

Perinatal support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents who have experienced complex childhood trauma.

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Investigators' report and project update

We are pleased to share the seventh *Healing the Past by Nurturing the Future* (HPNF) project newsletter which we circulate three times a year.

We hope you have been managing to stay safe and well during these very challenging times. We are now conducting 'phase 3' of the project, which includes evaluation of questions to include in an Aboriginal Complex Trauma Questionnaire. We have recruited a fabulous team of experienced Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal interviewers and conducted online interviewer training. This includes Dr Carlie Atkinson, Jill Faulkner, Dr Yvonne Clark, Karen Glover, Tahnee McBean, Pam McCalman, Dr Ngaree Blow, Rachel Reilly, Alison Elliott and Kimberley Harrison. Training was online rather than face-to-face – and thanks to Hannah for organising the virtual games and self-care activities that helped to make sure we still had a fun time. We feel very confident parents will be in safe hands with this deadly bunch of interviewers.



Dr. Carlie Atkinson



Jill Faulkner



Dr. Ngaree Blow

We have made some changes to our approach in the light of COVID-19, including offering online teleconference or phone interviews, and including some additional questions about COVID-19 experiences.

Ethics has now been approved in all three jurisdictions (Victoria, South Australia and Northern Territory). Thank you to Cindy Woods and Hannah Whetham for your incredible work on this, and we are looking forward to starting recruitment soon!

Working with DHHS COVID-19 response team

[Associate Professor Catherine Chamberlain](#) has been working with the DHHS Covid-19 response team three days per week since March 2020. Cath has been part of the massive response team who are tracking and tracing, collecting data and responding to a huge number of inquiries regarding COVID-19 and is now an epidemiologist on the COVID DHHS intelligence team. [Dr. Cindy Woods](#) is coordinating the *Healing the past by nurturing the future* project three days per week while Cath is working with the response team.

Carol Reid – My PhD COVID-19 bubble: travelling nowhere but getting stuff done

Since commencing with the *Healing the Past by Nurturing the Future* project at La Trobe University in February 2019 I had made a weekly trip from my home in Orrvale near Shepparton to the Bundoora campus. This travel routine of preparing for a two day stay and five-hour round trip has stopped as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions. Now studying full time from home, the Pandemic impact continued to unfold as the seasons changed from autumn to winter. This has meant my PhD journey has become a different type of travel bubble.

In my PhD bubble of working from home I have really missed the face-to-face casual conversations at the Judith Lumley Centre for inspiration and as part of social connectedness. The zoom platform has been my travel corridor to supervisors, colleagues and other students. These meetings are important for interaction and updates but are exhausting in terms of missing social cues to aid in interpretation and understanding.

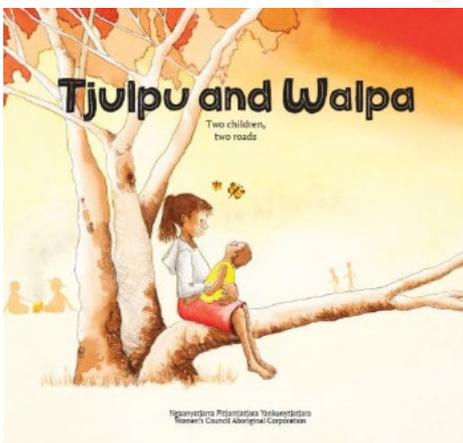
Positively, the space in the bubble for 'getting stuff done' has been helpful for writing, re-writing, reflecting and re-writing again. Which, from the experiences shared by many others, this is an important part of the PhD journey. This space has also been filled with amazing support and care with many casual check-ins through emails opening with 'how are you' – very meaningful words in these challenging times. So, take care everyone I am looking forward to reconnecting when restrictions ease. Travel to Orrvale is open and it is a great place to visit in winter and the fruit trees in full blossom are glorious in the spring.



Carol Reid's garden in Orrvale near Shepparton



Carol Reid PhD student with the *Healing the Past by Nurturing the Future* project



Tjulpu and Walpa NPY Women's Council picture book is for community workers, parents, families and communities; working together to grow strong and happy children.



The Healing the Past by Nurturing the Future: Cultural and emotional safety framework

Publications

'The Healing the Past by Nurturing the Future: cultural and emotional safety framework' has been published in the *Journal of Indigenous Wellbeing Te Mauri – Pimatisiwin*. Link to [full article](#). A plain language research summary of this article has been prepared by Hannah Whetham and is [now available](#).

The Framework guiding the HPNF project was developed to ensure safe research processes, drawing on Aboriginal meanings of social and emotional wellbeing. It is designed to keep parents, service providers, project staff, investigators and stakeholders, and the Aboriginal community safe, both emotionally and culturally. Safety (cultural and emotional) is at the forefront of a set of core values that underpin the conceptual framework for the HPNF research project and is essential when working and collaborating with others in the context of complex trauma.

The Lowitja Institute COVID-19 Resources and expert register Database

[The Lowitja Institute](#) has published a [COVID-19 Resources database](#) bringing together a number of national and international resources. These resources have been developed by various organisations and collaborations to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other First Nations peoples, organisations and communities. The database includes COVID-19 information, important recommendations, and mental health resources. There is also an expert register for people to seek or offer support during COVID-19.

Resources

We are pleased to share the following Resources that can be accessed by clicking on the below links:

[Wellmob](#) - Social and emotional Wellbeing online resources for our Mob

[ACEs Trauma Informed Guides, Presentations, & Self-Assessment Tools](#)

[OACAS Library Guides - Trauma and Child Welfare](#)

10 KEY INGREDIENTS FOR TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

As health care providers become aware of the harmful effects of trauma on physical and mental health, they are increasingly recognizing the value of trauma-informed approaches to care.

WHAT IS TRAUMA?
The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) describes trauma as events or circumstances experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening, which result in adverse effects on the individual's functioning and well-being.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA ON HEALTH?
The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study, conducted by the CDC and Kaiser Permanente, revealed that the more an individual is exposed to a variety of stressful and potentially traumatic experiences, the greater the risk for chronic health conditions and health-risk behaviors later in life.

HOW CAN PROVIDERS BECOME TRAUMA-INFORMED?
Trauma-informed care acknowledges that understanding a patient's life experiences is key to potentially improving engagement and outcomes while lowering unnecessary utilization. In order to be successful, trauma-informed care must be adopted at the organizational and clinical levels.

Organizational practices involve the culture of a health care setting to address the potential for trauma in patients and staff:

1. Lead and communicate about being trauma-informed
2. Engage patients in organizational planning
3. Train both clinical and non-clinical staff
4. Create a safe physical and emotional environment
5. Prevent secondary traumatic stress in staff
6. Build a trauma-informed workforce

Clinical practices address the impact of trauma on individual patients:

7. Involve patients in the treatment process
8. Screen for trauma
9. Train staff in trauma-specific treatments
10. Engage referral sources and partner organizations

For more details, read the brief, *Key Ingredients for Successful Trauma-Informed Care Implementation*. Visit www.TraumaInformedCare.chcs.org.

Trauma-Informed Care Implementation Resource Center





Self-Care during COVID-19

- We are delighted to share resources inspired by Indigenous peoples from around the globe and developed by Richard F. Mollica, Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and colleagues. Link to the below [resources](#);
- Animal Metaphors for Self-Care during the COVID-19 crisis
- 10-Point Toolkit and Pocket Card for Self-Care During the COVID-19 CRISIS
- HPRT New Self-Care Protocol

Working from home during COVID-19

Since the COVID-19 pandemic was declared by the World Health Organisation on 11th March, 2020 and physical distancing measures introduced by the government, the HPNF team have been working from home with meetings conducted via zoom or teams. Video conferencing has become the primary means of communication during the pandemic and it is a great way to stay in touch and interact with the team while we are apart. Staying in touch and feeling part of a community is an important aspect of keeping morale and engagement high. Our team has creatively found ways to use video conferencing to continue working together in activities such as writing workshops, team data coding, and editing documents as well as the usual meetings.



Image: Diane Baker Unsplash

In many Indigenous cultures, hawks are believed to be messengers of the spirit world. With their keen vision they can see what is unseen. From Animal Energies Harvard Trauma Programs 2020

Pictured right: Healing the Past by Nurturing the Future project members left to right – Associate Professor Catherine Chamberlain, Dr. Shannon Bennetts, Ms. Leanne Slade, Dr. Yvonne Clark, Dr. Carlie Atkinson, Dr. Cindy Woods, Dr. Graham Gee, Ms. Shawana Andrews, Dr. Deirdre Gartland, Miss Tanja Hirvonen, Ms. Karen Glover

Self-care tip 😊

Health Check: three reasons why sleep is important for your health

Many of us don't get enough sleep on a regular basis, but not getting enough sleep can have significant implications for our health.

*<https://theconversation.com/health-check-three-reasons-why-sleep-is-important-for-your-health-41176>