

HELPING CHILDREN & FAMILIES Association Inc (HCFA)

Newsletter JUNE 2021

It has been busy in the HCFA office over recent months! [referrals, volunteer interest, new computer, tidying] We remain very grateful to our supporters, and inspired by the small things we do that make a difference in the lives of local families and children.



VOLUNTEER TEAM NOMINATION



The volunteers who support families through HCFA are the backbone of what we do. As a team, our volunteers visit local families weekly (in most cases), providing a connection with the community, a friendly face and someone to give the primary carer for children five and under a little time when their attention can be undivided on something - themselves, their home or attending to emails or phone calls without interruption.

It is a pleasure to have nominated the volunteer team in the team category for an award. While the award was granted to Meals on Wheels, the work of HCFA volunteers is greatly appreciated by the families visited.

Our long-term volunteer home visitors (plus three management volunteers and one on leave) are encouraged by some new faces. **Welcome to Neek, Mark, Carmel and Sally!** If you know anyone who would be able to help with our website, it could use an overhaul!

Volunteers who attended the New England Family Support Service Early Years Conference shared with a small group of others what they learned about culturally responsive practices supporting early communication, partnership with Aboriginal agencies, anxiety and autism, the impact of trauma on young children and building hope with clients. If anyone is interested in material from this conference, contact coordinator@hcfa.org.au.

FAMILIES

HCFA's eight volunteers currently support nine families with two referred families yet to be accepted into the program.



MEMBERS - LIFE MEMBERSHIPS GRANTED

The Management Committee decided recently to honour two members with lifetime membership in recognition of their longstanding support and contribution to HCFA. Here is one reply, the other will be in the next newsletter.

My dear HCFA colleagues,

I'm ... surprised and delighted ... to find an invitation to be a Life Member of HCFA. Of course I accept while feeling honoured. ... here is the story behind my membership.

When I retired I was angry ... & wanted to do something to help families in crisis & dysfunction. ... the group "Pyjama Angels" (was) setting up in NSW. (These read stories to children in adoptee situations.) I spent some time expressing support for them, offering to co-ordinate for them in Northern NSW. In the end they hadn't enough funding for this & concentrated on Sydney & area. I was disappointed and then, in the Express was an article about HCFA & a photo of the first co-ordinator. This was just the type of organisation I wanted to join. And there it started.

HCFA has so many excellent features, not the least the policy of doing what the client wants at the time. This is an inspired approach, in that it avoids the temptation to "fix" the situation as if we know better.

I thank the Committee from the bottom of my heart and hope I can continue as a supporter/member for times to come.

The Association has shown great resilience & let's hope it stays.

Cheers, Christine.

FINANCES



After an interview on 2ARM Community Radio, we were asked if we had a donation portal on our website. We now have the online portal at [Give Now!](http://www.givenow.com.au/helpingchildrenandfamilies) (www.givenow.com.au/helpingchildrenandfamilies) Every small amount helps, which is why membership fees (\$5/year) are so low. If you can contribute even a small amount, you can do it online or make a deposit to our account at RAB.

ACTIVITY

Our volunteers cooked sausages at Bunning's on a cold, though not too inclement day, June 20th, raising between \$200 - \$300 for HCFA. It was a good run-through for the new procedures. Thanks everyone!

IN THE COMMUNITY

[Share the Dignity](http://sharethedignity.org.au/end-period-poverty/dignity-vending-machines) (sharethedignity.org.au/end-period-poverty/dignity-vending-machines) works to make a real, on the ground difference in the lives of those experiencing homelessness, fleeing domestic violence, or doing it tough. AT Armidale Library a #PinkBox Dignity machine was installed in the downstairs Unisex toilet. PinkBox machines dispense free period packs including 6 tampons and 2 pads.

NEEDING A HAND? HAVE A HAND TO LEND?
IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO RAISE A CHILD -
SPEND 2 HOURS A WEEK WITH A FAMILY WITH CHILDREN UNDER 6 YEARS

