



## NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

**GET YOUR RESEARCH,  
NEWS, MEDIA  
RELEASES,  
RECRUITMENT TRIALS,  
EVENTS OUT THERE!!**

*Submissions by end  
September for our next  
issue out in October*

**Social Media  
submissions  
(TWITTER, FB AND  
LINKEDIN):**

*Submissions open  
anytime*

**Submissions must align  
with HDA:**

We aim to promote, facilitate and enable multidisciplinary research to advance understanding of healthy development, ensuring the physical, psychological and social health of infants, children and adolescents.

## OUR PARTNERS

### PLATINUM



### GOLD



**University of  
South Australia**



**Flinders  
University**

### SILVER



**Government of South Australia**  
Department for Education



**Government of South Australia**  
Women's and Children's Health Network



Women and Kids



**Government of South Australia**  
Department for Child Protection

### BRONZE



# UPCOMING HDA EVENT



Join us for the **Healthy Development Adelaide (HDA)** forum on **Mental health specialist nurses, working with young and diverse populations**. This forum is held in conjunction with our partner organisation the Women's and Children's Health Network.

**CHANGE:::::** The forum will now be held live online via zoom on Thursday 4 August, 5.30-7.00pm.

Mental health issues for children and young people are increasing with COVID-19 having a significant impact. Mental Health Nurses have a pivotal role to respond and care for these children and young people. This HDA presentation shares the diverse roles of nurses within the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and how their work supports the mental health and wellbeing of young people in a range of settings.

## OUR SPEAKERS

**Tim Crowley**, Nursing Director / Manager - Acute and Statewide Services / Nurse Practitioner – Complex Care and Trauma Mental Health, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Women's and Children's Health Network - **Care integration considerations for children and young people with acute and complex mental health concerns during the COVID pandemic. Reflecting on developments and the role of CAMHS nurses.**

**Tom Sheppard**, Nurse Lead / Clinical Coordinator – Emergency Mental Health Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Women's and Children's Health Network - **Clinical practice approaches in supporting young people with acute psychological distress during the pandemic.**

**Dr Monica McEvoy**, Multicultural Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Women's and Children's Health Network - **Reflections on working in the community to meet the mental health needs of children, young people and families from CALD backgrounds, and the impact of COVID on newly arrived young people and families.**

**Jorja Terrell**, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Nurse Practitioner – Forensic, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Women's and Children's Health Network - **Caring for youth involved in the youth justice system during COVID period.**

## OUR CHAIR

**Dr Jenny Fereday** (HDA Ambassador), Executive Director of Nursing and Midwifery, Women's and Children's Health Network, Adjunct A/Professor, University of South Australia

This event is public and open to everyone interested to attend.

For full details and to register go to: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/381254170487>



# UPCOMING HDA EVENT



Join us for the 18<sup>th</sup> annual **Healthy Development Adelaide (HDA) Oration** to be presented this year by **Helen Connolly** on **Keeping Our Promises**.

Keeping our Promises is how I describe to children the treaties, obligations, legislation, policies and procedures made by leaders, governments, agencies, businesses and adults that tell them what they can expect from us and what we promise to do to positively impact their health, wellbeing, learning and safety. The theme also encapsulates the core of my statutory responsibility to provide, promote, and protect child rights and interests, to ensure we adults keep our promises to all SA children.

This HDA Oration provides an overview of what I have learnt during my first term as Commissioner for Children and Young People. What needs to happen for us to be more child focused in policy and practice and the things we adults need to stop and start doing, to ensure we keep our promises to all children to support them to live the best lives they can.

## OUR ORATOR

**Helen Connolly**, South Australian Commissioner for Children and Young People



Helen Connolly became South Australia's first Commissioner for Children and Young People in April 2017. The position was established under the Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016. The Commissioner promotes and advocates for the rights, development and wellbeing of *all* children and young people in South Australia, with a special focus to engage with and listen to children who aren't usually heard. Helen has 30 years' experience as a leader in human services. Throughout her career, Helen has taken an active advocacy role on the main policy issues that impact on the wellbeing of Australian families and children, with a strong focus on early intervention and prevention strategies.

## OUR CHAIR

**Professor Claire Roberts** (HDA Co-Convenor), NHMRC Leadership Fellow / Professor and Matthew Flinders Fellow / Group Leader, Pregnancy Health and Beyond Laboratory (PHaB Lab), College of Medicine and Public Health, Flinders University.

Everyone is welcome. Free to attend.

Tuesday 16 August, 6.00-8.00pm, Napier 102 lecture theatre, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Napier Building, North Terrace, University of Adelaide.

Register here <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/387106625337>

## HDA TRAVEL AND DEVELOPMENT GRANT RECIPIENTS

**Congratulations to our 2022 HDA Travel and Development Grant recipients (round 2)!**

The following HDA members will attend and present their research at international conferences or undertake professional development (courses, lab visits).



**Mary Brushe** - Child Health Development and Education team, Telethon Kids Institute / School of Public Health, University of Adelaide

**Dr Dexter Chan** - Robinson Research Institute, University of Adelaide

**Neha Lalchandani** - School of Public Health, University of Adelaide

**Josh Robinson** - Robinson Research Institute, University of Adelaide

**Andrea Roff** - School of Biomedicine, University of Adelaide

**Dr Lauren Lines** - College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Flinders University

**Dr Louisa Matwiejczyk** - College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Flinders University

**Annemarie Murphy** - College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Flinders University

**Susan Smith** - College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Flinders University

**Najma Moumin** – SAHMRI Women and Kids

**Dian Sulistyoningrum** - SAHMRI Women and Kids

**Dr Rosa Virgara** - Allied Health and Human Performance, University of South Australia



## HDA MEMBER NEWS

### AWARD FINALISTS

#### 2022 South Australian Science Excellence and Innovation finalist



##### **Professor Maria Makrides**

SAHMRI Deputy Director and Women and Kids Theme Leader has been selected as one of three finalists contending South Australia's **Scientist of the Year** award.

Prof Makrides has been chosen for her work leading a multidisciplinary team of more than 70 staff and students that is at the forefront of mother-infant nutrition research in the world. Prof Makrides has led a multitude of clinical studies that have improved the composition of infant foods, seen the inclusion of allergenic foods such as eggs and peanuts to the infant feeding guidelines and established specific nutrient recommendations for pregnancy and infancy worldwide. Most recently, Prof Makrides' team has coordinated the world's first omega-3 screening program for pregnant women, aimed at reducing the risk of preterm birth.

The Awards provide a remarkable opportunity to recognise the work of inspiring Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM) leaders and teams working in research and education institutions, schools, industry and the community.

The Awards will be celebrated in November. Full details on finalists here <https://www.scienceawards.sa.gov.au/2022-finalists>

#### 2022 Australian Museum Eureka Prizes finalist



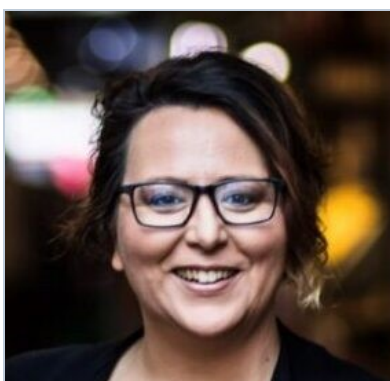
**Dr Katharina Richter**, University of Adelaide has been selected as one of the finalists for the Eureka Prize for **Emerging Leader in Science**.

Bacterial resistance to antibiotics may cause 10 million deaths annually by 2050. A year into her postdoctoral career, Dr Katharina Richter founded her own research group, and is making breakthroughs in superbug infections, wound healing and sterilisation techniques for humans and animals. She also is empowering young people as a mentor and leader of science outreach programs.

The Australian Museum (AM) has announced the 45 finalists selected for Australia's leading science awards, the 2022 Australian Museum Eureka Prizes. The winners will be announced on 31 August via a live broadcast event.

For further details and the full list of finalists can be found here.

<https://australian.museum/get-involved/eureka-prizes/2022-eureka-prizes-finalists/>



#### **New SA Guardian for Children and Young People appointed**

Eastern Arrernte woman **Shona Reid**, who is currently CEO of Reconciliation SA, will take over from outgoing Guardian Penny Wright on August 1.

She will also assume the roles of Child and Young Person Visitor, Training Centre Visitor and Youth Treatment Order Visitor – legislated positions which will see her advocate for children in both state care and youth detention over a five-year term. Shona Reid, who has cultural connections in both South Australia and the Northern Territory, is currently co-chair of

the Justice Reinvestment SA Board and also sits on the SA Housing Authority and Youth Training Centre Review boards. Learn more about the Guardian role here <https://gcyp.sa.gov.au>

## HDA MEMBER PROFILE - DR HON YEUNG (DEXTER) CHAN ROBINSON RESEARCH INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE



Hon Yeung (Dexter) Chan is an early career researcher in the field of reproductive biology, with his key interest in the contribution of seminal fluid from the male partner to optimal pregnancy outcomes. The role of seminal fluid in reproduction was once thought to be merely a medium for sperm survival and transport to the egg in the female reproductive tract. However, many studies have clearly demonstrated that seminal fluid also conditions the female tract in a way that may increase the quality of pregnancy, but the underlying mechanism is still unclear.

Dexter's research aims to further the understanding and to define the significance of seminal fluid in the reproductive process, and the female response to signalling factors carried within the ejaculate.

His current research interests include (1) the identification of the regulators of seminal fluid signalling that alter the female response to conception, such as signalling factors in the male ejaculate and receptors for these signalling moieties in the female reproductive tract, and (2) the mechanisms by which semen contributes to gene regulation in the uterus during the peri-implantation phase of pregnancy critical for female receptivity for successful embryo implantation. His vision is to understand how both paternal and maternal factors contribute to normal reproductive processes and may ultimately, improve our understanding of the causes of infertility.

Dexter completed his Bachelor of Science (Biomedical Science) at the University of Adelaide in 2013, followed by the completion of his Honours Degree of Bachelor of Health Sciences in the Reproductive Immunology Group led by Professor Sarah Robertson in 2014, focusing on the role of microRNAs in the regulation of the female immune response to conception. With a strong interest in reproductive biology, he then started his PhD in 2015 under the supervision of Professor Robertson and Dr John Schjenken at the University of Adelaide, where he further investigated the regulators of seminal fluid signalling and their influence on the immunological and gene expression changes in the female reproductive tract during early pregnancy. Dexter has gained recognition for his research, including winning the Trainee Oral Award at the International Society for Developmental Origins of Health and Disease World Congress held in Melbourne in 2019, and being a finalist in the Oozoa Student Award session at the Society for Reproductive Biology Meeting held in Adelaide in 2018 and also in the prestigious Ross Wishart Memorial Award session at the Australian Society for Medical Research (South Australia) Annual Scientific Meeting held in Adelaide in 2021. Since completing his PhD in 2020, Dexter has continued his postdoctoral training with Professor Robertson, focusing on the identification of seminal fluid factors and their impact on the maternal immune system and reproductive tract that may facilitate embryo implantation.

## HDA MEMBER RESEARCH PUBLICATION

### **Quality of life in children with glaucoma: a qualitative interview study in Australia** **Lachlan Knight, Flinders University**



This paper provides recent advances in the childhood glaucoma research space and is the first to detail the lived experience of childhood glaucoma from the perspective of the child. This study marks a milestone movement in the childhood glaucoma research space, as children have become partners in the research process and were given a platform to voice their concerns.

The paper can be found here: <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/12/7/e062754.info>



## RECENT HDA EVENTS

HDA joint forum with the **Australian Association for Infant Mental Health SA branch** on **Understanding Early Trauma**.

Our speakers included **The Hon Katrine Hildyard**, Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, and Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing; **Tessa Kong**, AAIMH SA Branch President / Senior Clinical Practitioner, Child Protection Service, Flinders Medical Centre / Clinical Psychologist, Private Practice; **Dr Liberty Gallus**, Senior Consultant Paediatrician, Flinders Medical Centre, Southern Adelaide Local Health Network; and **Joy Makepeace**, Kamilaroi / Murrawari woman from North Western New South Wales. Our chair was **Professor Claire Roberts** (HDA Co-Convenor), NHMRC Leadership Fellow / Professor and Matthew Flinders Fellow / Group Leader, Pregnancy Health and Beyond Laboratory (PHaB Lab), College of Medicine and Public Health, Flinders University.



Pictured l to r: Professor Claire Roberts, Joy Makepeace, Hon Katrine Hildyard, Tessa Kong and Dr Liberty Gallus.



HDA and Women's and Children's Hospital Grand Round (online) on **Quality improvement in perinatal care – how to use it to make a difference to outcomes that matter**.

Our speaker was **A/Professor Amy Keir**, Consultant Neonatologist at Women's and Children's Hospital, Adelaide, Women's and Children's Health Network and an NHMRC Early Career Fellow with the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI) Women and Kids and the University of Adelaide.

Amy's work focuses on using clinical practice improvement approaches to improve outcomes that matter to families experiencing preterm birth and neonatal care.

Chaired by Dr Jenny Fereday (HDA Ambassador), Women's and Children's Health Network.

## RECENT HDA EVENTS

The annual HDA Women's Excellence in Research Award presentation on **Striving for healthy kids who can move well and be active: opportunities and challenges**.

Our 2022 award recipient is **Dr Margarita Tsiros**, Senior Lecturer in Physiotherapy (Paediatrics), University of South Australia. Margarita leads the Child Health Challenge in the IIMPACT in Health research concentration. She is also the current Chair of the SA chapter of Paediatric Group of the Australian Physiotherapy Association. Informed by her clinical career, Margarita's research strives to optimise the physical health and wellbeing of children and adolescents. Her research has attracted accolades including AMP Tomorrow-maker, Young Investigator and Tall Poppy Science awards.

Chaired by **Dr Anna Kontos** (HDA Co-Convenor), MS McLeod, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Respiratory and Sleep Medicine, Women's and Children's Hospital / Early Career Researcher Committee, Robinson Research Institute, University of Adelaide



## BECOME A HDA MEMBER TODAY ...

Join us in fostering South Australian multidisciplinary research, policy and practice at basic, clinical, social and population levels to enhance the healthy development and wellbeing of Australia's future generations.

HDA membership is open to researchers, PhD students and professionals working in areas relevant to HDA's research.

### Membership benefits

- Access to travel grants (PhD students and early career researchers)
- Access to PhD scholarships
- Eligibility to apply for HDA awards
- Free HDA event attendance certificates towards your continuing professional development points
- Build relationships with people working in areas relevant to the health and development of young children and adolescents
- Contribute your knowledge and expertise to make a difference
- Support HDA into the future

1 year (2022) for \$20 or 3 years (to 31 Dec 2024) for \$50 (excluding GST).

<https://health.adelaide.edu.au/healthy-development-adelaide/get-involved>



## Future fund supports clinical trial on steroid use for pre-term babies

Media Release - 9 June, University of Adelaide



University of Adelaide researchers have been awarded more than \$3 million from the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) to conduct a clinical trial to help determine the most beneficial dose of steroids for babies born pre-term.

The trial will analyse the effects of a single dose of corticosteroids for babies at risk of pre-term birth, compared to the conventional treatment of two doses of corticosteroids administered 24 hours apart and within seven days of birth.

Lead Australian researcher for this clinical trial, University of Adelaide Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Jodie Dodd, said the results would impact the care of women and babies across Australia and internationally, with about 15 million babies born early (before 37 weeks) each year.

"Without some intervention, pre-term babies have a higher risk of inadequate lung and brain development, or early infant mortality," Professor Dodd said.

"The steroids act to stimulate the production of surfactant, which helps the babies' lungs to reduce the work of breathing. Ante-natal Corticosteroids (ACS) have been used in this context since the 1970s, but the optimal dose has never been determined.

"The benefits of using ACS for babies born preterm outweigh the risks, but it is possible that using half the dose will produce the same benefits of lung maturation without exposing babies to longer-term risks and side effects.

"This randomised trial will be conducted with collaborating hospitals around Australia and in Canada, and will allow us to achieve a robust sample size to see if a single dose of the steroid is enough to protect babies from the consequences of being born early."

Recruitment is expected to take three to four years. The trial will collect data on women and babies at the time of birth, and again at the child's second birthday.

The clinical trial will include more than 1500 Australian women and babies and will be completed as part of an international clinical trial partnership, led by the McMaster University and University of Toronto in Canada.

Dean of Medicine and Head of the Adelaide Medical School, Professor Danny Liew, said the important study by Professor Dodd and her colleagues is an example of research that challenges long-standing clinical practice that may not necessarily be the most optimal.

"De-escalation of established therapies, especially those that are associated with potential harm, is a critical area of clinical research, but which receives relatively little attention and funding," Professor Liew said.

## SA Commissioner for Children and Young People ::: REPORTS :::



**More Than a Game**  
What do children and young people think about sport?

Read the report - <https://www.cryp.com.au/ccyp-reports>



**Join the Dots**  
Considering the impact of parental incarceration on children and young people

Read the report - <https://www.cryp.com.au/ccyp-reports>

# How dads can use 'kangaroo care' to bond with their infants

Media Release - 11 July, University of South Australia



An Australian study examining how dads bond with their premature newborns in a neonatal clinic shows the immense power of skin-to-skin contact between father and infant in the initial weeks of life.

For the first time, University of South Australia researchers have documented the experiences of a group of fathers holding their premature and critically ill term babies against their bare chest in a pouch-like position known as 'kangaroo care' or KC.

Kangaroo care mimics the marsupial model where a joey finds warmth and security within the pouch, close to the mother's heart.

This caregiving model is replicated in neonatal wards worldwide, typically with mothers holding their newborn against their bare skin for as long as possible each day to nurture the neurodevelopment of infants and to help bond with them.

The benefits of mother-infant kangaroo care are globally recognised but there is little data on whether fathers and their infants achieve the same outcomes with this method.

Registered nurse and UniSA Masters' candidate Sophia Dong says that while mothers are considered the dominant KC providers, traditional family structures have changed in recent decades

and fathers have long been overlooked.

"We know that kangaroo care provides a variety of benefits for pre-term, low birth weight infants, including lower mortality rates, reduced infections, higher rates of breast feeding, calmer babies and enhanced bonding," Dong says.

"It also reduces parents' mental stress caused by premature babies in neonatal intensive care units (NICU) being separated from their parents."

The fathers who took part in the study reported a "silent language of love and connection" with their infant when they adopted the kangaroo care model.

First-time Adelaide father Joel Mackenzie says he felt an instant connection with his 540-gram daughter Lucy when he held her against his chest two weeks after she was admitted to the NICU.

"Holding her for the first time was one of the best experiences of my life. I felt she knew that her daddy was protecting her and nothing bad was going to happen from then on," Mr Mackenzie says.

"It's a chance that most fathers don't get, and I thought it was important for her development. I was able to hold her for a couple of hours each day and I think that helped her get to know me and vice versa. It was good therapy for me, too, because I felt that I was contributing rather than just being a bystander.

"Lucy settled onto my chest immediately and would hold my hand and pull my chest hair. It was reassuring that she was strong and that she knew my smell. It made me feel more loved than I have by any other person on this planet."

During KC, the skin-to-skin touch activates nerve receptors in mammals that spark certain hormones, reducing pain and stress for the baby and caregiver.

"A child has an innate need to connect with one primary attachment figure which is generally the mother. However, fathers are playing a much larger role as caregivers, including as single parents and same-sex parents," Dong says.

## Young Carers Bursary Program

This program supports young carers to continue with their education and offers 1,000 bursaries of \$3,000 each year to assist with education needs and resources. Young carers across Australia can apply for the program 2023 from 19 July to 13 September 2022.

To register as a young carer and apply for the bursary visit the Young Carers Network website here <https://youngcarersnetwork.com.au/bursary/young-carer-bursary/>



# Keeping children healthy in the first 2000 days of life

Caring Futures Institute - 19 July, Flinders University



Ongoing research led by Flinders Caring Futures Institute and the NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre is bringing together researchers from around the world to transform how we think about childhood obesity and what can be done to prevent it.

An Accredited Practising Dietitian, Dr Brittany Johnson's research focuses on improving children and families' health behaviours, including enhancing diet quality by reducing unhealthy food intake. She says the aim of the TOPCHILD (Transforming Obesity Prevention for CHILDren) Collaboration is to make it easier for parents to keep their children healthy in the first 2000 days of life.

"We know that young children are falling short of meeting diet and activity recommendations, and one in five Australian children experience overweight or obesity by five years of age," Dr Johnson explains. "Early childhood is a period when many behaviours that can contribute to the development of obesity, such as poor eating habits and physical inactivity, are established. These can then track into later childhood and contribute to risk of chronic conditions in adulthood."

To help establish healthy habits and give children the best possible start to life, interventions are constantly being developed by researchers around the world. Dr Johnson describes an intervention as programs or a combination of strategies designed to produce behaviour changes or improve health in babies.

"These can involve home nurse visits or mothers' group participation but can also mean clinicians providing advice to women before baby arrives. Other interventions use technologies, like regular SMS messages, to provide new families with guidance. "By changing behaviours, the interventions are designed to prevent excess, rapid weight gain in those first years. They will often look at different behaviours such as breast feeding and formula feeding practices, early eating habits, and how children are regulating their own appetite. They also promote active play and limiting screen time."

Sleeping patterns are increasingly being considered for preventing obesity, as more becomes known about the impact of poor sleep on child-

hood health. But there's no simple solution to this growing problem. "Interventions are often complex and don't always reach the families who need them most," Dr Johnson says. "We also don't know which interventions need to be delivered to different population groups, nor how widespread they are."

The TOPCHILD Collaboration is bringing together planned, ongoing and completed trials from more than 15 countries. Pulling apart the different forms of information and strategies given to families, researchers from Flinders University are assessing which interventions work the most effectively for specific populations or types of participants.

"We have found around two thirds of interventions are designed to be rolled out to the entire population, while the other third are targeted at one or more specific priority population groups," Dr Johnson says.

The Flinders-led research team is examining materials such as manuals, fact sheets, newsletters, videos, webpages and interview scripts used by facilitators to deliver the individual interventions.

"We are applying a systematic, internationally-recognised coding framework to look at three key features – the behaviours the intervention targets, the mode and style of how the intervention is delivered and the behaviour change strategies used," Dr Johnson says.

The research team aims to identify specific components within each intervention that are particularly effective in preventing and combating childhood obesity, to inform future practice. Dr Johnson says it makes sense to compare as many interventions as possible to get the best possible data analysis.

"By pulling together all trials with individual, row by row participant data, we will have a large sample size. Right now, TOPCHILD Collaboration involves 50 trials representing over 40,000 infant/parent pairs. Whereas childhood obesity was once something limited to high income countries, it's now seen in many low- and middle-income countries too. The project really does have international significance."

Collaborators from the NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre at The University of Sydney are concurrently conducting an individual participant data meta-analysis, considered the gold standard for combining trial data. Future research is likely to assess the feasibility of rolling out specific interventions based on how much they cost to deliver and working with policy makers and practitioners to explore how we can best support translating the project findings to various practice settings.

The Flinders TOPCHILD Collaboration team includes Dr Brittany Johnson, Professor Rebecca Golley and Samantha Pryde.

<https://www.flinders.edu.au/caring-futures-institute/do>

# COVID vaccines for children under 5 are almost here. Here's what parents need to know...

The Conversation - 19 July

**Daryl Cheng**, Consultant Paediatrician & Medical Lead, Melbourne Vaccine Education Centre, Murdoch Children's Research Institute. **Margie Danchin**, Paediatrician at the Royal Children's Hospital and Associate Professor and Clinician Scientist, University of Melbourne and MCRI, Murdoch Children's Research Institute.



COVID vaccines for children as young as six months look set to be available in the coming months, now the Therapeutic Goods Administration has approved the Moderna vaccine for babies and young children.

The vaccine has been approved for children aged six months to five years. However, we need to wait for advice from the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) to provide further scientific advice and recommendations around an immunisation program. Given no vaccines are currently manufactured in Australia, we will also need to wait for availability of supply before the program can commence.

Australia's approval of the Moderna vaccine for this age group follows a similar move in the United States in June.

Here's what parents need to know ahead of Australia's rollout of the Moderna vaccine to these younger children, the last remaining age group to receive COVID vaccines.

## Why vaccinate this age group?

COVID case numbers are still high. So with the threat of Omicron sub-variants and other potential variants, expansion of COVID vaccines to young children will be a welcome relief for many concerned parents and families.

Children are less likely to have severe outcomes or complications from COVID compared with adults. However, they continue to experience high levels of infection. This disrupts their schooling,

childcare and other activities. When they are sick, their parents need to take time off work to care for them. Severe disease can also happen in previously healthy children, and not just in children at higher risk because of underlying medical conditions.

While the total number of admissions to hospital from COVID infection in children is small, a large proportion of these have been children under five years.

That's because they are more likely to need supportive care, such as observation and hydration, than older children.

Children are also at risk of a severe COVID complication known as multi-system inflammatory syndrome. This requires admission to hospital and possibly the intensive care unit. We know vaccination protects children from this life-threatening condition.

The long-term effects and implications of COVID in children are also still not fully understood. Long COVID appears to be much less common in children than in adults, occurring in less than 2–3% of children. So, prevention of infection in children is still a priority.

## My child's had COVID. Do they still need a shot?

Many parents may be unsure of the benefit of vaccines if their child has already had COVID, especially if they weren't that unwell.

However, the World Health Organization says protection from vaccinating someone who has already caught COVID (known as providing hybrid immunity) is stronger than that provided by either vaccination or infection alone.

Importantly, hybrid immunity offers superior protection against severe COVID compared with infection-induced or vaccine-induced immunity alone. However, it is unclear whether this hybrid immunity will persist with new variants.

## The wider family and community benefit too

The benefits of vaccination extend beyond direct protection. The mRNA vaccines (Moderna, Pfizer) reduce transmission of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID, although less so with the Omicron variant.

Nevertheless, the vaccines remain an important way to protect both young children and those around them. They can help to ensure young kids can still go to kindergarten, play with their friends, travel and visit their grandparents.

**Continued next page...**



## Continued..... COVID vaccines for children under 5 are almost here. Here's what parents need to know...

### Does the vaccine work?

The Moderna vaccine is available for children from six months to five years, with two doses needed to complete the course. The dose is one-quarter of the adult dose (25 micrograms instead of 100 micrograms), and should be given at least four weeks apart.

The Moderna clinical trials demonstrated adequate vaccine effectiveness in younger infants and children. It showed a 51% effectiveness against COVID infection in children between six months to two years, and 37% effectiveness in children between two and five years.

It's too soon to say how much protection vaccination will protect preschoolers against multi-system inflammatory syndrome, but we do expect some protection.

### Is the vaccine safe?

Of course, we need to balance the benefits with any risks, and all vaccines have side effects.

In both real-world data and clinical trials, the number and rate of reports of side effects from COVID vaccines in young children are lower than for adults. Most of the common and expected side effects in young children occur in the first 24–48 hours and include a fever, painful arm, headache and tiredness.

There were no serious adverse events such as myocarditis (heart inflammation), anaphylaxis (life-threatening immune reaction) or multi-system inflammatory syndrome detected during the clinical trials for this age group for either vaccine. There are also no currently detected longer-term safety concerns with mRNA vaccines in the paediatric age group.

Once the COVID vaccines are available for this age group, side effects will be monitored and documented through AusVaxSafety and other surveillance systems, as they have been for other age groups, and other childhood vaccines.

*Reliable information about COVID vaccines for children is available from the Melbourne Vaccine Education Centre, the Australian department of health and your child's GP.*

## Resources to boost veggie intake in Aussie kids attending day care



A new package of resources designed to boost the vegetable intake of children attending long day care centres is now available, as part of the VegKIT project involving Flinders Caring Futures Institute researchers.

The independently reviewed resources have been uploaded to the VegKIT Resource Registry with the highest rating for both evaluation and effectiveness and alignment with the Best Practice Guidelines.

Flinders Caring Futures Institute researcher and Healthy Start to Life Lead Professor Rebecca Golley, a nationally recognised expert in childhood obesity and nutrition promotion, says the new package of resources comes with a range of benefits.

"We know that getting kids to eat vegetables can be challenging for long day care centres. Through a range of online training materials, videos and curriculum resources, the new package will support centre staff including management, cooks and educators to increase children's vegetable intake."

Author and children's food literacy advocate Alice Zaslavsky presents the engaging video series. She provides tips on ways to incorporate long day care best-practice guidelines into day to day operations and inspire staff members. Additional resources such as an infographic poster and user guide for the Best Practice Guidelines for Increasing Children's Vegetable Intake, a checklist of simple ideas that work in Long Day Care and a Sample Quality Improvement Plan are also part of the package.

The new resources for long day care centres form part of the VegKIT searchable website, which features projects, programs and research that can be used by health professionals, organisations and agencies in their own settings to support children's veggie intake.

The overall VegKIT project has been funded by Hort Innovation, using the vegetable research and development levy and contributions from Australian Government. Hort Innovation is the grower-owned, not-for-profit research and development corporation for Australian horticulture. The project is underpinned by a consortium of members from CSIRO, Flinders University and Nutrition Australia Victoria Division.

A study found children attending centres using VegKIT resources ate three times more veggies than kids at centres not using the resources. The new resources can be viewed here

<https://www.vegkit.com.au/long-day-care/long-day-care-tools-resources/#LDC-package>

# How do nurses and midwives safeguard children in Australia?

Caring Futures Institute - 19 July, Flinders University



What level of commitment are Australian healthcare workers able to demonstrate when dealing with children at risk of or experiencing abuse and neglect? The nature and scope of Australian nurses' and midwives' safeguarding practices in child-focused settings is being examined as part of important Flinders Caring Futures Institute research led by Dr Lauren Lines.

With a background in paediatric nursing in hospital settings, Dr Lines says she was exposed to sometimes severe cases of child abuse and neglect as well as at-risk children from families experiencing adversity.

"These families experience adversity due to a range of factors and often face unnecessary stigma that discourages them from reaching out for help. There's certainly a role for nurses and midwives to recognise that in the healthcare setting, so we can show empathy to families and encourage them to seek support."

However, with so many competing priorities in a busy healthcare setting, it can be difficult to deliver help where it is needed. Nurses and midwives also face an uphill battle for acknowledgement of the work they do.

"Many of the skills they use are commonly referred to as 'soft skills', so they are often undervalued," Dr Lines explains. "It is about communication, empathy, listening and caring which are critical to building rapport. If clinicians can achieve that, they can then determine what support is required."

"It's clear that if disadvantaged families trust the person providing the care, the clinician can act as a conduit between the different services."

However, nurses' and midwives' roles in safeguarding have not been evaluated in Australia or

overseas, nor are there standards or guidelines in place. Funded by a Flinders Foundation Health Seed Grant, Dr Lines set out to explore the nature and scope of safeguarding practices nurses and midwives currently render in healthcare settings. She spoke to clinicians who work in a range of settings, including hospitals, schools and child and family health, to inform her research.

"Participating nurses and midwives demonstrated they are committed to safeguarding children," Dr Lines says. "It's clear they are very dedicated to doing this and see it as a core part of their role. But it also highlighted there are immense challenges they face when trying to do this work."

"It's a challenge of a health system based on the biomedical model of health and disease and addressing physical issues, but not set up to address complex social issues that can contribute to physical conditions – and often make them worse."

Benefits of clearly articulating nursing and midwifery roles through standards of practice could include enhanced interdisciplinary collaboration and evidence for appropriate professional education, support and resourcing.

"Ultimately, with a unified understanding of nursing and midwifery roles, nurses and midwives would be able to leverage their shared expertise to confidently advocate for children at risk of abuse and neglect," Dr Lines says.

While emphasising the fact mandatory reporting will still be necessary in some cases, Dr Lines sees opportunity for nurses and midwives to be better resourced to enhance the identification of potential problems.

"If we could do that with a public health approach, that addresses core social factors rather than ignoring them, we could prevent kids getting to the point where they are abused or neglected."

Future research will examine how different systems 'talk to one another' and exactly who nurses are likely to contact or refer to when they identify a child at risk.

"By looking at how all the different services work together, we will be investigating where children are falling through the cracks," Dr Lines says.

Dr Lines' co-investigators for the project are Professor Julian Grant, Professor Alison Hutton and research assistant Tracy Kakyo.



## **Centacare's Supporting Children after Separation - Information session**

Parents and children who are living apart often have to deal with the stress of the breakdown of the family as well as making difficult decisions about parenting. The risk of separation impacting negatively on children's well-being is directly associated with parental conflict, parental distress and multiple changes in family structure. Some outcomes include greater levels of poverty, lower educational attainment, poorer health, higher levels of behavioural problems and depressive symptoms and higher levels of smoking, drinking, drug abuse and teenage pregnancy.

Centacare's Supporting Children After Separation Information Session is for separated parents wanting to understand and manage the changes in their family and support their children through the changes. The information session aims for parents:

- To better understand the effects of separation on children
- To better understand developmental needs of children
- To develop more strategies to help children through the separation
- To gain a better understanding of how mediation may help and what will assist you

The information session helps parents develop strategies to allow their children to:

1. Be reassured that both parents love them
3. Have fun – laughter is a great healer!
4. Know that we respect their right to love both parents
5. Know that we understand their feelings
6. Have an understanding of what is happening at an age-appropriate level
7. Know that the separation is not their fault
8. Have consistent care and routine



Available sessions:

**Tuesday 2 August 1:00pm-3:00pm located at 34 Yorktown Road, Elizabeth Park**

**Wednesday 10 August 6:00pm-8:00pm located at 45 Wakefield Street, Adelaide**

**Thursday 25 August 1:30pm-3:30pm **ONLINE** via **ZOOM**.**

Bookings essential. Cost: \$5 per person.

Please contact Centacare on 8215 6700 or email your details to [registrations@centacare.org.au](mailto:registrations@centacare.org.au)

This project is jointly funded by Centacare Catholic Family Services and Department of Social Services.

## **WEBINAR: Working with children who are experiencing or engaging in bullying behaviour**

This webinar is presented by the Australian Institute of Family Studies, and Emerging Minds.

**Wednesday 10 August, 1-2pm AEST**

Presenters: Lesley-Anne Ey, Julie Clifton, Vanya. Facilitated by Nicole Rollbusch.

Childhood bullying is a complex social issue and our understanding of bullying dynamics has evolved over time. The negative impacts of bullying can be observed well into adulthood if there is little or no intervention.

This webinar is designed to support practitioners to:

- understand how childhood bullying impacts on child mental health
- understand the importance of prevention and early intervention in limiting the effects of childhood bullying in adulthood
- be curious about children's understanding and perspectives on bullying and why this is important
- explore strategies to work with children experiencing bullying or engaging in bullying behaviour.

This webinar will be of interest to practitioners working with children and families in a broad range of settings because of the wide reach of bullying involvement. It will be of particular interest to those working with children aged 4–12 years.

To register go to <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/4595541213607275791>

## **SA Women's Health Research Translation Network (WHRTN)**

### **SA Women's Health Research Translation Network (WHRTN) launch**

**Wednesday 31 August 5.00pm to 8.30pm ACST (SAHMRI Auditorium) – in person and zoom**

WHRTN is a national collaboration which spans community, health services and academic institutions led by international multidisciplinary leaders in women's health.

Health Translation SA is working with the other Australian Health Research Alliance (AHRA) WHRTN centres nationally to boost national and international collaboration on women's health and research, build health workforce capacity, develop leaders in women's health, and advance research and translation to deliver impact and better health for Australian women across nine priority areas.

• Preconception, pregnancy, postpartum and intrapartum health of women and babies • Mental health  
• Violence and abuse • Reproductive health • Indigenous health • Chronic disease and preventative health including cancer and heart disease • Healthy ageing • Healthy lifestyle, nutrition, physical activity and the prevention of obesity • Sexual health

**The program will include short presentations and a panel discussion followed by an informal networking opportunity.**

#### **Join us to:**

• Build capacity, create opportunities and connections within the women's health research community in SA • Provide the opportunity for early and mid-career researchers to informally connect with experienced researchers for guidance and input • Hear and share insights relating to the challenges, barriers and successes relating to women health research and translation.

#### **Registration is free.**

Further info here: <https://redcap.sahmri.com/surveys/?s=TKC7344YFM3LWY3N>

## **National Homelessness Conference**

### **National Homelessness Conference**

**8-10 August, Canberra**

The National Homelessness Conference, jointly convened by AHURI and Homelessness Australia, returns as a face-to-face event while also offering a virtual option for delegates unable to travel to the nation's capital.

Conference sessions will allow for in-depth coverage of issues being faced by homelessness service providers including workforce capacity, homelessness in regional Australia, implementation of Housing First, embedding lived experience voices in homeless responses, child protection and many more.

Find out more and register here <https://ahuri.eventsair.com/national-homelessness-conference-2022>

## **Autism SA Workshops**

Autism SA has just released the list of webinars and face to face Professional Development workshops for term 3! We understand that teachers are looking for a whole classroom approach, that is we have designed workshops to empower you with strategies that are beneficial for the entire classroom.

Some of the workshops coming up in August include:

**Developing Independence and success using Visual Schedules**

**Benefits of brain breaks**

**Key Strategies for the Early Years setting**

**Building your understanding for supporting someone with anxiety**

For more information, to discuss your needs, or to book a session, contact the Training and Consultancy Coordinator on (08) 8462 0638 or 0466 008 817 at [training@autismsa.org.au](mailto:training@autismsa.org.au)