

Perinatal support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents experiencing complex trauma.



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Investigators' report

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

We hope you have been enjoying time with family, friends and loved ones after a challenging 2020. Like everyone, we have had to change the way we do things in a COVID-19 world. This included suspending face-to-face work and trying to do what we can online via Zoom and phone calls. It's definitely been challenging as we progress the 'Phase 3' activities, which include interviews with 173 parents to develop an Aboriginal Complex Trauma and Strengths Questionnaire (ACTSQ), and a final round of discussion groups with parents and perinatal care workers about the co-design plans.

2021 marks the final year of this four-year funded project, and we have been busy submitting proposals to translate the co-design plans into action – the fun part!! Please do get in touch anytime to chat about these.

Please help with this research

We need parents help to develop a questionnaire to improve support for parents who have experienced bad or hurtful things in their own childhood.

Do you live in Northern Territory, South Australia, or Victoria?

Are you Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?

Are you or your partner pregnant or have a child up to 5 years old?

What's involved? Two separate interviews with Deadly trained Indigenous or non-Indigenous interviewers (30 mins to 1 hour each). You will not be asked to share your personal stories and any information you provide will be strictly private and confidential.

We will provide supermarket vouchers, a thank you gift and a book for your child for your time. If you would like to know more, please click [here](#).

New Project Staff



Dr. Anni Hine Moana



Dr. Lindy Baxter



Antonia Burke

Welcome Anni

[Dr. Anni Hine Moana](#) has recently joined the team as a Research Fellow.

Prior to this role, Anni developed material for and taught into a number of subjects in the School of Psychology and Public Health at La Trobe University, and works on the development of therapeutic programs at Uniting ReGen Alcohol and other Drug Service.

In 2018 Anni completed a doctoral research study 'Looking at Our Own History Book': Exploring Through the Stories of Aboriginal Women the Relationship Between Shame and Problems with Alcohol and has recently completed a chapter for a book on the relationship of researchers to 'the researched'. Research interests include the significance of language, issues of power and privilege in the development of therapeutic relationships and the effects of settler-colonisation on indigenous populations.

Welcome Lindy

[Dr. Lindy Baxter](#) is an early career researcher, having completed her PhD by publication in 2019. She has a background in education and her PhD research focus was the school experience of urban Indigenous students, and in particular, exploring the influences for student attendance and how attendance impacts student achievement. Her recent research project has been evaluating the efficacy of the innovative Reflective Circle Education Model in socially disadvantaged regional primary schools. The model was designed to foster wellbeing in the education community through supporting teacher wellbeing and enhancing professional practice for teachers educating students with traumatic backgrounds and associated challenging behaviours.

Welcome Antonia

Antonia Burke is a Gurdanji (Borroloola) woman based in Darwin, NT. She completed a Graduate Certificate in Indigenous Trauma Recovery Practice (UoW) and is the North Australia Director and Lead Facilitator of National We Al-li Programs, including Integrated Healing Approach workshops.

Antonia is also an Associate Faculty Member of Gestalt Therapy Australia and a Lecturer at Griffith University in the School of Human Services and Social Work. She has served on Queensland's Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council Advisory group. She has delivered educational programs on cultural healing practices, trauma response strategies and diversionary programs in Youth Justice, as well as federally-funded National Health Promotion programs increasing child health checks.



[Associate Professor Catherine Chamberlain](#) and [Dr. Stacey Hokke](#) meet at La Trobe University to work on evidence reviews for the first time in 12 months since COVID-19 lockdowns.

Project update

Evidence reviews

The team are busy progressing work on evidence reviews, with Stacey leading a qualitative review of parents' experiences from 6 weeks to two years after birth; and Carol finalising a protocol for a Cochrane Review of Interventions to support parents experiencing complex trauma.

Discussion groups

Two papers are currently under review by journals, one outlining the discussion group with the Deadly Nannas: and a second outlining the first round of discussion groups with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents. We will share these as soon as they are available.

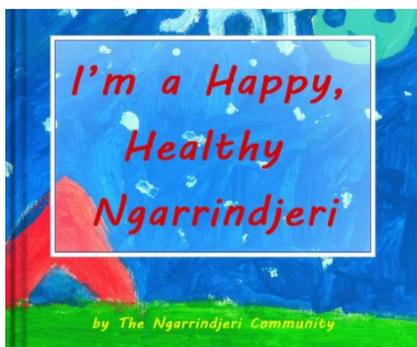
We are starting to plan for the second round of parent discussion groups and service provider discussion groups, for later in 2021 – watch this space 😊! These will involve talking about proposed plans and exploring both the acceptability and feasibility in depth, which will be critical for working towards sustainable effective change.

Workshops

Cindy, Carol, and Graham are working on, respectively, papers describing strategies to improve awareness and safety in maternity care, support strategies, and the process of developing the Aboriginal Complex Trauma and Strengths Questionnaire. These will be submitted to journals and made available as soon as possible.

Parent interviews

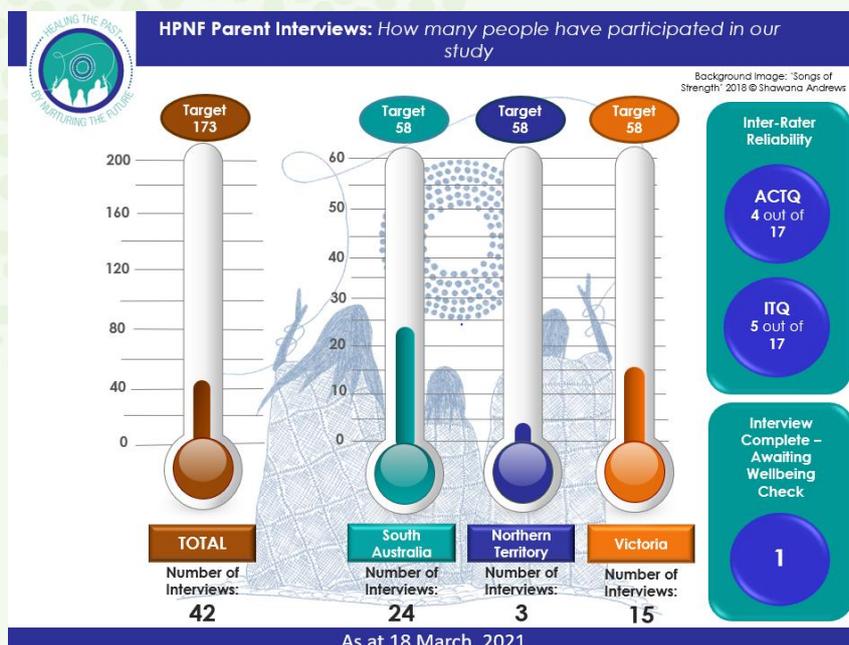
Thanks to all the parents helping develop the ACTSQ. We will need to finish up interviews by June 2021 – so please do get in contact if you can help 😊



Moorundi Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service joined forces with Headspace and schools in their catchment area to create this book as a promotion, prevention, and early intervention resource.



"Natures Healing" Organic Tea Blend Lemon Myrtle & Wild Raspberry Leaf Blend is offered to parents as part of their thank you gift pack



HPNF Parent Interviews: How many people have participated in our study? (developed by Dr Shannon Bennetts)

The Lowitja Institute 2021 Scholarships

The Lowitja Institute has released [Scholarship opportunities for 2021](#). In 2021, the Lowitja Institute is offering three types of scholarships.

- [Postgraduate top-up Scholarship](#)
- [Graduate Certificate](#), and
- [Certificate IV](#).

For further details on each of the available scholarships, including eligibility criteria and application form, please go to the Lowitja Institute [website](#).

Is it time for trauma-informed public health?

The Australian Partnership for Preparedness Research on Infectious Diseases Emergencies (APPRISE) grant team have been working hard to develop a framework for trauma-informed public health emergency responses for First Nations people. This work includes:

1. A scoping review of trauma-informed public health emergency responses (due to be completed in June 2021)
2. Analysis of the impacts of COVID-19 on First Nations families
3. A key stakeholder workshop to reach consensus on what needs to be included in the framework – date to be confirmed for second half of 2021.

Please do get in touch if you are interested in knowing more about this work.

SNAICC Family Matters National Week of Action

Together with a growing coalition of colleagues, we have been working to develop a SNAICC consortium Position Statement and call to action; *Implementing effective therapeutic support to prevent removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies from parents in maternity settings*.

This will be a focus for the Family Matters National Week of Action, with a presentation from 12-2 pm on Friday 14th May, 2021. Please see details in a [link to the Family Matters National Week of Action page](#) – the theme is **#OurMobsMatter** – and groups are welcome to register their own events for the week at that link. If you are interested in joining this coalition or finding out more, please email us at hpnf@latrobe.edu.au.



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Self-care tip ☺

Why you should do something for yourself every day.

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/personal-best/pillar/supporting-yourself/why-you-should-do-something-for-yourself-every-day>



Australia's National Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research

