



Healthy Development Adelaide  
A Research and Innovation Cluster in South Australia

## NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

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

*Submissions by end  
July for our next issue  
out in August*

**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



### SILVER



### BRONZE



## RECENT HDA EVENTS

### WE'RE BACK WITH 'LIVE' EVENTS!!



Last month we held the HDA and Women's & Children's Hospital Grand Round on **Seeing the small baby: Advanced imaging in detecting and treating fetal growth restriction** presented by **Professor Janna Morrison**, Head of the Early Origins of Adult Health Research Group, Clinical and Health Sciences, University of South Australia.

*Over 25,000 babies are predisposed to having a bigger left side of the heart and cardiovascular disease even before they are born. This is because they did not receive enough nutrients and/or oxygen during pregnancy and were born too small with a heart that has a relatively bigger left side. This project aims to use a combination of advanced MRI techniques and a nutritional supplement to stop these babies from having heart disease by helping them grow better even before they are born!*

Pictured l to r: Professor Janna Morrison with Dr Jenny Fereday



Last month we also held the Healthy Development Adelaide (HDA) and Robinson Research Institute (RRI) Q&A where our expert speakers discussed **Empowering personal change for pregnancy and child health**.

Our speakers included:

- Professor Megan Warin, Research Leader, Robinson Research Institute / Director Fay Gale Centre for Research on Gender, University of Adelaide
- A/Professor Leonie Heilbronn, Group Leader, Obesity and Metabolism Lab, Adelaide Medical School, University of Adelaide / Lifelong Health Theme, SAHMRI
- A/Professor Philippa Middleton, Principal Research Fellow, Women and Kids theme, Aboriginal Communities and Families Research Alliance (ACRA), SAHMRI
- Dr Jessica Grieger, Research Fellow, Robinson Research Institute, University of Adelaide
- Verity Booth, PhD candidate (HDA Scholar), Alliance for Research, Nutrition and Activity (ARENA), University of South Australia
- 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



## UPCOMING HDA EVENT INFANT MENTAL HEALTH IN CHALLENGING TIMES

Healthy Development Adelaide (HDA) and Australian Association for Infant Mental Health SA branch (AAIMH) forum where our expert speakers will discuss and take your questions on **Infant mental health in challenging times** on Thursday 10 June, 5.30-8.00pm



### OUR SPEAKERS

**Dr Ros Powrie**, Perinatal, Infant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Women's and Children's Health Network, SA President AAIMH on **Infant Mental Health in a post-COVID world: Keeping our eyes on infants**

**A/Professor Amy Keir**, Senior Consultant Neonatologist, Women's and Children's Hospital / NHMRC Early Career Fellowship, SAHMRI / University of Adelaide and **Angela Cavallaro**, Clinical Nurse Neonatal Intensive Care, Women's and Children's Hospital on **Implementing family-integrated care in the neonatal unit - approach and challenges**

**Zakiyyah Muhammad**, Masters of Social Work and Accredited Mental Health Social Worker in Private Practice on **My Baby's Mind. Infant Mental Health within CALD and New Arrival Communities**

**Professor Leonie Segal**, Foundation Chair Health Economics and Social Policy, Australian Centre for Precision Health, UniSA / SAHMRI on **Why infant mental health must become a greater priority – from a child, family, societal and economic perspective**

### 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.

Register on Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/154306114743>

## UPCOMING HDA EVENT BENEFITS OF NATURE ENGAGEMENT FOR CHILD WELLBEING AND LEARNING

**Healthy Development Adelaide (HDA) event on Benefits of nature engagement for child wellbeing and learning** on Tuesday 15 June, 5.30-8.30pm

This event is sponsored by the Environment Institute, University of Adelaide



### OUR SPEAKERS

**Minister David Speirs**, Minister for Environment and Water on **Parks 2025**

**Ms Tassia Oswald**, PhD Candidate, School of Public Health, University of Adelaide on **From Screen to Green: Nature as an upstream determinant of psychological wellbeing for young people in a high-tech era**

**Dr Mark Kohler**, Senior Lecturer, School of Psychology, University of Adelaide on **The nature of child learning and wellbeing at school**

**Dr Katherine Baldock**, Program Director, Health Sciences and Public Health, Allied Health and Human Performance, UniSA on **Exploring nature play, nature-based learning and outcomes for children's health, wellbeing and development**

**Dr Elissa Pearson**, Senior Lecturer, Justice and Society, UniSA on **How time and space in nature fosters children's development and flourishing - a practitioner perspective**

**Barb Jones**, (BEd, MEd) Director of Nurtured Learnsapes, Consultancy in Context, Founder of Acacia Bush School Inc, Board member and Coordinator of Acacia Bush Pods on **Time & Tide wait for no person!**

### OUR CHAIR

**Professor Bob Hill**, Director, Environment Institute, University of Adelaide

Register on Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/156048732961>

## Shabnam Kashef, HDA Scholar PhD Publication

### ***Cluster randomised controlled trial of a menu box delivery service for Australian long day care services to improve menu guideline compliance: a study protocol***

Shabnam Kashef, Dorota Zarnowiecki, Victoria Brown, Jennifer C Arguelles, David N Cox, Rebecca K Golley <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/11/4/e045136>

#### **Introduction**

Globally, children are not meeting the recommended serves of the five food group foods, particularly vegetables. Childcare is an opportune setting to improve children's diet quality. This study aims to assess the effectiveness of a menu box delivery service tailored to the long day care setting to improve menu compliance with recommendations and improve children's food intake while in care.

#### **Methods and analysis**

This study will employ a cluster randomised controlled trial and will recruit eight long day care centres, randomly allocated to the intervention or comparison groups. The intervention group will trial the delivery of a weekly menu box service that includes all ingredients and recipes required to provide morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack. The menu boxes are underpinned by a 4-week menu developed by dietitians and meet menu planning guidelines. The comparison group will receive access to online menu planning training and a menu assessment tool for cooks. The primary outcomes are child dietary intake and menu guideline compliance. Secondary outcomes include within-trial cost-effectiveness and process evaluation measures including intervention acceptability, usability and fidelity. If effective, the menu box delivery will provide an easy strategy for childcare cooks to implement a centre menu that meets menu planning guidelines and improves child intake of five food group foods, including vegetables.

#### **Ethics and dissemination**

This study was approved by the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee. Study outcomes will be disseminated in peer-reviewed publications, via local, national and international presentations. Non-traditional outputs including evidence summaries and development of a business case will be used to disseminate study findings to relevant stakeholder groups. Data will be used in a doctoral thesis.

## HDA TRAVEL AND DEVELOPMENT GRANT PARTICIPANT REPORT

**Dr Erandi Hewawasam**, Post-doctoral Research Fellow, ANZDATA Registry, SAHMRI

In April 2021, I participated in the World Congress of Nephrology which was held virtually. This international conference was a fantastic opportunity to present the latest research findings of my research program, as it was aligned with my primary research interests in pregnancy and kidney disease. The conference took place over 4 days (16-19th April). Over 1000 delegates participated in the conference from many countries, including the world's leading experts in kidney care, who showcased their latest science and discussed their novel clinical applications designed to improve kidney health and prevent kidney disease worldwide. It started with a plenary session followed by 4-6 parallel sessions. It was a fantastic opportunity for me to gain further skills and knowledge, as well as network with other participants.

My abstract was selected as one of the best submitted to the conference, thus I was invited to give a 10 minutes presentation on "Maternal characteristics and birth outcomes for mothers receiving kidney replacement therapy: An analysis of linked ANZDATA Registry and Perinatal datasets over 22 years" at the session titled "*Late breaking clinical trials, trial updates and best of abstracts*". This presentation received a large amount of interest, and I was able to discuss and share my research findings with other researchers and clinicians from all around the world. Additionally, I had the opportunity to present an electronic poster. Overall, it was an excellent learning and networking opportunity for me, and has provided me with a number of new contacts for potential future collaborations.

Finally, I would like to thank the HDA travel grant which supported my attendance at the World Congress of Nephrology. It was an invaluable opportunity given to early career researchers at a time when other career development opportunities are scarce!



## NURSES AND MIDWIVES NEEDED FOR RESEARCH STUDY



Are you are Nurse or Midwife working in Australia? We need you for this research study!

This study explores how registered nurses working with children (birth - 18 years) and midwives in all practice models keep children safe from abuse and neglect (safeguarding) in diverse settings (clinical and non-clinical) across Australia.

Participants will be invited to complete a series of online surveys (up to four rounds) over 6-9 months. Each consecutive round will become available after the researchers have analysed the data and updated the survey items. You will be notified by your nominated email address each time the next round becomes available.

For more information and to start the first online survey go here [https://qualtrics.flinders.edu.au/jfe/form/SV\\_1X2UdGZfVYyLIQO](https://qualtrics.flinders.edu.au/jfe/form/SV_1X2UdGZfVYyLIQO)

If you have any questions about participation, please contact Dr Lauren Lines on (08) 8201 7661 or email [safeguarding@flinders.edu.au](mailto:safeguarding@flinders.edu.au)

## BOOST EXERCISE AND CUT COMPUTERS: THE NEW BEST PRACTICE FOR AUSSIE KIDS IN OSHC

Media Release - 20 May, UniSA



Thousands of Adelaide school children will participate in a world-first initiative to increase physical activity and cut screen time in Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) centres across the country.

The biggest of its kind anywhere in the world, the University of South Australia study will address growing concerns about children's sedentary behaviour marked by an increase in regular screen time.

Awarded about \$1.5 million through the NHMRC's Medical Research Future Fund (MRRF) the researchers will work with 162 Australian OSHC centres to implement and evaluate newly established best practice guidelines for children's physical activity and use of screens.

With more than half a million Australian children attending Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) and research showing that 31-79 per cent of OSHC sessions are sedentary, it is an important and timely move.

In Australia, less than one in four children achieve the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity each day. On average, primary school-aged chil-

dren (aged 5-14) spend more than two hours each day sitting or lying down for screen-based activities.

With about 10 per cent of Australian primary school children attending OSHC every week, the guidelines have the potential to affect many children on a regular basis.

Lead researcher, UniSA's Professor Carol Maher, says the initiative could be a game-changer for OSHC centres, helping them better support the health and wellbeing of Australian children in their care.

"For a long time OSHC centres have been concerned about getting the right balance of physical activity and screen time for children in after school care," Prof Maher says.

"Currently, physical activity and screen time practices in Australian OSHC centres are not guided by policy. As a result, practice varies enormously.

"We know that children's activity patterns, including their physical activity and screen time behaviours, have wide-ranging impacts on their physical and psychological health, school performance and wellbeing, so it's really important to get this right."

"For the past five years, we've been working with more than 500 OSHC directors to develop the first national guidelines for children's physical activity and screen time in OSHC. And now, we're at the point of helping OSHC centres implement and embed these into daily practice."

The new guidelines\* encourage free outdoor play which is consistent with research that shows that more than half of children's physical exercise is accumulated through this type of physical activity.

OSHC centres will be recruited from greater Adelaide, greater Perth, and the Hunter New England region of NSW, with the first cohort expected to begin early next year.

### **The SA launch event for the MJA-VicHealth supplement, *Australia 2030: what is our path to health for all?* was held earlier this month.**

There are 7 papers in the supplement plus Dr Sandro Demaio's (CEO, VicHealth) editorial so readers can identify the topics they are most interested in via the titles.

Several South Australian authors were involved in the supplement including Prof Fran Baum (Director, Southgate Institute for Health Society and Equity, Flinders University), A/Prof Carmel Williams (Health Translation SA) and Dr Tahna Pettman (Public Health Academic Consultant).

Read the Australian 2030 supplement open access here

<https://www.mja.com.au/journal/2021/214/8/australia-2030-what-our-path-health-all>

# CHILDREN'S SLEEP AND ADENOTONSILLECTOMY

Media Release - 19 May, UniSA



While a pint-sized snorer may seem adorable tucked up in bed, studies show that children with sleep-disordered breathing are likely to show aggressive and hyperactive behaviours during the day.

The recommended treatment is an adenotonsillectomy – the removal of adenoid and tonsils – not only to fix the snore, but also the behaviour. Yet according to new research from the University of South Australia, while the surgery can cure a child's snoring it doesn't change their behaviour, despite common misconceptions by parents and doctors alike.

Conducted in partnership with the University of Adelaide and the Women's and Children's Hospital, researchers examined children's behaviour at six months, two and four years after an adenotonsillectomy for clinically diagnosed sleep-disordered breathing disorder (SDB). Comparing them to a control group of non-snoring children, the study showed improvements to children's sleep and quality of life, but not behaviour.

Lead researcher, UniSA's Professor Kurt Lushington says the findings provide realistic expectations for parents and practitioners, particularly if the child already has a diagnosis of a behavioural disorder such as ADHD.

"As most parents would attest, when a child has a bad night's sleep, their behaviour reflects this the next day," Prof Lushington says.

"But when their sleep quality is affected by snoring, parents often hope that by fixing this problem, they'll also fix any associated behavioural issues. While I'd love to advise the opposite, this is not necessarily the case.

"Our research shows that a child's quality of life improves following an adenotonsillectomy, which is clearly linked to a more solid, less interrupted sleep. But when it comes to behavioural difficulties, we did not see any significant changes."

Recommended sleep for school-age children (age 5-12) is between 9-11 hours a night. Up to 15 per cent of children snore regularly, with 1-4 per cent formally diagnosed with obstructive sleep apnea syndrome (which leads to breathing repeatedly stopping and starting).

But it's not all bad news.

"In clinical practice at a child's post-operative review, many parents report major improvements in behaviour and attentiveness," Prof Lushington says. "No doubt this is reassuring, but it's probable that other factors are at play – most likely more sleep for the whole family and less worry from the parents, that together translate as a calmer, more attentive and emotionally responsive environment during the day. Beyond this, there is evidence to suggest that intervention much earlier in life may help. We may be leaving surgery too late."

"Previous work conducted by UniSA found that an adenotonsillectomy at a younger age of 3-5 years – may be important. Our previous work has suggested this too, so there is scope for further research.

"At this point, ensuring parents are fully aware of what an adenotonsillectomy can and can't achieve for their child, is vital."

## 2021 Unsung Hero Awards of South Australian Science

These awards aim to recognise those who have not yet received significant recognition for their contribution to science or science communication. There are 2 awards: the **Unsung Hero of South Australian Science** and the **Unsung Hero of South Australian Science Communication**.

**Closing date for applications has been extended to 18 June.**

Criteria and application form are available at:

**<https://www.scienceweek.net.au/2021-unsung-hero-awards-of-south-australian-science/>**

*For any enquiries, please contact:* Rona Sakko, Chair, National Science Week SA Coordinating Committee. 0419 827 723 or email [rona.sakko@gmail.com](mailto:rona.sakko@gmail.com)



## Job insecurity and poor work-life balance affect the whole family, not just workers

Media Release - 14 May, UniSA



Research by UniSA's Centre for Workplace Excellence (CWeX) shows that poor work-life balance and job insecurity can affect the whole family – not just individual workers.

Saturday 15 May is the UN International Day of Families, and UniSA is highlighting research about work-life balance and job security.

While the recent Federal Budget suggests overall unemployment in Australia is on the way down, many sectors are still struggling with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

For industries like tourism, the arts, and higher education, the future is still uncertain, with many workers in these sectors facing increased job insecurity and the potential for poor work-life balance due to challenging work conditions.

While the impact of difficult work situations on an individual's wellbeing has received increased attention in the past year, research from UniSA's Centre for Workplace Excellence indicates more consideration should be given to the effect these factors have on families.

CWeX director, Associate Professor Connie Zheng, has been involved in multiple studies exploring the ways working conditions for one family member can have a flow-on effect for other family members.

"Research shows that work experiences can affect health, quality of life and participation in work or family activities," Assoc Prof Zheng says.

"We can expect that job insecurity and overwork is harmful to employees' well-being and its effects spill over from the work domain to the non-work domain, affecting things like spouse health, children's grade performance and future outlooks, as well as decreased marital functioning with generally much lower levels of life satisfaction."

Given the potential for such pronounced flow-on effects from difficult work situations, Assoc Prof Zheng says that within those industries still facing economic uncertainty, proactive, positive human resources (HR) actions can make a significant difference.

"HR professionals and practitioners should manage this sense of job insecurity among employees through strategic planning," Assoc Prof Zheng says.

"Specifically, if the threat of job loss is high, it is important to take actions for protecting the wellbeing of employees by providing more lead time for employees to gain retraining or reskilling and enable them to search for new jobs. It's also useful to collaborate with other organisations in the community to relocate employees with job loss or reorganising jobs with some forms of flexibility, such as flexible pay or flexi-time.

"This not only reduces the stress for workers and their families, it also means when the economy picks up again, organisations can reinstate these employees with fulltime and fullpay, without experiencing the bottleneck of skill shortage or expenses of recruiting and training of new employees."

### PhD Scholarship opportunity:

#### **Crisis Response in mental health care: Lived experience and philosophy of care**

This project aims to produce high quality research which is an original contribution to the field of crisis response in mental health care. Funded by and undertaken in collaboration with the Neami National Urgent Mental Health Care Centre in South Australia, this research will focus on clinical and peer support based services, novel service design, unique philosophy of care, and innovative governance arrangements.

A Scholarship worth \$37,500 per annum for 3.5 years is available to domestic candidates only. An additional \$2,500 per annum for 3.5 years will be available for project support. Principal Supervisor: Professor Nicholas Procter, University of South Australia

Further information and application here

<https://unisa.edu.au/research/degrees/research-projects#crisis-response-in-mental-health-care-lived-e>

# CAR-T cure for childhood cancer one step closer to clinical trials

Women's and Children's Hospital Foundation



**A revolutionary therapy that homes in on and destroys cancer cells could soon be used to tackle hard to treat cancers, including those commonly seen in children.**

The CAR-T Cancer Immunotherapy Research project is moving closer to its first-in-man clinical trials. The project was developed here in South Australia by WCH researcher and Chief Medical Scientist, Professor Simon Barry, with biotechnology research and development company Carina Biotech.

Initially backed by WCH Foundation funding in 2017, the CAR-T therapy involves genetically modifying a cancer patient's own immune cells (T cells) with a chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) that can recognise and attack the cancer. By using a patient's own cells it avoids the problem of them being recognised as foreign, making the therapy much safer and more effective.

Early CAR-T research has already been shown to have great success in treating blood cancers, but the research team here in South Australia are directing their efforts toward designing a CAR-T therapy for solid cancers. These account for around 30 per cent of childhood cancers and are typically much harder to treat. Professor Simon Barry says:

"We are focused on building smarter CAR's that

have a unique homing capability. Cancer cells release hormones that the immune cells can sense and follow. If we learn what is being released by the tumour, we can add the relevant receptors so the CARs will follow it – so we are building receptors that can actively seek, recognise and destroy cancer cells. This ability is not needed for blood cancers because in that instance the CAR's are mixed directly into the blood, however it is critical for treating solid cancers."

In the past two years, great progress has been made toward making this therapy a reality for children and adults with otherwise incurable cancers.

"Over the last two years, our research has focused on the 'back room' work that is required to build a clinical trial. We need to be able to say that we know how to make CAR-T better than anyone else – and we are close! We could be looking at our first human trials getting underway in as little as 18 months," says Professor Barry.

Research funding provided by the WCH Foundation has been used for specialised researchers and experiments – two critical components when clinical trials are on the horizon. Professor Barry says:

"Clinical trials are safety driven and also very costly, so we must be able to undertake the very best research and development, and gather pre-clinical data to give us the most confidence to build a case for the clinical trial."

A key success for the team has been improving the efficiency of the CAR manufacturing by optimising the research team's own protocols. For example, the first approved CAR-T treatments target the antigen CD19 (present in blood cancers such as leukemia) with a CAR expression rate of only 50 per cent. However, Professor Barry and his team have managed to increase the amount of CAR being expressed to 90 per cent – an enormous improvement because the more CAR expressed, the more chance it has to find and kill cancer cells. They also believe it will last longer.

The team has also made advances in the time it takes to create these modified cells.

"Previously, it took 30 days for us to make the appropriate number of cells for testing. It now takes us only 9-14 days which is a huge reduction in cost and manpower. We've also broadened the CAR-T pipeline with new baroreceptor targets including a new lead targeting a gene called LGR5," says Professor Barry.

# Save the mother, save the child: Disrupting the cycle of intergenerational child abuse and neglect

Media Release - 1 May, UniSA



Supporting female survivors of childhood maltreatment is critical to disrupting intergenerational abuse as new research from the University of South Australia shows a clear link between parents who have suffered abuse and the likelihood of their children suffering the same fate.

The finding amplifies an acute need for far better support for victims of child maltreatment to ensure safer and more nurturing environments for all children.

Funded by the NHMRC and the Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation, and published in *The Lancet Public Health* today, the study found that most child maltreatment is occurring among families caught up in intergenerational cycles of child abuse and neglect – 83 per cent of the cases of substantiated child maltreatment were the children of mothers with a history of child protection contact.

The study showed that 30 per cent of the children of mothers with substantiated maltreatment as a child were also the subject of substantiated maltreatment (by age 12). In comparison, for children of mothers with no history of child protection contact, the rate of substantiated abuse was five per cent.

The study quantified the intergenerational transmission of child maltreatment in South Australia using a large linked data set from the internationally recognised iCAN study, which included 38,556 mother-child pairs – some of whom had experienced abuse and some who had not – based on

SA child protection data.

The children of mothers exposed to substantiated maltreatment and removal into out-of-home care were at greatest risk of child maltreatment, with 14 times the risk of experiencing substantiated maltreatment, and 26 times the risk of being removed, reflecting extreme child protection concerns.

Lead Investigator, UniSA's Professor Leonie Segal, says the findings highlight the urgent need to do more to help these children and families – from early in life into adulthood – not just for their own well-being, but also as an intervention opportunity to protect their unborn children and future generations.

"The results are especially concerning given the generally poor outcomes for victims of child abuse or neglect across multiple health and social domains," Prof Segal says.

"Abused children often grow into adults with poor impulse control, a heightened sense of shame, an over-alertness to threat, easily triggered, with extreme levels of distress that can result in early substance use and mental illness, compounding harms.

"When these children become parents, their capacity for compassion or trust can be impaired, they often cannot see the needs of their own children, and can find it extremely difficult to provide the nurturing parenting that they would so want to offer.

"Our results are consistent with well-described biological mechanisms for intergenerational transmission of child maltreatment, through the lasting impacts of assault or neglect, altered brain development and disturbed relational patterning, strongly suggesting the observed associations are causal, and at least partly preventable.

"Children and parents need help. Healing their trauma is an ethical imperative, but also offers large health and economic payoffs to families and the wider community.

"The increased risk of child abuse and neglect among children whose mothers have experienced maltreatment themselves as children, is extreme and too significant to ignore – and they are already known to the service system.

"If only we could disrupt the intergenerational transmission pathway, we could prevent the lion's share of child maltreatment and turn around the life trajectories of our most vulnerable children and offer protection to future generations."



## Thirteen years after 'Sorry', too many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are still being removed from their homes

Media Release - 26 May, The Conversation

On February 13, 2008, then-Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said "we are sorry" to members of the Stolen Generations. This was a significant moment in the shameful history of Australia's treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Apology represented a formal acknowledgement that the forced removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children was based on racist policies that caused unspeakable harm to our communities.

Children were forced off their lands. They were disconnected from their kin, Country, traditional languages and culture.

Today on Sorry Day, 13 years since the Apology, our Elders, families and communities still grieve these losses. And many families are being repeatedly traumatised by contemporary child removal practices. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are nearly 10 times more likely than non-Indigenous children to be in out-of-home care.

To find new ways to confront this problem and promote community-identified solutions, the Ngulluk Koolunga Ngulluk Koort (Our Children, Our Heart) project conducted consultations with over 100 Elders and senior Aboriginal community members in Perth.

The Elders and community members repeatedly

expressed concerns they were not being consulted or included in decisions being made about child protection interventions.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have a right to be kept safe and free from harm. Removing them from their families has been proven to have devastating consequences. They are vulnerable to a lifetime of grief and loss, shattered identities, poor health outcomes and intergenerational trauma.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families involved with the child protection system represent some of the most marginalised and stigmatised members of our community. We are witnessing child removals across multiple generations, yet policymakers are not making connections between the past harms of the Stolen Generations and the current problems families are experiencing.

This leaves little room to redress the harm that past policies have inflicted. We need a new strategy for creating a more responsive and just child protection system. This requires a public debate about the thresholds for child removal and for clearly defining what it means to be a "good enough" parent to maintain guardianship of a child. And we need to reassess what actually constitutes risky parenting.

There is a lack of national leadership and coordinated, inclusive and culturally secure practice in the child protection system. Decisions are no longer made explicitly based on race, but there are enduring problems with how actions taken by authorities affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

### Assisted Reproductive Treatment (Donor Conception Register) Amendment Bill 2021

*Help us develop legislation to ensure effective and optimal functioning of the donor-conception register*

#### What's being decided?

An amendment to the *Assisted Reproductive Treatment Act 1988* (External link) (the ART Act) passed by the parliament in 2019 will commence operation on 7 November 2021 to mandate the establishment of the donor-conception register (DCR).

Further amendments to the ART Act are now proposed to ensure the effective and optimal functioning of the DCR. These changes are contained in the Assisted Reproductive Treatment (Donor Conception Register) Amendment Bill 2021.

The 4 key areas of change are:

1. provide all donor-conceived people with the right to access identifying information about their donor (with retrospective effect) including the establishment of a contact preference scheme through a Statement of Wishes
2. ensure the DCR can operate retrospectively to include historical donor conception information
3. ensure all donor-conceived people have the option to have donor information included in their birth certificate
4. ensure the effective operation of the DCR.

Have **yourSAy** - where you can influence government decisions. Join an active community having their say on government decisions that matter to them.

Further information here <https://yoursay.sa.gov.au/art-act-amendments>

# PERINATAL AND INFANT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES - HELEN MAYO HOUSE ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2021

## Save the Date and Abstract Call

Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Services – Helen Mayo House  
Annual Conference 2021

**22nd – 23rd November 2021**  
**Adelaide Convention Centre**

Please consider submitting an abstract to present your work in the field of perinatal and infant mental health.

**Oral presentations** will occur during a break-out session either in the morning or the afternoon, while **posters** will be displayed throughout the day.

**Abstract call open.** Contact Tina Bull (details below) for the abstract form. Submissions will close **Friday 30<sup>th</sup> July**.

Successful presenters will be notified by **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September** and will be required to register for the conference by **Monday 27<sup>th</sup> September**.

## **The Best of Times & The Worst of Times** Perinatal & Infant Mental Health after 2020



**Monday 22nd November: 8:00am – 5:00pm**

### **Highlights include:**

- ✦ Rose Spencer and Dana Shai from the Anna Freud Centre speaking from London regarding their work on Parental Embodied Mentalising
- ✦ Michelle Stuckey speaking from Perth on the psychological impacts of infertility treatment on couples
- ✦ Adelaide's own Angie Willcocks presenting her PhD work on the connections between diet and mental health during pregnancy
- ✦ Further highlights may include - your work!

**Tuesday 23rd November: 8:00am – 5:00pm**

An extended workshop by our Clinical Psychologist, Chris Yelland and colleagues on the Mother-Infant Dialectical-Behavioural Therapy (MI-DBT) program developed at Helen Mayo House for mothers with borderline personality disorder.

Enquiries to **Tina Bull**  
Helen Mayo House  
Email: [tina.bull@sa.gov.au](mailto:tina.bull@sa.gov.au)  
Ph: (08) 708 71047

## PERIOD SUMMIT

On behalf of Helen Connolly Commissioner for Children and Young People SA, you are warmly invited to attend the Period Summit in Adelaide on Wednesday 30th June.

The impact of menstrual stigma is both harmful and pervasive, with negative effects felt in our health sector, education system, workplace, economy and environment. This is a first of its kind cross-sector event to acknowledge the key struggles and barriers surrounding menstruation, share our ideas for change, and carve a pathway forward together.

More information on the Summit hosts, topics for the day and the option to reserve your spot is available here: <https://events.humanitix.com/period-summit>

## NATIONAL YOUTH HOMELESSNESS Virtual Conference

The 2021 National Youth Homelessness Conference is organised around a project to develop a **National Strategy to End Youth Homelessness**.

We call upon youth and homelessness workers and sector organisations, school teachers and educationists, as well as people working in government to come forward and attend the 2021 Conference and join the work to produce a **National Strategy to End Youth Homelessness** in Australia. This is solutions-focused advocacy which requires the collective all of us. The National Youth Homelessness Conference in June 2021 is advanced as an inaugural creative workshop for this change process.

**15-16 June**

Presented by Youth Development Australia

Tickets close 5pm Friday 11 June.

For further information go to:

<https://youthhomelessnessconference.org.au>

## RESEARCH TUESDAY

**Research Tuesdays, University of Adelaide**

**Combatting child sex abuse** presented by Associate Professor Russell Brewer (School of Social Sciences). Advanced facial and voice recognition software can potentially increase the ability of law enforcement to detect child sexual abuse material online. This seminar explores the possible impact and unique challenges of biometric technology. Tuesday 8 June, 5.30 pm. Bragg lecture theatre or online.

<https://www.adelaide.edu.au/research/events/research-tuesdays>

## National Science Week 2021

In-person and online events, virtual tours, DIY science and more, all across Australia, from **14 - 22 August**

[www.scienceweek.net.au](http://www.scienceweek.net.au)