian Government's Productivity Commission and its predecessors for over 30 years. Trevor talks us through the economic and structural inequality in our education system, in particular the under-funding of public schools in Victoria.

PODCAST #32 – FAMILY REUNIFICATION & THE LAW (MAY 2024)

In this video/podcast Director of Kinship Carers Victoria Anne McLeish and lawyer Fleur Ward talk about the complex and vexed issue of family reunification for carer families.

They speak in detail about the reunification provisions in the *Children, Youth and Families Act (Vic)* and how the current one-size-fits-all foundation of these provisions could mean that they are not serving their intended purpose. The rights of carers to access information contained in children's court orders is also clarified.



PODCAST #31 – CYBER SAFETY FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE (APRIL 2024)



Children and young people spend significant amounts of their lives online in the cyber world, but how do we ensure that their online experiences are safe?

In this podcast we speak with Susan McLean of cyber safety education organisation Cybersafety Solutions. Susan is acknowledged as Australia's foremost expert in the area of cyber safety and young people, and answers many of the questions carers have to help them help children and young people navigate their digital world safely.

PODCAST #30 – DIET & NUTRITION FOR NEURODIVERSE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE (MARCH 2024)

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

Nikki Valentini, Clinical Nutritionist, functional medicine practitioner and Director of SuperNature Nutrition, joined Kinship Carers Victoria to speak in depth about the effect of diet/nutrition on children with autism, ADHD, OCD and other types of neurodiversity.

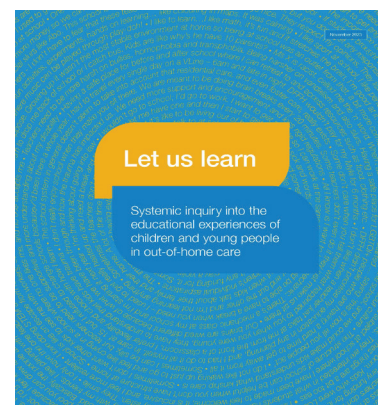


PODCAST #29 – ISSUES WITH EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUT-OF-HOME-CARE (JANUARY 2024)

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

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

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



PODCAST #28 – GRIEF AND LOSS (DECEMBER 2023)

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

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



PODCAST #27 – PREPARING FOR ACCESS VISITS (NOVEMBER 2023)



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

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

In this podcast, we speak with Adam Lyons, Managing Director of Lancaster Consulting, who addresses some of the more common issues carers face in preparing the children in their care for access visits and outlines strategies for debriefing children afterwards. A resource booklet on this issue is available online via the KCV website or by calling the office.

PODCAST #26 – THE BENEFITS OF PLAY (OCTOBER 2023)

Relaxing
for self-care



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

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



PODCAST #25 – NUTRITION (AUGUST 2023)



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

Eating
for self-care



In this podcast we speak again with Nikki Valentini, Clinical Nutritionist, functional medicine practitioner and Director of SuperNature Nutrition on a broad range of current topics

regarding nutrition. Nikki answers some of the more common questions from carers and others regarding this topic.

PODCAST #24 – CARER LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT (JULY 2023)

**Self-care for
Thriving**



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

However, DFFH has set aside considerable funding to support learning and development for

carers via Carer KaFE.



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

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

PODCAST #23 – THE IMPORTANCE OF QUALITY SLEEP (APRIL 2023)



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

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

Sleeping
for self-care



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



PODCAST #22 – BENEFITS OF HOBBIES & OTHER PURSUITS (APRIL 2023)

Hobbies for self-care



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

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

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



PODCAST #21 – THE BENEFITS OF EXERCISE (FEBRUARY 2023)



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

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

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

Exercising for self-care



PODCAST #20 – RELAXATION TECHNIQUES FOR CARERS (NOVEMBER 2022)

Relaxing for self-care



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

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

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



PODCAST #19 – DIET & STRESS (OCTOBER 2022)



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

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

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

Eating
for self-care



PODCAST #18 – CONNECTING WITH OTHERS (SEPTEMBER 2022)

Connecting
for self-care



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

This podcast – as part of Kinship Care Week 2022 – provides suggestions

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



PODCAST #15 – SELF-CARE FOR KINSHIP CARERS & HOW TO PREVENT BURNOUT (SEPTEMBER 2021)



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

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

**Self-care for
Thriving**



PODCAST #13 – SLEEP & WELLBEING (JUNE 2020)

Sleeping for self-care



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

Dr Weinberg discusses the effects sleeping poorly or well can have on a person's physical and psychological health and suggests a series of valuable

tips on how carers can improve their own patterns of sleep as well as those of the children or young people in their care.



PODCAST #12 – CREATING HAPPINESS (APRIL 2020)

"This majestic book has much wisdom to savor and practical steps to help you navigate life's many forks. I promise it will delight!"
—DEEPAK CHOPRA

THE
TWO MOST
IMPORTANT DAYS

HOW TO FIND YOUR PURPOSE—
AND LIVE A HAPPIER, HEALTHIER LIFE



SANJIV CHOPRA
AND
GINA VILD

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

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

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

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

Self-care for Thriving



PODCAST #11 – KCV LONGITUDINAL STUDY REPORT (JULY 2019)

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

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

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

Kinship
Carers
VICTORIA

The KCV longitudinal study of kinship
care families, 2011-2019 and beyond



PODCAST #10 – THE HEALTH OF CHILDREN IN KINSHIP CARE (MAY 2019)



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

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

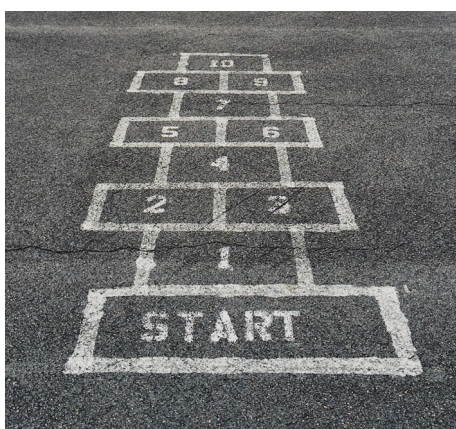
PODCAST #9 – THE ROLES THAT GRANDPARENTS PLAY SURVEY REPORT (APRIL 2019)

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

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



PODCAST #5 – LOOKOUT CENTRES (AUGUST 2018)



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

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

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



PODCAST #4 – KINSHIP CARER WELLBEING (JULY 2023)

Hobbies
for self-care



This podcast again addresses the issue of carer wellbeing.

Director of Kinship Carers Victoria (KCV) Anne McLeish talks about how KCV works to better protect and promote carer wellbeing and

about the various projects KCV employs to do so.

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



PODCAST #2 – THE IMPORTANCE OF KINSHIP CARER WELLBEING (MAY 2024)



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

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

Connecting
for self-care



PODCAST #1 – WELCOME TO THE KCV PODCAST SERIES (APRIL 2018)

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

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

