



# Lead the Way Conference 2025



## Program

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**11–12 August | Melbourne | Rydges**

Strengthening Wellbeing and Safety  
through Collaboration



# About

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Across two days of keynotes, panel discussions, research presentations, and interactive workshops, the conference will explore:

- Cross-sector insights for strengthening safety and wellbeing.
- How evidence-based approaches improve outcomes.
- What real-world examples of practice look like across sectors.



#### Inspiring Keynotes

Experts on trauma, culture, child safety, wellbeing and leadership.



#### Cutting Edge Research

Evidence-informed insights for safer environments.



#### Real-World Case Studies

Examples of practice transforming schools and organisations.



#### Networking

Connect with leaders across sectors.



The conference is a celebration of collaborating across sectors, providing an opportunity for knowledge sharing and promoting the critical importance for us all to have a deep understanding of trauma and its impact on the families and children we support, and the staff who support them.



**Dr Robyn Miller AM**

Chief Executive Officer  
MacKillop Family Services

# Keynote Speakers



**Commissioner Meena Singh**

Acting Principal  
Commissioner and  
Commissioner for Aboriginal  
Children and Young People



**Commissioner Joe Ball**

Commissioner for LGBTIQ+  
Communities



**Dr Ross Greene**

Clinical Psychologist  
New York Times  
Bestselling Author



**Prof. Pasi Sahlberg**

Professor  
Educational Leadership  
University of Melbourne



**Prof. Leah Bromfield**

Director  
Australian Centre for  
Child Protection  
University of South Australia



**Prof. Anne Graham AO**

Director  
Centre for Children &  
Young People  
Southern Cross University



**Prof. Pat Dudgeon**

Professor, School of  
Indigenous Studies  
The University of Western  
Australia



**Dr Robyn Miller AM**

Chief Executive Officer  
MacKillop Family Services

# Guest Speakers



**A/Prof Lisa McKay-Brown**  
Associate Professor  
Diversity & Inclusion University of Melbourne



**A/Prof Tim Moore**  
Associate Professor  
Institute of Child Protection Studies  
Australian Catholic University (ACU)



**Zoë Robinson**  
Advocate for Children and Young People  
Office of Youth



**Krushnadevsinh (Kano) Ravalji**  
CEO  
Third Culture, Victorian Youth  
Multicultural Commissioner



**Esmail Manahan**  
National Director,  
Nanyubak Unit: First Nations Practice and Partnerships  
MacKillop Family Services



**Jocelyn Bignold OAM**  
CEO  
McAuley Community Services for Women



**Jahin Tanvir**  
CEO  
Australian School of Entrepreneurship



**David Burroughs**  
Founder  
Australian Psychological Services



**Rabbi Zalman Kastel AM**  
Founder  
Together for Humanity



**Fiona McCallum**  
General Manager  
MacKillop Seasons



**Dr Beau Hu**  
National School Partnerships Manager  
Together for Humanity



**Dr Gemma McKibbin**  
Senior Research Fellow  
University of Melbourne



**Annette Schneider**  
CEO  
Together for Humanity



**Dr Phil Lambert PSM**  
Adjunct Professor  
University of Sydney



**Simangaliso Nyoni**  
Multicultural Practice Lead  
MacKillop Family Services



**Allison Wainwright**  
CEO  
Family Life



**Louise Hall**  
National & International Partnership  
MacKillop Seasons



**Josh Darby**  
Project Lead  
Whanaungatanga Fire & Emergency  
New Zealand



**Dr Nikki Jamieson**  
Defence – Strategic Advisor  
Suicide Prevention, Lived Experience and Moral Injury



**Matthew Spicer**  
Director  
Clinical Training Services  
The Centre for Positive Behaviour Support (CPBS)



**Keeva Mostyn**  
Seasons for Life Lead  
MacKillop Seasons



**Cameron Burgess**  
Program Director  
Sanctuary



**Dr Trixie James**  
Lecturer  
School of Access Education  
CQUniversity



**Douglas Russel**  
Senior Research Officer  
Institute of Child Protection Studies, ACU



**Kathy Karatasas**  
Founder & CEO  
CulturalWorks



# Guest Speakers



**Cleo Westhorpe**  
Founder, PIVOT  
Professional Learning



**Jas Perry**  
National Leader Foster  
Care Development  
MacKillop Family Services



**Dr Tracy Castileno**  
Founder  
ShantiWorks



**Tammy Wallace**  
Strategic Manager  
Engagement and Inclusion  
Churches of Christ



**Kate Martin**  
Head of Practice Quality  
and Impact  
Endeavour Foundation



**Clare Pritchard**  
Trauma Center Trauma Sensitive  
Yoga Facilitator (TCTSY-F)



**Emma Esposito**  
School Social Worker  
Coburn Primary School



**Hayley Wainwright**  
PhD Candidate  
Australian Research Council  
Grant Monash University



**Dr Justine Grogan**  
Senior Advisor for Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait Islander Education  
Australian Institute for Teaching  
and School Leadership



**Kathleen McInnes**  
Student Wellbeing Case  
Manager  
Coburn Primary School



**Phil Slade**  
Co-founder  
Switch4Schools



**Selba-Gondoza Luka OAM**  
CEO  
Afri-Aus Care Inc.



**Lee Bromley**  
Founder  
Eternity Aid



**Deb Tsorbaris**  
CEO  
Centre for Excellence in  
Child and Family Welfare



**KA Mc Kercher**  
Founder  
Beyond Sticky Notes



**Robert Boucher**  
Principal,  
Swifts Creek P-12



**Peta Simpson**  
eSMART Engagement  
Manager  
Alannah & Madeline



**Kathy Warwick**  
Head of Trauma Consulting  
Alannah & Madeline



**Genevieve Bloxsom**  
Researcher  
University of Melbourne



**Camille Schloeffel**  
Founder  
The STOP Campaign



**Justin Roberts**  
National Program Director  
ReLATE



**Dr John Molineux**  
Senior Lecturer  
Deakin Business School  
Deakin University



**Alex Dalton**  
Peer Researcher  
Orygen



**Smeeta Singh**  
National Program Director  
Power to Kids



**Alison Parolo**  
Principal  
Baldivis Secondary College

# Guest Speakers



**Tegan McDonald**  
Principal,  
St Patrick's Primary School



**Shona Loudon**  
Assistant Principal,  
St Patrick's Primary School



**Ian Hamm**  
Chairperson  
Indigenous Land and Sea  
Corporation



**Taryn Hopper**  
School Counsellor  
Xavier Catholic College



**Hannah Jamieson**  
Seasons for Life Coordinator  
VIC/TAS - MacKillop Seasons



**Anish Varghese**  
Project Manager  
Afri-Aus Care Inc.



**Frazer Bekele**  
School Community Liaison Officer  
Afri-Aus Care Inc.



**Margaret Hepworth**  
Founder - The Gandhi  
Experiment  
Vic Education Coordinator  
- Together for Humanity



**Nicole Lempriere**  
School Nurse - Druin  
Secondary College



**Renae Pettit**  
Seasons for Life  
Coordinator NSW / ACT -  
MacKillop Seasons



**Karen Evans**  
Lead Pastoral Care  
Services,  
Diocese of Lismore  
Catholic Schools



**Amanda Glenwright**  
General Manager Health  
Services,  
YourTurn/Standby Support



**Chris Proctor-Abraham**  
National Training Manager,  
Stand Tu Maia



**Gaye Titcombe**  
Assistant Principal,  
South Lismore Public School



**Skye Staude**  
Co-Principal  
MacKillop Education



**Kristen Douglas**  
Head Headspace & Schools  
Headspace



**Tanja Hirvonen**  
Interim Chief Executive Officer  
Thirrilli



**Trish Quig**  
Family Support  
Reiby Youth Justice Centre



**Larissa Polak**  
Principal  
South Lismore Public School



**Kris Bardon**  
Principal  
MacKillop Education



**Brona Walsh**  
Director - Education Engagement  
Programs  
MacKillop Education



**Jose de la Garma**  
Learning & Development Manager  
MacKillop Family Services



**Daphne Yarram**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Yoowinna Wurnalung Aboriginal  
Healing Service



**Nina Levin**  
Specialist Clinical Advisor  
Yoowinna Wurnalung Aboriginal  
Healing Service



**Graham Briggs**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Kirrip Aboriginal Healing Service



# Presenting Organisations



# Sponsors

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## Exhibitors



## Donors



# Conference Streams and Topics

Sessions across the two days are grouped to match the role of audience members, but real impact comes from cross-sector learning. Attendees are encouraged to explore all streams, gain fresh perspectives, and strengthen practice by learning from colleagues in other sectors.

Below are some of the topics already confirmed for the conference.

## STREAM A: EMPOWERED SCHOOLS: WELLBEING, SAFETY AND INCLUSION IN EDUCATION

### Grappling with Diverse Beliefs, Identities and Cultures

#### Cultivating Cultural Responsiveness

Supporting Identity and Belonging for Young People

#### Equipping Young People for the Future

Wellbeing, Inclusion and Opportunity through Entrepreneurial Education

#### Building Emotional and Grief Literacy

Supporting Whole-of-School Communities Following a Suicide or Other Loss Event

#### Best Practices for Therapy Dogs in Schools

#### Secondary Trauma and Educators' Pathways to Mitigating its Impacts

#### We Belong

The Practical Implementation of Collaborative Practice in Schools

#### Empowering Educators to Have Brave Conversations

Power to Kids in Schools and the Role of Staff in Safeguarding Children

## STREAM B: STRONGER COMMUNITIES: CHILD, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES IN PRACTICE

### Grief Support

Building Capacity to Support the Grief Experiences of Children & Young People Living in Out-of-Home Care

### Belonging, Identity & Mental Wellbeing

A Roadmap for Young People

### Responding to Harm, Building Safety

Co-Designed Prevention Strategies for Harmful Sexual Behaviour in Child and Youth Services

### Culturally Humble Collaborations

### Cultural Humility, Responsiveness and Belonging

### It takes a Village Community to Keep a Child Safe

### Financially Coerced "self-produced" Child Sexual Exploitation Material: How Do We Intervene?

**Safe-at-Home:** Intervening Early to Support the Safety and Wellbeing of People Experiencing Family Violence

## STREAM C: THRIVING WORKPLACES: CULTURE, LEADERSHIP AND MENTAL HEALTH

### Psychosocial Safety in Practice

#### The Whanaungatanga Program

A New Approach to Mental Ill Health Prevention Across Workforces

#### Family Life - Safe, Connected and Thriving: Trauma Capable Models of Community and Systems Healing

#### Contemporary Leadership for the Human Services/Professions: Safe Harbours or Turbulent Seas?

#### How Organisations Change: Beyond Change Theory to Change Practice

#### Reflective Leadership in Unprecedented Times

#### Whole-of-Self Affirming Care

#### Understanding Moral Injury in the Workplace and its Impacts on the Helping Professions



# Agenda

Conference Seminar Key:

EMPOWERED SCHOOLS:  
WELLBEING, SAFETY AND  
INCLUSION IN EDUCATION

STRONGER COMMUNITIES:  
CHILD, FAMILY AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICES IN  
PRACTICE

THRIVING WORKPLACES:  
CULTURE, LEADERSHIP AND  
MENTAL HEALTH

## DAY 1 | MONDAY, 11 AUG 2025

8.00 AM - 9.00 AM	ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION LEVEL 1, RYDGES HOTEL							
9.00 AM - 10.30 AM	OPENING PLENARY						CENTRE STAGE	
	<div>Welcome Ceremony Welcome to Country Opening Address - Commissioner Meena Singh, Acting Principal Commissioner for Children and Young People and Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People, Commission for Children and Young People Keynote - Professor Pasi Sahlberg, Professor of Educational Leadership, University of Melbourne - Lead the way toward the future we need Dr Robyn Miller AM, CEO, MacKillop Family Services</div>							
10.30 AM - 11.10 AM	MORNING TEA - PRE FUNCTION AREAS LEVEL 1 AND LEVEL 2						MINDFUL YOGA 11.00 AM - 11.10 AM - MEETING PLACE 2	
ROOM	CENTRE STAGE 1 LEVEL 1	CENTRE STAGE 2 LEVEL 1	MEETING PLACE 2 LEVEL 1	MEETING PLACE 3 LEVEL 1	MEETING PLACE 4 LEVEL 1	TERRACE 1 LEVEL 2	TERRACE 2 LEVEL 2	TERRACE 3 LEVEL 2
CONCURRENT SESSIONS 1	<div>Rabbi Zalman Kastel AM Together for Humanity</div> <div>Grappling with Diverse Beliefs, Identities and Cultures.</div> <div>Session: 30 minutes 11.10 am-11.40 am</div>	<div>David Burroughs Australian Psychological Services</div> <div>Psychological Safety in Practice.</div> <div>Session: 60 minutes 11.10pm - 12.10pm</div>	<div>Associate Professor Lisa McKay-Brown University of Melbourne</div> <div>Recalibrating school attendance: Global perspectives to inform local solutions</div> <div>Session: 35 minutes 11.10 am-11.45 am</div>	<div>Genevieve Bloxson &amp; Dr Gemma McKibbin University of Melbourne</div> <div>Financially Coerced "self-produced" Child Sexual Exploitation Material: How Do We Intervene?</div> <div>Session: 35 minutes 11.10 am-11.45 am</div>	<div>Cleo Westhorpe Pivot Professional Learning &amp; Robert Boucher Swifts Creek P-12</div> <div>Taming the Seahorse Curve: Understanding and Improving Student Connectedness P-12.</div> <div>Session: 35 minutes 11.10 am-11.45 am</div>	<div>Skye Staudé MacKillop Education</div> <div>Leading Well in Complex Environments.</div> <div>Session: 35 minutes 11.10 am-11.45 am</div>	<div>Deb Tsobaris Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare</div> <div>'I Don't Need to be a Professional, But I Want to be Treated Professionally': Carer Perspectives on Working with Australia's Most Vulnerable Children.</div> <div>Session: 35 minutes 11.10 am-11.45 am</div>	<div>Advanced Life Photography</div> <div>Have a professional photo taken by our Gold Sponsor: AdvancedLife Photography</div> <div>Session: 11.10 am-12.25 pm 75 mins</div>
CONCURRENT SESSIONS 2	<div>Panel Discussion: Chair: Annette Schneider</div> <div>Panellists: Dr Beau Hu, Simangolisio Nyoni, Selba-Gondozo Luka OAM, Anish Varghese Frazer Bekele</div> <div>Cultivating Cultural Responsiveness - Supporting Identity and Belonging for Young People.</div> <div>Session: 40 minutes 11.45 am-12.25 pm</div>	<div>Alex Dalton Peer Researcher, Orygen Foundation</div> <div>Whole of Self-Affirming Care: What is it and Why is it Important?</div> <div>Session: 15 minutes 12.10 pm-12.25 pm</div>	<div>Dr John Molineux Deakin University</div> <div>Secondary Trauma and Educators' Pathways to Mitigating its Impacts.</div> <div>Session: 35 minutes 11.50 am-12.25 pm</div>	<div>Douglas Russell Institute of Child Protection Studies, Australian Catholic University</div> <div>It takes a village community to keep a child safe!</div> <div>Session: 35 minutes 11.50 am-12.25 pm</div>	<div>Dr Trixie James CQ University</div> <div>Let's Be Positive Together: Empowering Equity Students Through Positive Psychology.</div> <div>Session: 35 minutes 11.50 am-12.25 pm</div>	<div>Alison Wainwright Family Life</div> <div>Family Life - Safe, Connected and Thriving: Trauma Capable Models of Community and Systems Healing.</div> <div>Session: 35 minutes 11.50 am-12.25 pm</div>	<div>Louise Hall MacKillop Seasons &amp; Lee Bromley &amp; Trish Quig Reiby Juvenile Justice Centre</div> <div>Seasons for Growth: Supporting the Loss and Grief Experiences of Young People in The Juvenile Justice Setting.</div> <div>Session: 35 minutes 11.50 am-12.25 pm</div>	
12.25 PM - 1.25 PM	LUNCH - PRE FUNCTION AREAS LEVEL 1 AND LEVEL 2						MINDFUL YOGA 1.05 PM-1.25 PM - MEETING PLACE 2	
							SPEAKERS ONLY NETWORKING - CENTRE STAGE 1	
							MACKILLOP SEASONS NETWORKING - CENTRE STAGE 2	
CONCURRENT SESSIONS 3	<div>Panel Discussion: Chair: Esmal Manahan</div> <div>Panellists: Graham Briggs Daphne Yarram Ian Hamm</div> <div>Culturally Humble Collaborations.</div> <div>Session: 1:25 pm-2:40 pm 75 minutes</div>	<div>Panel Discussion: Chair: Cameron Burgess</div> <div>Panellists: Matt Spicer Tammy Wallace Kate Martin Tenille Abell</div> <div>How Organisations Change: Beyond Change Theory to Change Practice.</div> <div>Session: 1:25 pm-2:40 pm 75 minutes</div>	<div>Smeeta Singh The MacKillop Institute</div> <div>Challenging Ourselves to Have Challenging Conversations with Children and Young People About Sexual Safety.</div> <div>Session: 1:25 pm-2:40 pm 75 minutes</div>	<div>Fiona McCallum MacKillop Seasons &amp; Karen Evans Diocese of Lismore Catholic Schools &amp; Gaye Titcombe, Larissa Polak, South Lismore Public Schools</div> <div>Improving Wellbeing and Building Hope - Supporting Students with the Stormbirds, Natural Disaster Education Program.</div> <div>Session: 1:25 pm-2:40 pm 75 minutes</div>	<div>Jahin Tanvir Australian School of Entrepreneurship</div> <div>Equipping Young People for the Future: Wellbeing, Inclusion and Opportunity through Entrepreneurial Education.</div> <div>Session: 35 minutes 1.25 pm-2.00 pm</div>	<div>Josh Darby Fire and Emergency New Zealand</div> <div>The Whanaungatanga Programme: A New Approach to Mental Ill Health Prevention Across Workforces.</div> <div>Session: 1:25 pm-2:40 pm 75 minutes</div>	<div>Emma Esposito &amp; Kathleen McInnes Coburn Primary School</div> <div>We Belong: The Practical Implementation of Collaborative Practice in Schools.</div> <div>Session: 35 minutes 1.25 pm-2.00 pm</div>	<div>Dr Justine Grogan Australian Institute for Teaching &amp; School Leadership (AITSL)</div> <div>Shifting Across the Indigenous Cultural Responsiveness Continuum in Teacher Education: Insights from Research and Practice.</div> <div>Session: 35 minutes 1.25 pm-2.00 pm</div>
CONCURRENT SESSIONS 4				<div>Session: 1:25 pm-2:40 pm 75 minutes</div>	<div>Phil Slade Switch4Schools</div> <div>Switching on Emotional Intelligence: The Neuro-Science of Leadership and Student Success.</div> <div>Session: 40 minutes 2.05 pm-2.40 pm</div>		<div>Alison Parolo Baldvis Secondary College</div> <div>Collaboration to Build a Sense of Belonging and Identity in School.</div> <div>Session: 35 minutes 2.05 pm-2.40 pm</div>	<div>Margaret Hepworth The Gandhi Project</div> <div>A Call to Hope: Empowering Young People for a Better World.</div> <div>Session: 35 minutes 2.05 pm-2.40 pm</div>
2.40 PM - 3.20 PM	AFTERNOON TEA - PRE FUNCTION AREAS LEVEL 1 AND LEVEL 2						MINDFUL YOGA 3.10 PM - 3.20 PM - MEETING PLACE 2	
3.20 PM - 4.50 PM	<div>Closing Ceremony Keynotes - Professor Anne Graham AO, Director of the Centre for Children and Young People, Southern Cross University - Implementing the evidence: young people's views about practices that support wellbeing, recognition and safety Professor Pat Dudgeon, School of Indigenous Studies, University of Western Australia - Indigenous Social and Emotional Health and Wellbeing</div>						CENTRE STAGE	
5.00 PM - 6.30 PM (DAY 1 ONLY)	NETWORKING DRINKS AND CANAPES - TERRACE							

# Agenda

CONFERENCE AGENDA

## DAY 2 | TUESDAY, 12 AUG 2025

EMPOWERED SCHOOLS:  
WELLBEING, SAFETY AND  
INCLUSION IN EDUCATION

STRONGER COMMUNITIES:  
CHILD, FAMILY AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICES IN  
PRACTICE

THRIVING WORKPLACES:  
CULTURE, LEADERSHIP AND  
MENTAL HEALTH

8.00 AM - 9.00 AM	ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION LEVEL 1, RYDGES HOTEL							
9.00 AM - 10.30 AM	OPENING PLenary					CENTRE STAGE		
	Welcome Ceremony Keynotes - Meena Singh, & Members of Youth Council, Commission for Children and Young People - Genuine Collaboration with Children and Young People Dr Ross Greene, Founder, Collaborative, Proactive Solutions' - Live Virtual Keynote							
10.30 AM - 11.10 AM	MORNING TEA - PRE FUNCTION AREAS LEVEL 1 AND LEVEL 2					MINDFUL YOGA 11.00 AM - 11.10 AM - MEETING PLACE 2		
ROOM	CENTRE STAGE 1 LEVEL 1	CENTRE STAGE 2 LEVEL 1	MEETING PLACE 2 LEVEL 1	MEETING PLACE 3 LEVEL 1	MEETING PLACE 4 LEVEL 1	TERRACE 1 LEVEL 2	TERRACE 2 LEVEL 2	TERRACE 3 LEVEL 2
CONCURRENT SESSIONS 5	<p><b>Panel Discussion:</b> The National Postvention Leadership Group</p> <p>Chair: Fiona McCallum</p> <p>Panellists: Tanja Hirvonen Kristen Douglas Amanda Glenwright</p> <p><i>Leading the Way – Strengthening school and community support through national collaboration.</i></p>	<p><b>Dr Tracy Castelino</b> ShantiWorks</p> <p><i>Reflexive Leadership in Unprecedented Times.</i></p> <p>Session: 35 minutes 11.10 am-11:45 am</p>	<p><b>Justin Roberts</b> The MacKillop Institute &amp; <b>Tegan McDonald</b> , Principal, St Patrick's Primary School &amp; <b>Shona Louden</b>, Assistant Principal, St Patrick's Primary School</p> <p><b>Improving Educator Wellbeing in Student Centred Schools.</b></p> <p>Session: 75 minutes 11.10 am-12:25 pm</p>	<p><b>Daphne Yarram &amp; Nina Levin</b> Yowinna Wurnaling Aboriginal Health Service</p> <p><i>Cultural Humility, Responsiveness and Belonging.</i></p> <p>Session: 35 minutes 11.10 am-11:45 am</p>	<p><b>Associate Professor Tim Moore</b> Australian Catholic University</p> <p><i>Empowering Young Survivors: Trauma- Informed Approaches to Sexual Health and Relationship Education.</i></p> <p>Session: 35 minutes 11.10 am-11:45 am</p>	<p><b>Dr Nikki Jamieson</b> Moral Injury Australia</p> <p><i>Understanding moral injury in the workplace and its impact on the helping professions.</i></p> <p>Session: 75 minutes 11.10 am-12:25 pm</p>	<p><b>Camille Schloeffel &amp; Dr Gemma McKibbin</b> University of Melbourne</p> <p><i>What victim-survivors of children's harmful sexual behaviour need from the service system: Learning from Lived Experience.</i></p> <p>Session: 35 minutes 11.10 am-11:45 am</p>	<p><b>Simangaliso Nyoni</b> MacKillop Family Services</p> <p><i>What if you didn't know who you are , where you come from?. Multicultural Cultural Support Plan</i></p> <p>Session: <b>35 minutes</b> 11.50 am-12:25 pm</p>
CONCURRENT SESSIONS 6	<p>Session: 75 minutes 11.10 am-12:25 pm</p>	<p><b>Dr Phil Lambert PSM</b> University of Sydney &amp; Nanjing Normal University</p> <p><i>Contemporary Leadership for the Human Services/Professions: Safe Harbours or Turbulent Seas?</i></p> <p>Session: 35 minutes 11.50 am-12:25 pm</p>		<p><b>Krushnadevsinh (Kano) Ravalji</b> Third Culture Australia &amp; Youth Victorian Multicultural Commission</p> <p><i>Belonging, Cultural Identity &amp; Mental Wellbeing: A Roadmap for Young People.</i></p> <p>Session: 35 minutes 11.50 am-12:25 pm</p>	<p><b>Peta Simpson &amp; Kathy Warwick</b> Alannah &amp; Madeline Foundation</p> <p><i>Embedding a Trauma Informed Lens to Online Safety Education.</i></p> <p>Session: 35 minutes 11.50 am-12:25 pm</p>		<p><b>Jocelyn Bignold</b> McAuley Community Services for Women</p> <p><b>Safe at Home:</b> Intervening early to support the safety and wellbeing of people experiencing family violence.</p> <p>Session: 35 minutes 11.50 am-12:25 pm</p>	<p><b>Hayley Wainwright</b> Monash University</p> <p><i>Improving the Implementation of Transition Planning in Out-of-Home Care.</i></p> <p>Session: 35 minutes 11.10 am-11:45 am</p>
12.25 PM - 1.25 PM	LUNCH - PRE FUNCTION AREAS LEVEL 1 AND LEVEL 2					NETWORKING SESSION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE CENTRE STAGE 1  SPEAKERS ONLY NETWORKING - CENTRE STAGE 2  LUNCH AND LEARN WORKSHOP DR TRIXIE JAMES LECTURER, SCHOOL OF ACCESS EDUCATION - CQUNIVERSITY - MEETING ROOM 2		
CONCURRENT SESSIONS 7	<p><b>Louise Hall</b> MacKillop Seasons &amp; <b>Jas Perry</b> MacKillop Family Services</p> <p><b>Building Capacity to Support the Grief Experiences of Children &amp; Young People Living in Out-Of-Home Care.</b></p> <p>Session: <b>30 minutes</b> 1.25 pm-1.55 pm</p>	<p><b>Youth Council Members</b> Commission for Children and Young People</p> <p><b>Meaningful engagement with children and young people to create safety and wellbeing</b></p> <p>Session: 75 minutes 1.25pm-2:40 pm</p>	<p><b>Brona Walsh</b> MacKillop Education</p> <p><i>Best Practices for Therapy Dogs in School Settings</i></p> <p>Session: 75 minutes 1:25 pm-2:40 pm</p>	<p><b>Jose De La Gama</b> MacKillop Family Service</p> <p><b>Intentional Use of Self: Leading the Way in the Face of Crisis</b></p> <p>Session: 35 minutes 1.25pm-2:00 pm</p>	<p><b>Keeva Mostyn, Renae Petitt, Hannah Jamieson &amp; Taryn Hopper</b> MacKillop Seasons Xavier Catholic College &amp; <b>Nicole Lempriere</b> Druin Secondary College</p> <p><b>Building Emotional and Grief Literacy: Supporting Whole-of- School Communities Following a Suicide or Other Loss Event.</b></p> <p>Session: 75 minutes 1.25pm-2:40 pm</p>	<p><b>Matthew Spicer</b> The Centre for Positive Behaviour Support (CPBS)</p> <p><b>Values-Based Leadership</b></p> <p>Session: 75 minutes 1.25 pm-2:40 pm</p>	<p><b>KA McKercher</b> Beyond Sticky Notes</p> <p><i>Co-Designing with Care: Centering care, dignity and choice in our engagement with families and each other.</i></p> <p>Session: 75 minutes 1.25 pm-2:40 pm</p>	<p><b>Kathy Karatasas</b> University of Western Sydney</p> <p><i>Using Intentional Questions to Design Culturally Inclusive Services with the SELF Framework.</i></p> <p>Session: 75 minutes 1.25 pm-2:40 pm</p>
CONCURRENT SESSIONS 8	<p><b>Zoë Robinson</b> Advocate for Children and Young People Office of Youth</p> <p><b>TBA</b></p> <p>Session: 25 minutes 2.00 pm-2:25 pm</p>		<p><b>Kris Bardon</b> MacKillop Education</p> <p><b>Empowering Students to re-engage in education.</b></p> <p>Session: 30 minutes 2.10 pm-2:40 pm</p>	<p><b>Chris Procter-Abraham</b> Stand Tu Maia &amp; <b>Fiona McCallum</b>, MacKillop Seasons</p> <p><b>Change Education and Growth: Celebrating 30 Years of Global Relationships</b></p> <p>Session: 35 minutes 2.05am-2:40 pm</p>				
2.40 PM - 3.20 PM	AFTERNOON TEA - PRE FUNCTION AREAS LEVEL 1 AND LEVEL 2							
3.20 PM - 4.50 PM	Closing Ceremony Keynotes - Commissioner Joe Ball, Commissioner for LGBTQIA+ Communities Professor Leah Bromfield, Director of the Australian Centre for Child Protection, University of South Australia - Reimagining Our Response to Abuse and Neglect						CENTRE STAGE	

# Keynote Sessions:



## Professor Pasi Salsberg

Educational Leadership - University of Melbourne

### Lead the way toward the future we need

In a time of rapid change, deep uncertainty, and growing inequality, education systems around the world are being called to evolve urgently and meaningfully. The real question is: How can we ensure our schools remain relevant, resilient, and just in the face of these challenges? Blending personal insights from around the world with global research, this keynote offers a brief but honest look at the current state of education both in Australia and internationally. While recognising the pressures and setbacks facing our systems, it focuses on the real opportunities we have to shift direction to strengthen equity, deepen engagement, and lift learning for all. The keynote concludes with a provocation to spark deeper conversation among participants: What kind of future do we need and how can we lead the way together?



## Professor Leah Bromfield

Director Australian Centre for Child Protection - University of South Australia

### Reimagining Our Response to Abuse and Neglect

COMING SOON



## Dr Ross Greene (live virtual keynote)

Clinical Psychologist New York Times Bestselling Author

### Collaborative and Proactive Solutions

COMING SOON



## Professor Pat Dudgeon

Professor, Indigenous Studies - University of Western Australia

### Reimagining Our Response to Abuse and Neglect

This presentation will provide a brief overview of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health and wellbeing. The mental health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has become a critical issue, and the evidence suggests a worsening mental health crisis. This is seen in reported high rates of psychological distress, hospitalisation for mental health conditions and most critically, increasing suicide rates. Mainstream western approaches to mental health have an ongoing history of failing to consider and include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' needs. This includes the failure to acknowledge historical and cultural contexts within conceptualisations of mental health and wellbeing. The wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples cannot be understood without appropriate recognition of these important contexts.

Social and emotional health and wellbeing (SEWB) has emerged as an important Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander concept of mental health and wellbeing. Although the term is often used to refer to issues related to 'mental health' and 'mental illness', SEWB has a broader scope. It recognises the importance of connection to land, culture, spirituality, ancestry, family and community, and how these affect the individual, family and community. SEWB issues cover a broad range of problems that can result from unresolved grief and loss, trauma and abuse, domestic violence, removal from family, substance misuse, family breakdown, cultural dislocation, racism and discrimination, and social disadvantage. The holistic nature of wellbeing, the historical impacts resulting in social determinants that adversely influence wellbeing are discussed. In recent times, innovative approaches are emerging in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wellbeing that confirm a promising way forward.

# Keynote Sessions:



## Commissioner Meena Singh

Acting Principal Commissioner and Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People

**Genuine Collaboration with Children and Young People**

COMING SOON



## Commissioner Ball

Commissioner for LGBTIQ+ Communities

**COMING SOON**

COMING SOON



## Prof. Anne Graham AO

Director Centre for Children & Young People – Southern Cross University

**Implementing the evidence: young people's views about practices that support wellbeing, recognition and safety**

COMING SOON



# Concurrent Sessions 1 and 2



## Rabbi Zalman Kastel AM

Founder – Together for Humanity

### Grappling with Diverse Beliefs, Identities and Cultures.

Some adolescents and adults are guarded. Vulnerability about status is part of the human condition, but is heightened due to the influence of digital technology and broader concerns. Prejudice and causal racism toward indigenous people and others persists. Interfaith relations have deteriorated in Australia since late 2023. The percentage of those with negative attitudes towards Jews, Muslims and others has increased since the escalation of harm and tensions in Gaza and Israel. People with diverse faiths, loyalties and identities invariably misrepresent and mistrust each other. Empathy, critical for countering prejudice, is naturally geared toward people “like us”. This talk will explore what helps or hinders authentic positive relationships between groups. How can a reflective practice of listening from a place “of not knowing” facilitate Intercultural communication, while assumed knowledge and power imbalances prevent real understanding. What can we learn about ourselves to prepare us to create cultural safety for others?

## Panel:

### Cultivating Cultural Responsiveness: Supporting Identity and Belonging for Young People.

Chair:

Panellists:



Annette Schneider  
CEO  
Together for Humanity



Dr Beau Hu  
National School Partnerships Manager  
Together for Humanity



Simangaliso Nyoni  
Multicultural Practice Lead  
MacKillop Family Services



Selba-Gondoza Luka OAM  
CEO  
Afri-Aus Care Inc.



Anish Varghese  
Project Manager  
Afri-Aus Care Inc.



Frazer Bekele  
School Community Liaison Officer  
Afri-Aus Care Inc.



## David Burroughs

Founder – Australian Psychological Services

### Psychosocial Safety in Practice.

Psychosocial Safety is a hot topic, but it's not new. It has been around for decades, it has just become the centre of attention as organizations strive to meet their regulatory responsibilities, prevent mental health harm, and improve people's overall experience of work. Dave has been working for nearly 20 years in this domain and his practical session will cover:

- The evolution of psychosocial safety – where the evidence lies and what's been missing
- Strategic integration across people functions to mitigate risk and improve productivity and performance – taking an employee life cycle approach
- Understanding and addressing key risks – and exploration of Work Overload and Vicarious Trauma
- How not to stuff it up! Critical considerations and success factors in organisational psychosocial safety maturity



## Alex Dalton

Peer Researcher and Consumer Coordinator – Orygen Foundation

### Whole of Self-Affirming Care: What is it and Why is it Important?

This presentation outlines the Whole of Self Affirming Care research project. The project's focus is on trans and gender diverse young people with multiply marginalised identities and how they can experience care that affirms all aspects of their identity. The project's aim is to create a patient-reported experience measure and fidelity checklist for services to know how well they're providing care that affirms all aspects of a young person's identity.

A key component of this project is how we collaborate and continuously engage with lived experience knowledge at all project stages, including from conceptualisation before the grant was funded. There are people drawing on lived experience at various levels of our project, from our Lived Experience Advisory Group to our project staff and chief and associate investigators. These experiences come together to form the basis on which the project operates and is guided by.



## Associate Professor Lisa McKay-Brown

Associate Dean Diversity and Inclusion – University of Melbourne

### Recalibrating school attendance: Global perspectives to inform local solutions

School attendance and school attendance difficulties (SADs) are a national concern for the education sector however they are not new phenomena. While the post pandemic period has increased the visibility of school attendance and absence, data shows that the percentage of students who are chronically absent have been steadily declining since 2018. The factors impacting school attendance are complex and multifactorial and require systems level and local responses.

This presentation will explore what's working to improve school attendance and how engaging with global perspectives can help us to create local solutions that can make a difference. I will discuss the importance of reframing how we understand attendance, and the need to recalibrate the purposes of schooling and education to create sites of safety and engagement. Key takeaways include: thinking broadly about the meaning of attendance; implementing change using multi-tiered frameworks and developing shared alliances to support children and youth engage with education.



## Dr John Molineux

Senior Lecturer, Deakin University

### Secondary trauma and educators' pathways to mitigating its impacts.

Secondary trauma and educators' pathways to mitigating its impacts

A mixed methods study of 2285 educators undertaken across Australia in Term 3 of 2024, including 107 interviews, revealed significant impacts of secondary trauma on teachers and leaders in schools, both in mainstream and special education settings. In this session, findings on factors contributing to and mitigating secondary traumatic stress (STS) in educators will be displayed, as well as findings on the relationship of STS to mental health risk, burnout, turnover risk, and rumination. This includes the influence of compassion satisfaction. In addition, factors mitigating STS and its impacts will be discussed, including stories relating examples of the experiences of educators in reducing the impact of trauma through techniques such as recovery, support and coping. The session will conclude with an outline of proposed pilot intervention projects aimed at converting the findings into positive action for individual educators, schools, and at department/system levels.

Key takeaways:

- Understanding the impact of secondary trauma on educators
- Understanding how educators and schools can help minimize the impact of secondary trauma
- Invitation for future involvement in pilot intervention projects



## Douglas Russell

Senior Research Officer, Institute of Child Protection Studies, Australian Catholic University.

### It takes a ~~village~~ community, to keep a child safe!

This session explores how children and young people seek support when they feel unsafe – and what this means for organisations working to prevent child sexual abuse. Drawing on original research with over 3,000 young people across a range of organisational settings (primarily schools), as well as findings from two recent systematic reviews on the role of parents in prevention, the session highlights who children turn to, who they don't, and how we can better support the networks around them.

Participants will gain insight into the often-overlooked role of families and peers in safeguarding, and the importance of building broader cultures of safety and responsiveness. The session will also examine the implications of these findings for practice, including staff training, parent engagement, and community partnerships.

This session will appeal to professionals across education, community, child and family services. Key takeaways include: understanding real-world disclosure patterns, strengthening the role of parents and carers, and embedding shared responsibility into child-safe practice.



**Dr Gemma McKibbin**

Senior Research Fellow – University of Melbourne



**Genevieve Bloxsom**

Researcher – University of Melbourne

**Financially coerced “self-produced” child sexual exploitation material: How do we intervene?**

In this presentation, we present new findings about perpetrator strategies and how children experience being financially coerced into providing “nudes” to perpetrators. A model for disrupting child sexual exploitation for children and young people living in residential care is showcased. Participants will be invited to share their own ideas and insights into emerging forms of child sexual exploitation, and opportunities for regulation and legislative change will be brainstormed to galvanise action to address this appalling form of sexual abuse.



**Cleo Westhorpe**

Founder, Pivot Professional Learning



**Robert Boucher**

Principal, Swifts Creek P-12 School

**Taming the Seahorse Curve: Understanding and Improving Student Connectedness P-12.**

Being data-driven is the climate we find ourselves in – but when leaders approach this data with curiosity, real change becomes possible. Frameworks and practice guides support great thinking, but it is change within classrooms and across schools that enables all students to thrive. The Far East (geographic) Network has used the Pivot Wellbeing Survey over the past three years to gather meaningful data and inform practice. This presentation explores how such data can be used to develop shared beliefs, guide targeted change, and unlock the power of simple refinements to achieve significant gains in student connectedness.



**Dr Trixie James**

Senior Lecturer, CQ University

**Let's Be Positive Together: Empowering Equity Students Through Positive Psychology.**

Let's Be Positive Together showcases a series of Positive Psychology-based programs designed to help equity students build confidence, resilience, and a belief in their academic potential. This session highlights current initiatives and new developments for schools and discipline-specific challenges like maths anxiety.

This presentation, Let's Be Positive Together, introduces a suite of research-informed programs using Positive Psychology to support equity students in reframing their mindset and building confidence in their academic journey. Originally designed for enabling students at CQUniversity, the program has evolved into a scalable, multimedia resource now embedded across multiple sectors. The session will showcase the current programs available – including a 2-part positive psychology Micro Credential, Be Positive about Study – and share exciting developments in progress, such as adaptations for a secondary schools program Be Positive (Middle Schools) and targeted interventions for addressing maths anxiety through Be Positive about Maths. Join this presentation to explore how positivity, purpose, and practical strategies can help students not just survive, but thrive.



**Skye Staude**

Co-Principal – MacKillop Education

**Leading Well in Complex Environments.**

Schools are fast-paced, ever-evolving environments where leadership is increasingly complex and demanding. With little formal preparation and high expectations, today's leaders must balance authenticity, communication, wellbeing, planning, and relational challenges- often all at once.

Drawing on over a decade of experience leading in high-pressure school settings across the independent, government, and Catholic sectors, Skye shares a leadership approach shaped by working with vulnerable and at-risk student populations. Her work is grounded in relational trust and the development of strategic, evidence-informed practices that build resilience across individuals, teams, and systems.

This presentation explores the vital connection between leader wellbeing and sustainable school culture. Attendees will be introduced to trauma-informed leadership practices that support self-regulation, emotional agility, and team connection in the face of challenge and change.

Participants will leave with:

- Simple routines that embed regulation and reflection into daily and weekly structures
- Tools to build relational trust, emotional awareness, and team capacity
- Frameworks for leading through “the muck” with clarity and compassion
- Strategies for creating sustainable, wellbeing-focused leadership networks

Designed for professionals across education, care, and community sectors, this session offers practical, research-aligned strategies to lead with intention, connection, and courage.



## Alison Wainwright

CEO – Family Life

**Safe, connected and thriving: Trauma capable models of community and systems healing.**

Communities seem beset by wicked problems – family violence, child neglect and maltreatment, young people in conflict with the law, substance abuse. The mental models that we have relied on to respond to these are proving to be increasingly ineffective and we are all left wondering what can be done?

In this presentation, Allison invites us to reimagine the work we do with individuals, families, communities, and systems. All of these are made up of people and the opportunities for change lie in the relationships between people. We now understand what relational trauma does to wellbeing, safety and connection and need to build the toolkits that allow us to work in a capable way with individuals, groups and the larger system to support change. By reimagining the “collective brain” and identifying opportunities to “fire and wire” together, through rhythm, storytelling, deep listening and empathy, we can re-create our mental models in a way that unburdens the system and allows community to risk share with us.

Arguing that we have transplanted many of the limitations of institutional care into our community care settings, Allison will make the case for power sharing, risk sharing, building capacity and creating the opportunities for sustainable, authentic care relationships to flourish.



## Deb Tsobaris

CEO at Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

**‘I don’t need to be a professional, but I want to be treated professionally’: Carer perspectives on working with Australia’s most vulnerable children**

Foster and kinship carers are the foundation of Australia’s care system, providing love, safety, and support to children when their families are in crisis. Yet, despite their critical role, carers are often undervalued and overlooked.

This presentation, based on a chapter authored by Deb Tsobaris, draws on the voices and experiences of carers to explore how systems can do better to support those who care for the nation’s most vulnerable children.

The address examines how care systems depend on carers’ unpaid labour, compassion, and resilience, and the toll this can take without the right support. Drawing on Australian and international examples, Deb will outline practical, evidence-informed strategies to better recognise, support, and retain foster and kinship carers.

In a system under increasing pressure, we must reframe how we value care, shifting from reliance on goodwill to a model that invests in children and those who care for them.



## Louise Hall

Lead Partnerships  
MacKillop Seasons



## Lee Bromley

Chaplain –  
Reiby Youth Justice Centre



## Trish Quig

Reiby Youth Justice Centre

**Seasons for Growth – supporting the loss and grief experiences of young people in the Juvenile Justice Setting.**

Research indicates that 63% of young people entering detention have experienced the loss of a significant individual in their lives. Many face change and uncertainty before entering the justice system, with adverse childhood experiences and complex trauma being central to their existence.

Reiby Juvenile Justice Centre, catering to individuals aged 10–18, has successfully run the Seasons for Growth program for over 15 years. This presentation will highlight the effectiveness of small group psychoeducational programs in addressing the changes and losses these young people face within a complex system.

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# Concurrent Sessions 3 and 4

## Panel:

### Culturally Humble Collaborations

Chair:



**Esmail Manahan**  
National Director, Nanyubak Unit: First Nations Practice and Partnerships  
MacKillop Family Services

Panellists:



**Graham Briggs**  
CEO  
Krip Aboriginal Cooperative



**Daphne Yarram**  
CEO – Yawwinna Wurralung  
Aboriginal Healing Service



**Ian Hamm**  
Chairperson  
Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation

## Panel:

### How organisations change: Beyond change theory to change practice.

Chair:



**Cameron Burgess**  
National Program Director,  
Sanctuary  
The MacKillop Institute



**Matt Spicer**  
Director  
Clinical Training Services –  
The Centre for Positive Behaviour  
Support (CPBS)



**Tammy Wallace**  
Strategic Manager  
Engagement and Inclusion  
– Churches of Christ



**Kate Martin**  
Head of Practice Quality  
and Impact  
Endeavour Foundation



**Tenille Abell**  
Sanctuary Faculty  
Consultant

Join Cameron Burgess as he opens a conversation with Matthew Spicer, Kate Martin, Tenille Abell and Tammy Wallace to share what they've learnt about organisational change. Drawing on a decade's experience supporting Community Service and Government Departments to integrate a whole of organisational change model, this workshop will explore the inhibitors of change, and simple actions that help individuals, teams and organizations get unstuck and embrace new behaviours and practice. The team will also share a tool from the Sanctuary model that has the power to help you, and your teams move forward.



## Smeeta Singh

National Program Director, Power to Kids – The MacKillop Institute

### Challenging ourselves to have challenging conversations with children and young people about sexual safety.

1 in 4 children in Australia experience child sexual abuse (ACMS 2023). Prevention and early intervention is critical, however the community needs support. 28% of Australians were 'not at all confident' to start a conversation with a child they suspected had been sexually abused (NCACSA 2024).

Power to Kids and Power to Kids in Schools foster a whole-of-community approach to strengthen prevention and responses to child sexual abuse. Co-facilitated with a young person, this interactive workshop will offer a unique perspective into the enablers and barriers of taking action, embedding sustainable practice, and the importance of authorising environments. Participants will have an opportunity to engage in some of the key program tools to support bringing the core concepts to life.



## Fiona McCallum

Director – MacKillop Seasons



## Karen Evans

Diocese of Lismore Catholic Schools



## Larissa Polak & Gaye Titcombe

South Lismore Public School

### Improving Wellbeing and Building Hope – Supporting Students with the Stormbirds, natural disaster education program.

Stormbirds is a small group evidence-based education program that supports the recovery of children and young people in response to change and loss that often results from natural disasters.

The Diocese of Lismore has an almost 30 year history of working with MacKillop Seasons (formerly God Grief) in implementing evidence-based education interventions to support primary and secondary school children respond well to experiences of grief and loss. The Diocese has strategically continued to train staff in the MacKillop Seasons programs to continue to build the knowledge and capacity of key school staff to prioritise the wellbeing of children and young people, with the understanding that the programs help children and young people to learn knowledge and skills to support them to navigate both current and future experiences of loss and grief. This session provides valuable insight into a system-led initiative that supported schools in implementing the Stormbirds intervention following the catastrophic floods of 2022.



## Jahin Tanvir

CEO – Australian School of Entrepreneurship (ASE)

### Equipping Young People for the Future: Wellbeing, Inclusion and Opportunity through Entrepreneurial Education.

Entrepreneurial education is the key to unlocking the full potential of young people. It's not just about launching businesses, it's about building confidence, purpose and real-world skills that young people can apply to every area of their lives. The future belongs to those who are empowered, resilient and ready to lead.

This presentation will showcase the work of the Australian School of Entrepreneurship – Australia's largest youth-led social enterprise, having engaged over 250,000 young Australians across the country. Through this case study, we'll explore how entrepreneurial education is transforming lives, creating opportunities, and how you can be part of the movement through your own work.



## Phil Slade

Psychologist, Author, and Founder – Switch4Schools

### Switching on Emotional Intelligence: The neuro-science of leadership and student success.

Emotional intelligence (EI) is increasingly recognised as a cornerstone of effective leadership and student success. In this dynamic session, behavioural economist and psychologist Phil Slade—co-founder of Switch4Schools—will bridge cutting-edge neuroscience with practical tools that can transform the way school leaders work.

Drawing on research from behavioural economics, neuroscience, and psychology—including the works of Kahneman, Tversky, Damasio, and Ekman—Phil will unpack the science behind emotional regulation, empathy, and decision-making. During the session we will explore how emotional intelligence impacts cognitive load, resilience, and school culture, and learn how to apply these insights to enhance leadership and student outcomes.

The session will introduce practical frameworks and tools which utilise proven psychological methods to support emotional health and wellbeing in students and teachers – tools have been shown to reduce teacher workload and improve student engagement and performance. Join Phil to discover how integrating emotional intelligence into your leadership practice can lead to more resilient, empathetic, and high-performing educational environments.



## Josh Darby

Fire and Emergency New Zealand

### The Whanaungatanga Programme: A new approach to Mental Ill Health Prevention across Workforces.

The Whanaungatanga Programme is a groundbreaking workplace mental health initiative developed within Fire and Emergency New Zealand that focuses on prevention through systemic change rather than individual treatment. Grounded in principles of connection, trust, and co-design the programme addresses organisational drivers of mental ill-health by creating environments that support voice, belonging and value. This presentation shares key insights, early outcomes, and practical tools from the first responder context that are relevant to any sector grappling with burnout, workplace culture challenges, or worker exposure to difficult events. Rather than asking workers to be more resilient, Whanaungatanga focuses on work redesign – offering a replicable model for those looking to create mentally healthier, more connected workplaces.



## Emma Esposito

School Social Worker  
Coburn Primary School



## Kathleen McInnes

Student Wellbeing Case Manager  
Coburn Primary School

### We Belong' – The Practical Implementation of Collaborative Practice.

'We Belong' showcases the practical implementation of collaborative practice as a preventative approach within a school setting. 'We Belong' is co designed and culturally informed with community voice to promote wellbeing, safety, mental health, and diversity. 'We Belong' is a whole school approach to strengthening students' sense of engagement, wellbeing, and ability to form respectful relationships.



## Alison Parolo

Principal – Baldivis Secondary College

### Collaboration to Build a Sense of Belonging and Identity in School

Collaboration to Build a Sense of Belonging and Identity in School explores the intercultural challenges identified at Baldivis Secondary College and the targeted initiatives implemented in response. The presentation outlines how school-level collaboration, culturally responsive practice, and community partnerships were harnessed to reduce barriers for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) students and strengthen their sense of belonging and identity. By centring student voice and embedding inclusive, strengths-based approaches, the initiatives enhanced student engagement, wellbeing, and educational outcomes. The session will share the most significant changes observed, alongside practical strategies that can be adapted to other school contexts. Contributing to the national conversation on equity and inclusion, this presentation demonstrates how collaborative, community-connected practice builds a school's capacity to respond to diversity in meaningful and sustainable ways. It highlights the power of intentional collaboration in shaping inclusive school cultures where all students feel seen, heard, valued, and supported to succeed.



## Dr Justine Grogan

Senior Advisor for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education at the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)

### Shifting Across the Indigenous Cultural Responsiveness Continuum in Teacher Education: Insights from Research and Practice

Over the past five years, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL, 2022) has worked on behalf of the Commonwealth Department of Education to advance cultural responsiveness in the Australian teaching workforce. This initiative included extensive consultations to reflect the diversity of First Nations education experts and stakeholders within the teaching sector. It became evident that teachers must go beyond simply delivering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural content. To support this shift, AITSL uses a mixed method approach and data collection methods, such as surveys and focus groups, to capture insights from both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous educators. Upholding principles of The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) ethics application and Indigenous data sovereignty, the project prioritises ethical management of Indigenous data. AITSL's (2022) Indigenous Cultural Responsiveness toolkit, recently released, serves as a self-reflection resource to help teachers foster culturally safe learning environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and indeed all students. An ongoing trial across 77 schools gathers data on the toolkit's use, assessing changes in teachers' biases, beliefs, and practices, while identifying any barriers to implementation. These insights will inform updates to the toolkit and additional resources, such as professional learning to enhance culturally safe learning environments in all Australian schools. AITSL is dedicated to sharing these findings widely with researchers, educators and stakeholders across all disciplines and sectors, both nationally and internationally.



## Margaret Hepworth

Founder – The Gandhi Experiment

Victorian Education Coordinator – Together for Humanity

### A Call to Hope: Empowering Young People for a Better World

How can we help shift young people's attitudes from overwhelm to hope, to build a better world?

This inspiring session explores how hope can become a catalyst for wellbeing, action, and social change. Using the transformative 'Positive Reality' methodology, we'll explore ways to shift negative thinking and feelings of doom, to purposeful, mindful action.

Participants will leave with practical tools to nurture hope, creativity and critical thinking in young people, alongside strategies to help them find purpose as global citizens and contribute to stronger, safer communities. In today's world, Hope is a key for change.

# Concurrent Sessions 5 and 6

## Panel:

### Leading the Way – Strengthening school and community support through national collaboration – The National Postvention Leadership Group

Chair:



Fiona McCallum  
Director, MacKillop Seasons

Panellists:



Tanja Hirvonen  
Interim Chief Executive Officer  
Thirilli



Kristen Douglas  
Head Headspace & Schools



Amanda Glenwright  
General Manager Health  
Services  
Youturn



Keeva Mostyn  
National Lead  
Seasons for Life

The panel will explore the vision for the National Postvention Leadership Group (NPLG) which brings together organisations who deliver national suicide postvention services and activities for individuals and communities bereaved or impacted by a death by suicide. Through collaboration, the NPLG aims to build on the strengths of each organisation to improve suicide postvention support in Australia and ensure that no person or community is without the support they need.



## Dr Tracy Castelino

Founder – ShantiWorks

### Reflexive Leadership in Unprecedented Times.

This presentation will offer a space to explore leadership practices in deeply unsettled and unprecedented times – globally and locally. Some of what this presentation will cover:

- Reviewing our thinkings and practices.
- Make sense of our vision and role as a leader
- Develop or extend your complex understandings of organisational-team and worker care.
- Explore your personal, political and professional understandings of supervision and leadership.
- Join with colleagues in order to nourish each other.



## Dr Phil Lambert PSM

Adjunct Professor – University of Sydney & Nanjing Normal University

### Contemporary Leadership for the Human Services/Professions: Safe Harbours or Turbulent Seas?

This session addresses the VUCA (volatile, unpredictable, complex and ambiguous) world in which human services leaders operate. Now and as never before, transformational leadership qualities and dispositions are required to strengthen the safety and wellbeing of their staff, clients or students. Drawing on his recent article published in the USA to a readership of over 100,000, Dr Lambert will outline the approach to leadership genuine leaders exhibit and develop in others, how they provide guidance and support and recognise, like boats, there might be security in a safe harbour but that's not what boats are for.



## Justin Roberts

National Program Director,  
ReLATE – The MacKillop Institute



## Tegan McDonald

Principal,  
St Patrick's Primary School



## Shona Loudon

Assistant Principal  
St Patrick's Primary School

### Improving Educator Wellbeing in Student-Centred Schools

Drawing on insights from over 3,000 educators implementing the ReLATE Education Model, this practical workshop unpacks evidence-informed strategies to reduce educator burnout and secondary traumatic stress while strengthening professional growth and student-centred practice.

Participants will explore key elements of ReLATE's Educator Wellbeing Framework and discover how one Victorian school has embedded robust recovery practices to help staff navigate challenging incidents and design effective supports for students to recover and reengage.





**Daphne Yarram**

Chief Executive Officer  
Yoowinna Wurnalung Aboriginal Health Service.



**Nina Levin**

Specialist Clinical Advisor  
Yoowinna Wurnalung Aboriginal Health Service.

### **Cultural Humility, Responsiveness and Belonging**

Strengthening Young people and their Families through cultural connections, Transforming Futures: The Family Centred Approach Initiative

Family Centred Approaches (FCA) program is a comprehensive and culturally responsive initiative aimed at supporting young people and reducing their involvement with the justice system.

Key Aspects of FCA:

- **Culturally Responsive:** The program is Aboriginal-led and emphasises self-determination, cultural responsiveness, and trauma-informed care.
- **Family-Centred Focus:** It involves the support of an adult, family member, or mentor to help young people through holistic healing, strengthening family relationships, and fostering social and cultural connections.
- **Supportive Activities:** The program includes mentoring, recreational activities, and events that promote cultural connection, healing, and personal development.

Young Person's Journey:

- **Goal Setting:** Goals are shaped by the young person, with guidance and support from adults and mentors.
- **Cultural Connection:** Activities such as weaving, burning, crafting, making music, and poetry help maintain cultural ties.
- **Educational Support:** Assistance with re-engagement in school, TAFE, or university, and support for pursuing trades, courses, sports, and music.
- **Life Skills and Mindfulness:** Clinicians support life skills development and mindfulness strategies, fostering healthy and respectful relationships.

This approach is holistic and supportive, focusing on the overall well-being and development of young people grounded in culture



**Krushnadevsinh (Kano) Ravalji**

CEO, Third Culture Australia  
Youth Commissioner, Victorian Multicultural Commission

### **Belonging, Cultural Identity & Mental Wellbeing: A Roadmap for Young People**

For children and young people, identity is not just about self-expression, it's tied to their mental health, sense of safety, and belonging. In environments where cultural, racial, and personal identities are constantly shifting, many young people, especially those from migrant and refugee backgrounds often feel unseen or pressured to conform. The experience of navigating multiple cultures, expectations and communities can be both isolating and confusing.

This presentation explores the vital link between identity, wellbeing, and culturally safe environments. It highlights the importance of creating space for young people to explore who they are, develop the language to share their lived experiences, and feel validated in their identities. By addressing the impacts of racism, bias and cultural disconnection, we can better support young people in understanding that their identity is not a challenge to overcome—but a strength to celebrate.

Through lived experience, practice-based insights and practical strategies, this session will challenge professionals to reimagine how they support young people. It will centre the importance of cultural safety, belonging and representation in building mentally healthy schools, services and communities that allow all young people to thrive.



## Associate Professor Tim Moore

Institute of Child Protection Studies, Australian Catholic University

### Empowering Young Survivors: Trauma-Informed Approaches to Sexual Health and Relationship Education.

Many young Australians will experience maltreatment before turning 18 which, in turn, places them at greater risk of further harm. In previous research young survivors have told us that sexual health and relationship education is a site where they might not get the information they need and be supported to find assistance they require but that most is unhelpful if not harmful. In this session on trauma-informed, survivor-aware sexual health and relationship education (SHRE), Tim Moore will draw on findings from a three-year research project, funded by the National Centre on Action Against Child Sexual Abuse, conducted with young survivors and practitioners. The research aimed to understand what young survivors want and need from SHRE and how to adopt a more survivor-aware approach in delivering this education. Key insights from the study emphasise the importance of creating safe, inclusive learning environments where young people feel heard and supported. This includes addressing the impact of past trauma, providing content that is sensitive to triggers, and ensuring facilitators are trained in trauma-informed practices. Young survivors shared their experiences of what works for them in sexual health education, highlighting the need for education that is both responsive and practical, helping them build healthy relationships and manage challenging emotions. The findings also underscore the need for education that empowers young people while prioritising their emotional and psychological safety, ensuring that they feel respected and capable of engaging with the material in a way that is meaningful to them.



## Peta Simpson

Alannah & Madeline Foundation



## Kathy Warwick

Alannah & Madeline Foundation

### Embedding a Trauma Informed Lens to Online Safety Education Alanah Madeline Foundation.

This 30-minute presentation shares three heartfelt stories showing how a whole-of-community approach can unlock hidden potential, benefiting individuals, society, and the country.

Mel, a primary school Principal, shares Jono's journey—struggling with reading until Grade 4, his needs were acknowledged by his family thanks to his brother Mikey's own struggles until Grade 10, leading to a turnaround. Now school captain in 2025, Jono's story includes video interviews with Mikey, their mother Cathy, and Jono, revealing stigma's impact and self-advocacy's power.

Next, Charli, identified with unique needs in Year 9, shares her struggles without support from a dysfunctional family, moving towns to escape hardship. Overwhelmed, she skipped VCE exams, taking a gap year in 2025 to rebuild while awaiting mental health support, hoping to unlock her potential.

Finally, Gufran, an accountant raised in India, recounts feeling trapped in a loop until his needs were identified at 35. After personal challenges, he found purpose in psychology, co-founding Timestone Consulting with Mel to deliver education programs fostering a future where everyone thrives.

Each story follows a past-present-future arc, using research-backed tools—contact and education—to reduce stigma, creating safe, culturally responsive spaces (UNICEF, 2021).

Takeaways urge educators to ensure equity for every child per the DDA, workplaces to foster understanding through human connection, and everyone to see each person's potential. Interactive elements—video, reflection prompts, and Q&A—ensure engagement, while a trauma-informed approach prioritises safety and empowerment, offering practical ways to build communities where every person flourishes as their whole self.



## Dr Nikki Jamieson

Strategic Advisor – Suicide Prevention, Lived Experience and Moral Injury  
Department of Defence & Founder of Moral Injury Australia

### Understanding Moral Injury in the Workplace and its Impact in the Helping Professions.

Individuals can be exposed to events that violate their moral beliefs and values such as acts or decisions that cause intentional or unintentional harm. The response to such violations can lead to what is called moral injury and can create deep, unresolved feelings of anger, betrayal, guilt, and shame and heighten the risk of suicidality. Moral injury has often been linked to military veterans and first responders, and more recently social work, aged care, teaching, law and media professions particularly during COVID-19. Moral injury is rapidly becoming recognised as a psychosocial risk for some workplaces. The presentation explores the multi-dimensionality of moral injury and how we as a helping profession can increase our knowledge and understanding, in turn supporting our own self-care, organisational wellbeing, and care of our clients.



## Dr Gemma McKibbin

Senior Research Fellow, University of Melbourne



## Camille Schloeffel

Founder – The STOP Campaign

### **What victim-survivors of children's harmful sexual behaviour need from the service system: Learning from Lived Experience.**

This presentation adopts a conversational style to explore the insights of 25 Survivors of children's harmful sexual behaviour (child-on-child sexual abuse). Opportunities for service system enhancement across multiple sectors, including the media, primary and mental health, education, justice and specialist sexual assault, are discussed. Participants will hear directly from a Survivor about her abuse experience and will have the opportunity to reflect on the power of Lived Experience when advocating for improved service provision.



## Jocelyn Bignold AM

CEO – McAuley Community Services for Women.

### **Safe at Home: Intervening early to support the safety and wellbeing of people experiencing family violence.**

This session explores an innovative approach to supporting the safety and wellbeing of people affected by family violence – the three-year 'Safe at Home' trial in the Geelong and Barwon region. Funded by the Victorian Government and co-designed by victim-survivors, men who had used violence and sector experts, Safe at Home provides early, tailored interventions for the whole household, with women, children, young people and the person using violence provided with individualised, flexible support for up to two years. This session will outline the research, codesign and systems mapping work that informed the model and the community engagement work being done to embed it. Family violence is the biggest driver of homelessness among women, children and young people across Australia. Safe at Home aims to keep them safe and connected to their communities while preventing homelessness, through a new model that will be evaluated and potentially replicated across Australia.



## Hayley Wainwright

Researcher – Monash University

### **Improving the Implementation of Transition Planning in Out-of-Home Care.**

Abstract Transition planning is a core practice designed to support young people in out-of-home care (OOHC) to prepare for adulthood. However, evidence indicates that it is often inconsistently applied and is not achieving its intended outcomes. Why this is the case remains unclear. This presentation draws on findings from mixed-methods studies which applied an implementation science lens to examine how transition planning is understood, delivered, and experienced across MacKillop's residential care settings. Data from transition plan content analysis, surveys, and interviews were analysed to assess the fidelity, acceptability, appropriateness, and feasibility of transition planning, and to identify barriers and enablers to implementation. Findings show that despite strong policy intent, transition planning is inconsistently enacted in practice. Barriers span system-level ambiguity, organisational constraints, individual beliefs, and the design of the transition planning process. Enablers include placement stability and young people's readiness. Implementation strategies to enhance uptake and consistency have been identified. These findings offer insight into why transition planning is not working as intended and provide strategies for improving its delivery so that young people receive timely, meaningful, and developmentally responsive support as they leave care.



## Simangaliso Nyoni

National Multicultural Practice Lead, MacKillop Family Services

### **What if you didn't know who you are , where you come from?. Multicultural Cultural Support Plan**

Multicultural Cultural Support Plans are an important part of telling the story of a young person and who they are , it is an important part of cultivating their identity and their sense of belonging . The Charter of Rights recognises that children need to feel safe , secure and have a strengthened sense of cultural connection , identity and know their background. The multicultural cultural support plan is a resource for everyone who plays a critical role in young people who are in Out of Home Care , this includes educators , practitioners , clinical and disability services. A Cultural Support Plan is an individualised plan that aims to develop or maintain children and young people's cultural identity through connection to family, community, and culture while they are in care. Cultural Support Plans help to document and assist culturally responsive planning and decision making, centering the best interests of the child and young person.

What will be covered in the session: This session will walk you through the development of what a high quality and authentic cultural support plan looks like. How a cultural support plan can be utilised as a resource in the care, connection, and relationship with young people. It is a resource that can give great insight into the needs and strengths of a young person. It highlights the importance of embedding and considering culture in all aspects of a young person's life , including and especially education . We know that the education environment plays a huge part in the development of a young person's sense of belonging.



# Concurrent Sessions 7 and 8



## Louise Hall

Lead Partnerships- MacKillop Seasons & Jas Perry, National Leader Foster Care Development – MacKillop Family Services.



## Jas Perry

National Leader Foster Care Development – MacKillop Family Services.

### Building Capacity to Support the Grief Experiences of Children & Young People Living in Out-Of-Home Care .

Grief is a natural reaction to significant changes and losses, often overlooked beyond bereavement. For children and young people in out of home care, grief is a constant companion due to ongoing changes and losses. This grief affects them physically, emotionally, cognitively, behaviourally, and spiritually, yet they often struggle to understand these connections. Recognizing the link between trauma and grief, it's crucial to support both children and their caregivers. The presentation aims to reframe these experiences using grief theory, helping professionals and carers better understand and support children and young people. The presentation will further share knowledge and new approaches to support the loss and grief experiences of foster carers.

Key learnings include understanding grief in out of home care, building professional knowledge, and providing practical support for children.



## Dr Trixie James

Lecturer, School of Access Education – CQUniversity

### "How Can We Help Students Be Positive... When We're Not?!" A Reboot for the Resilient Educator

You can't pour from an empty cup! When we nurture our own optimism and resilience, we create space for others to do the same. This uplifting workshop offers simple, science-backed strategies to recharge your mindset and help others thrive too.

In the busyness of our professional lives, it's easy to forget that our mindset matters just as much as the students and the people we work with. This fun and empowering workshop builds on the Let's Be Positive Together session and flips the focus inward: how can we, as educators, mentors, and professionals, cultivate optimism, resilience, and a more constructive internal dialogue – for ourselves and those around us? Using simple, research-informed strategies from Positive Psychology, this interactive session invites you to pause, reflect, and reframe. Through storytelling, group activities, and laughter, we'll explore practical tools to energise your outlook, language, and emotional wellbeing. Come ready to reconnect with the power of positive thinking – and leave with a few new strategies (and smiles) to share.



## Zoë Robinson

Advocate for Children and Young People, Office of Youth

COMING SOON



## Brona Walsh

Director Education Engagement Programs – MacKillop Education

### Best Practices for Therapy Dogs in School Settings

Animal-assisted education is an emerging approach that leverages the unique benefits of the human-animal bond to support student wellbeing and engagement. This session will explore best practices for integrating therapy dogs into school environments, with a focus on fostering self-regulation, building emotional resilience, enhancing social interactions, boosting confidence, and cultivating empathy among students.

Participants will gain practical knowledge on developing safe, effective, and goal-focused animal-assisted education programs. The session will provide essential guidelines for risk management, outline protocols to ensure the safety and wellbeing of both students and therapy dogs, and share strategies to create supportive environments where learning and connection can thrive.

Drawing on real-world examples and evidence-informed practice, this session will demonstrate how therapy dogs can enrich educational experiences and contribute to improved mental health and academic outcomes for students.



## Kris Bardon

Principal – MacKillop Education

### Empowering Students to re-engage in education.

MacKillop Education operates five specialist school campuses designed to support students whose learning needs and social or emotional challenges cannot be adequately met in a mainstream education setting. To cater for a student's learning and wellbeing needs, MacKillop provide an environment that empowers students to re-engage in education and supports them academically and socially so they can experience success in learning.

MacKillop recognises the importance of student voice in shaping a supportive and inclusive learning environment. By actively listening to and valuing students' perspectives, we foster a sense of ownership, belonging, and agency that enhances engagement and personal growth.

Join this workshop to hear directly from our students as they share their personal stories and reflect on their experiences at MacKillop Education.



## Jose De La Garma

Learning and Development Manager – MacKillop Family Services

### Intentional Use of Self: Leading the Way in the Face of Crisis

In our crisis-laden, high-stress environments, great leadership isn't just about making the right decisions. It's about becoming someone others trust in chaos. This session explores the 4 Foundations of Intentional Use of Self: Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Relationship Skills and Attunement, and Self-Care, and how they translate into powerful leadership practice across every level of an organisation. Whether you're supporting a distressed young person, navigating burnout in your team, or managing high-stakes conversations, this session will equip you with a practical framework to lead with clarity, connection, and calm. You'll gain insight into how others perceive you, learn how to regulate yourself under pressure, and understand why sustainable leadership begins with how we care for ourselves. If you're looking to elevate your leadership with real presence, emotional precision, and lasting impact, then this session is for you.



## Keeva Mostyn

Seasons for Life Lead,  
MacKillop Seasons



**Taryn Hopper**  
Social Worker



**Nicole Lempriere**  
Secondary School Nurse



**Renae Pettit**  
Secondary School Educator



**Hannah Jamieson**  
Seasons for Life Coordinator,  
Vic and Tas

### Building emotional and grief literacy for whole of school communities following a suicide or other loss event

Seasons for Life provides grief literacy education and built the capacity of young people, and the adults in their lives, in over 600 schools communities across Australia. The initiative is funded under the National Suicide Prevention Leadership and Support Program by the Department of Health and Aged Care and is built from the long-standing evidence-based loss and grief education program, Seasons for Growth supports schools to respond to loss by suicide. Many schools have recognised the value of the initiative to support students following the many changes and losses that occur, and as a suicide prevention strategy. The initiative has been delivered in urban, regional and remote areas across the country, and to all types of schools.

Join this workshop to gain insight into supporting students and school communities following a loss event, including loss by suicide. The workshop will be presented with two experienced Seasons for Growth Companions (facilitator) who have implemented the program in high school settings. The Companions will provide a firsthand account of implementing small group grief and loss education to secondary students.



## Matthew Spicer

Director – Clinical Training Services, The Centre for Positive Behaviour Support (CPBS)

### Values-Based Leadership

The alignment of leaders' actions with organisational values is crucial for fostering and maintaining a culture of trust, integrity, and effectiveness.

The presentation examines the implications of values in leadership, emphasising how actions reflect values and have genuine organisational impact. Values alignment and Leaders' actions can dynamically impact staff behaviour leading to positive or negative consequences for organisations. Actions are always congruent with some values, the important question is, "Which values are they congruent with"?

We will look at examples that illustrate issues of questionable leadership practices, and their associated impacts. Finally, the presentation will offer constructive alternatives for leaders to embody their values in everyday decisions and interactions, aiming to inspire a shift toward authentic and constructive leadership, cultivating a positive organisational culture that benefits both employees and the communities they serve.



## KA McKercher

Founder – Beyond Sticky Notes

### Co-designing with care: centering care, dignity and choice in our engagement with families and each other .

Can co-design support safety and wellbeing? Yes, but it depends on how it's done. Co-design done poorly can cause harm, feel extractive, and damage trust. Done well, it can build connections, support healing, and lead to meaningful solutions. The process matters just as much as the outcome.

This session explores how to co-design with care, from start to finish. We'll focus on trauma-informed approaches that centre choice, dignity, and shared power. We'll also ask tough questions about what "safety" really means in an unjust world, especially for people in bodies made and kept vulnerable. Simply saying "this is a safe space" isn't enough.

You'll take away:

- a clearer understanding of co-design and co-production
- insight into the roles of leaders, staff, young people, and families
- how to tell co-design apart from other engagement approaches
- practical strategies to plan, run, and close co-design processes with care
- real-world examples of co-design in action

Note: This session won't teach you how to run workshops or facilitate co-design. Like any skill, it takes time, practice, and support to get good at it.



## Kathy Karatasas

Researcher University of Western Sydney

### Using Intentional Questions to Design Culturally Inclusive Services with the SELF Framework

The presentation provides an overview on the S.E.L.F cultural framework, which explores cultures through the lens of settlement journey, ethnicity, language and faith and reflections on learnings from Churchill Fellowship international research with child and family organisations working with culturally diverse backgrounds.

Key messages include: the importance of cultural connectedness; creating opportunities to be language warriors; valuing and collecting cultural data; exploring cultural thinking, attitudes through safe reflective communities of practice forums for practitioners, carers and multi-disciplinary; and the role organisations have to advocate for better monitoring practices that strengthen safeguards and for developing collaborative partnerships with cultural and community leaders.

# Conference speakers and bios

## Keynote Speakers



### **Dr Robyn Miller AM**

Chief Executive Officer – MacKillop Family Services

Robyn is the Chief Executive Officer of MacKillop Family Services. She is passionate about social justice and the rights of children and families. As a social worker and family therapist, Robyn has over thirty years' experience in the child and welfare sector. Robyn is committed to training and supportive supervision for colleagues to provide best practice to the children and families we serve. When not traveling to MacKillop programs all over Australia, Robyn delights in her own five children and three beautiful grandchildren.



### **Commissioner Meena Singh**

Acting Principal Commissioner and Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People – Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) Victoria

Meena Singh is a Yorta Yorta and Indian woman, born, raised and living on the land of the Kulin Nations. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Bachelor of Law degree. Meena started her legal career with Victoria Legal Aid, where she practised in human rights and criminal law, and later became their inaugural Associate Director, Aboriginal Services. She has led legal services and programs at the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service and the Human Rights Law Centre, as well as consulting in vocational education and training and organisational development across many organisations.

Meena is the Acting Principal Commissioner for Children and Young People and the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People in Victoria. In her work, she is passionate about elevating the voices of children and young people to inform service design and regulatory practices that promote inclusion, connection and ultimately achieve children and young people's wellbeing and safety.



### **Commissioner Joe Ball**

Commissioner for LGBTIQ+ Communities Victoria

Joe Ball was appointed as the new Victorian Commissioner for LGBTIQ+ Communities in September 2024 for a three-year term. Commissioner Ball (he/him) is a proud transgender man. The Commissioner advocates for the rights, safety and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ communities. He is a longstanding LGBTIQ+ advocate and former CEO of Switchboard Victoria, with a 25-year career in disability, housing and homelessness, and social services. During his tenure with Switchboard, Joe led the establishment of the statewide LGBTIQ+ Family Violence and Mental Health helpline Rainbow Door. Throughout his expansive career, Joe has drawn upon the strength and guidance of LGBTIQ+ history and most importantly, the work of activists who have paved the way, the courageous voices with lived experience and the wisdom of LGBTIQ+ elders. Commissioner Ball is also a member of the Expert Advisory Group for the federal government's 10-Year LGBTIQ+ Health and Wellbeing Plan and previously participated in several leading social service advisory committees and boards. This includes the Victorian Family Violence peak body Safe and Equal, the community advisory committee for 1800RESPECT, the Victorian LGBTIQ+ Taskforce, the Victorian Family Violence Reform Advisory Group, and the National Suicide Prevention Governance Committee. In 2020, Joe was honoured as an award recipient in the 50 Outstanding LGBTI+ Leaders in Australia.



### **Professor Pasi Sahlberg**

Professor of Educational Leadership – University of Melbourne

Professor Pasi Sahlberg is a renowned Finnish educator, researcher, and author, recognised for his contributions to global education reform. With a career spanning teaching, teacher education, policymaking, and academia, he has influenced education systems worldwide. He has served in key roles, including Senior Education Specialist at the World Bank (Washington, DC), Lead Education Specialist at the European Training Foundation (Italy), and Director General at Finland's Ministry of Education and Culture (CIMO). Additionally, he was a Visiting Professor of Practice at Harvard University. Pasi is currently Professor of Educational Leadership at the University of Melbourne, where he continues to advocate for evidence-based education policies.





## **Professor Leah Bromfield**

Director of the Australian Centre for Child Protection – University of South Australia

Professor Leah Bromfield is a leading authority in child protection and a distinguished academic, currently serving as Chair of Child Protection and Director of the Australian Centre for Child Protection at the University of South Australia. Recognised for her groundbreaking contributions to child safety reform, she was named 2025 South Australian Australian of the Year. She also holds several influential advisory roles, including Chair of the SA Child Protection Expert Group, Chair of the Tas Uplifting Care Independent Expert Group, and Co-Chair of the National Advisory Group for the National Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Child Sexual Abuse.



## **Dr Ross Greene**

Clinical Psychologist – Founder of Collaborative & Proactive Solutions

Dr. Ross Greene is the originator of the Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS) model, a groundbreaking approach to supporting children with behavioural challenges. He spent over 20 years on the faculty at Harvard Medical School and is now the founding director of Lives in the Balance, a non-profit organisation dedicated to providing free, web-based resources on the CPS model to educators, parents, and clinicians worldwide. A highly sought-after speaker and consultant, Dr. Greene has advised schools, mental health organisations, and policymakers across the globe. His work has been widely featured in major media outlets, including The Oprah Show, Good Morning America, National Public Radio (NPR), The Atlantic, The Washington Post, The Chicago Tribune, and The Boston Globe.



## **Professor Anne Graham AO**

Director of the Centre for Children and Young People – Southern Cross University

Professor Anne Graham AO is the Founding Director of the Centre for Children and Young People (CCYP) and a conjoint Professor at the University of New South Wales. With a background as both a primary school teacher and sociologist, she has dedicated over 20 years to teacher education, shaping research and policy that improve the lives of children and young people. Under her leadership, CCYP has positioned Southern Cross University as a key player in regional, national, and international research on children's rights, social and emotional wellbeing, and ethical research involving young people. Her work has directly influenced policy and practice in education, child protection, and community services.



## **Professor Pat Dudgeon**

Professor, Indigenous Studies – University of Western Australia

Pat Dudgeon is from the Bardi people in Western Australia. She is a psychologist and professor at the Poche Centre for Aboriginal Health and the School of Indigenous Studies at UWA. Her area of research includes Indigenous social and emotional wellbeing and suicide prevention. She is a member on many boards and committees such as on the National Suicide Prevention Office Advisory Board, the Culture, Care, Connect Advisory Group – National, Regional and Local Suicide Prevention and Aftercare Networks, NACCHO, Gayaa Dhuwi Proud Spirit Australia, Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association (AIPA) and the Australians for Mental Health. She was also a national Mental Health Commissioner for 5 years. She is the director of the Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention at UWA. She is also the lead chief investigator of a national research project, Transforming Indigenous Mental Health and Wellbeing. She has many publications in Indigenous mental health that have significant impact such as the Working Together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principals and Practice 2014 and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project Report – What the Evidence and Our People Tell Us 2016

# Presenters and Panellists



## Krushnadevsinh (Kano) Ravalji

Founder – Third Culture Australia and Youth Commissioner, Victorian Multicultural Commission

Krushnadevsinh (Kano) Ravalji is the founder of Third Culture Australia and Youth Commissioner at the Victorian Multicultural Commission. As a passionate advocate for D&I, Kano works to empower young people and multicultural communities nationwide. Through keynotes, school programs, and policy-driven initiatives, he amplifies youth voices and fosters inclusive leadership. Kano recently hosted Australia's first entirely youth-led conference, bringing together over 120 professionals to explore authentic youth engagement and wellbeing. His dedication to equity has earned him accolades such as the VicHealth Future Changemaker Award and Wyndham City's Young Citizen of the Year. A regular voice on national radio and media, Kano shares insights on best practices, identity, and systemic change. Committed to supporting young people's mental well-being by equipping young people and sector workers alike with the tools to navigate challenges, build resilience, and advocate for their needs in education, policy, and beyond.



## Deb Tsorbaris

Chief Executive Officer – Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

Deb Tsorbaris serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, the leading body representing child and family services in Victoria. With a career spanning over three decades, Deb brings extensive leadership experience from both the not-for-profit and public sectors, including roles in youth work, disability, homelessness, drug and alcohol services, and employment support. Before joining the Centre, she held senior executive positions within the Victorian Government. Deb is a dedicated advocate for children, young people, and families, particularly those facing vulnerability and disadvantage. She plays a significant role in shaping policy at both state and national levels and is recognised for her commitment to cross-sector collaboration in addressing systemic and long-term needs. Deb co-chairs the Roadmap Implementation Ministerial Advisory Group and its steering group, and is also a member of the Victorian Children's Council, contributing her expertise to critical reform and strategic initiatives.



## Zoë Robinson

Advocate for Children and Young People, Youth Office

Zoë Robinson was appointed as the Advocate for Children and Young People in January 2021.

Zoë holds a law degree and a Masters of Human Rights. She previously worked as a solicitor for firms in NSW, for Deloitte in internal strategy and was the CEO of the NSW Peak Body for Youth Homelessness. Prior to commencing her appointment as the Acting Advocate, Zoë worked at the Department of Premier and Cabinet. Her role was focussed on breaking disadvantage. Zoë also volunteered for a number of months for an organisation that represented death row inmates based in Houston, Texas.

Having both experience in the professional services industry and the not for profit industry means that Zoë brings a balance of passion coupled with a "can do" attitude to her role as Advocate. Zoë firmly believes that children and young people should be given every opportunity to succeed and set themselves up for success, and that they should have the opportunity to choose what that means to them. Zoë believes that all children and young people should be heard, listened to and be central to the work that we do both in government, business and community. Zoë is enthusiastic, energetic, and pragmatic and thoroughly enjoys collaborating with people to achieve a purpose and an outcome.



## Rabbi Zalman Kastel AM

Founder – Together for Humanity

Rabbi Kastel AM grew up in the ultra-orthodox Hasidic tradition in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, where his worldview was shaped by his community's traditions. His perspective shifted in 2001 through encounters with Christians and Muslims, inspiring a lifelong commitment to interfaith cooperation and promoting positive experiences of diversity for young Australians. Now based in Sydney, he continues to serve as a Hasidic Rabbi, teaching Bible study at Chabad House North Shore. Ordained after studies in the UK, Australia, and the US, he also holds a Graduate Diploma in Education from the University of New England. In 2020, he was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for his contributions to interfaith and intercultural understanding.



## David Burroughs

Founder – Australian Psychological Services

Dave Burroughs is Founder of Australian Psychological Services and Chief Mental Health Officer for Westpac Group. With a 20-year international career as a consultant psychologist working across multiple industries, Dave is a recognised expert in Psychological Health & Safety and supports many leading government, national and international organisations in adopting strategic and practical approaches to psychosocial risk management and developing mentally healthy workplaces. Dave has a commitment to evidence-based practice, a reputation for tackling complex people matters and a passion for innovation and challenging convention.



## **Associate Professor Lisa McKay-Brown**

Associate Dean Diversity and Inclusion – University of Melbourne

Associate Professor Lisa McKay-Brown is the Associate Dean for Diversity and Inclusion at the University of Melbourne's Faculty of Education. With more than 25 years of experience in teaching and educational leadership across diverse contexts, Lisa has a longstanding commitment to promoting the inclusion of students with disability. She is internationally regarded for her expertise in school attendance and serves on the Executive Board of the International Network for School Attendance. Her research spans both the education and health sectors, and she leads the Faculty's Disability Research Collaboration, guiding initiatives such as In2School—designed to support students with chronic absenteeism—and Pathways2Participation, which applies Multi-tiered Systems of Support to improve attendance outcomes. Lisa is actively engaged in global partnerships that focus on advancing inclusive education in regions such as India and Latin America. Her research is particularly concerned with how students with mental health challenges and disabilities experience exclusion in educational environments, and she is driven by a passion to address and transform these systemic barriers.



## **Jahin Tanvir**

Chief Executive Officer – Australian School of Entrepreneurship

Jahin Tanvir is the CEO of the Australian School of Entrepreneurship (ASE), Australia's largest innovation provider, and a 3-time TEDx speaker. Recognised as a 40 Under 40 Most Influential Asian-Australian (2022) at just 21, he is a board director and a leading advocate for young people, diversity, and inclusion. A finalist for 2022 Young Australian of the Year and recipient of the 2021 Young Canberra Citizen of the Year for Community Service, Jahin serves as a Board Director at the Adolescent Health Association of Australia, a UNICEF Young Ambassador, and a Movember Ambassador. At 21, he founded Breathe., an EdTech social enterprise providing public speaking education to marginalised young people. In just six months, it reached over 16,000 individuals before being acquired by ASE Group in November 2022, where Jahin was appointed CEO.



## **Dr Phil Lambert PSM**

Adjunct Professor – University of Sydney & Nanjing Normal University

Dr Phil Lambert PSM is an internationally acclaimed education expert. He has extensive experience in education as a principal; inspector; Regional Director (Sydney) and General Manager of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority where he led the development of Australia's first national curriculum. Phil is Adjunct Professor at the University of Sydney and supports education reform efforts globally as expert advisor and researcher for the OECD, UNESCO and the World Bank. He has been engaged by education ministries in several countries including Japan, The Netherlands, Qatar, Kazakhstan, the UAE, Kuwait, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, Lithuania and Vietnam to guide and support their respective reforms. He is a Director on the board of Brazil's Instituto Reuna and an International Ambassador for the United Kingdom's National College. Phil contributes to the community in various ways. He is Chair (previously CEO) of Together For Humanity, the Attorney General's appointee on the NSW Children's Court Advisory Committee, the Minister of Education's independent appointee on the Non-Government School Not-For-Profit statutory advisory committee and was recently appointed as a member of the NSW Parliament's Education Advisory Group.



## **Associate Professor Tim Moore**

Deputy Director – Institute of Child Protection Studies  
Australian Catholic University (ACU)

Associate Professor Tim Moore serves as Deputy Director at the Institute of Child Protection Studies and is widely regarded as an international expert in child and youth research and advocacy for children's rights. With over 20 years of experience, his work has addressed a broad range of critical issues including homelessness, youth justice, child protection, residential out-of-home care, young carers, and strategies for preventing child sexual abuse. Tim has contributed expert advice to numerous major inquiries and Commissions, most notably the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, and has played a pivotal role in shaping initiatives at local, national, and international levels aimed at improving outcomes for children, young people, and their families. At the Institute, Tim leads the development and delivery of research and practice that meaningfully includes the voices and perspectives of children and young people. His work focuses on making services and systems more responsive, inclusive, and aligned with the rights and lived experiences of those they serve.



## **Jocelyn Bignold AM**

Chief Executive Officer – McAuley Community Services for Women

Jocelyn Bignold AM has been the CEO of McAuley Community Services for Women since 2008, leading innovative support programs for women and children experiencing family violence and homelessness. She has over 25 years of experience in community services, policy development, and advocacy, working extensively with government and non-government organisations to improve policy and service systems. A recognised leader in her field, Jocelyn was an expert witness before the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence and was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia in 2020 for her contributions to social welfare and improving the lives of vulnerable women and children.



## **Annette Schneider**

Chief Executive Officer – Together for Humanity

Annette brings more than two decades of experience in educational leadership, both in Australia and internationally. She began her professional journey in the classroom as a teacher before moving into leadership and values-driven education roles with organisations such as the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation, UNICEF, the Council of Europe Youth Directorate, and Amnesty International. After many years working in Europe, Annette returned to Australia where she taught in a range of school settings across Sydney, eventually joining the team at Together For Humanity. She holds a Master's degree in Intercultural Education and a double Bachelor's degree in Education and Arts (International Studies). Having lived and worked in diverse communities across the globe—and drawing on her own multicultural heritage—Annette brings rich lived experience to her commitment to intercultural understanding and inclusive education. At home, she is kept grounded and inspired by her three children, each of whom reminds her daily of the importance of striving for a world where diversity is celebrated and all people are treated with dignity and respect.



## **Fiona McCallum**

Director – MacKillop Seasons

Fiona brings extensive leadership experience across the fields of human resources, health, and education, having worked in both corporate and not-for-profit sectors. With formal qualifications in nursing and management, she is passionate about promoting the health and wellbeing of individuals across the lifespan. Fiona is dedicated to creating and sharing knowledge that empowers children, young people, and adults to thrive and reach their full potential.



## **Esmail Manahan**

National Director, Nanyubak Unit: First Nations Practice and Partnerships – MacKillop

Esmail is a proud Yorta Yorta woman, shaped by a politically active family committed to driving positive change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Drawing on her background in trauma and family therapy, Esmail leads cultural safety, self-determination, and reconciliation efforts at MacKillop Family Services. Her role includes advocating for the rights and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, and families—particularly those involved in child protection and out-of-home care. Esmail also oversees the development and implementation of MacKillop's Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan, ensuring meaningful and sustainable progress towards reconciliation. With extensive experience across both the Aboriginal community sector and the State Government, she brings a depth of cultural knowledge and leadership to her work. Esmail is inspired by the strength, resilience, and legacy of her ancestors, which continues to guide her advocacy and commitment to creating safe, culturally responsive systems for future generations.



## **Louise Hall**

National and International Partnerships Lead – MacKillop Seasons

Louise's passion for the value of group work led her to her current role. With a social work and early years background, Louise has worked across statutory and not for profit services with a focus on family support and wellbeing. At work, Louise enjoys building relationships with stakeholders and widening the reach of community support; and at home, she enjoys the changes and joy that come with being a parent of young adults.



## **Smeeta Singh**

National Program Director, Power to Kids – The MacKillop Institute

With an MA in Education Policy, Smeeta is passionate about social justice in education and the impact of intergenerational outcomes on student transitions, engagement and achievement. Nearing 20 years in the education sector, Smeeta has worked across a variety of roles that focus on empowering young people through education, including school improvement, teacher training and child wellbeing. Through senior leadership roles at AVID Australia, The Smith Family and The Orange Door, Smeeta has led the rollout of trauma-informed practice and systems-based change across school, family violence and community services sectors. She brings a deep understanding of place-based implementation within national and state contexts, and experience harnessing the voice of communities and young people to inform meaningful change.





### **Dr John Molineux**

Senior Lecturer – Deakin Business School – Deakin University

Dr John Molineux is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Management at Deakin Business School, where he has been based since 2012 following a distinguished career spanning over three decades in human resource management (HRM) across various industry sectors. He currently teaches postgraduate courses in HRM and leadership and maintains a strong focus on applied, industry-engaged research. His primary research interests include human performance, wellbeing, strategic HRM, organisational change, and action research. John has led several industry-funded research projects in recent years, particularly those examining the intersection of workforce wellbeing and organisational outcomes. He has successfully supervised six PhD candidates and one Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) candidate to completion and is currently supervising another doctoral student. Before entering academia, John held senior HR positions, including HR Director and Strategist, in multiple organisations.



### **Alison Wainwright**

Chief Executive Officer – Family Life

Allison has over 20 years of social work experience across government and non-profit sectors, holding senior leadership roles in community change, family violence, and child and family services in Australia and internationally. She specialises in trauma-informed interventions and family-sensitive practice, designing programs in crisis services, residential care, child protection, and community-based models. Her international work includes leading collective impact and primary prevention initiatives, particularly in HIV/AIDS prevention, family violence, and sexual health. From 2005 to 2011, Allison served as State Director for Integrated Services for Women and Children in South Africa, driving government reforms to support victims of crime and violence.



### **Dr Gemma McKibbin**

Senior Research Fellow – University of Melbourne

Dr. Gemma McKibbin is a Research Fellow in the Department of Social Work at the University of Melbourne, working with Prof. Cathy Humphreys in the Violence Against Women and Children Research Team. With a background in gender studies and experience in the women's sector, her PhD research focused on preventing harmful sexual behaviour among children and young people. A scholar with the Safer Families Centre for Research Excellence, Dr. McKibbin is the Chief Investigator on action research projects in partnership with MacKillop Family Services and Jesuit Social Services. She recently led a co-designed sexual abuse prevention program for children in residential and home-based care.



### **Dr Beau Hu**

National School Partnerships Manager – Together for Humanity

Dr. Beau Hu is the National School Partnerships Manager at TFH, where he leads the Intercultural Understanding Partnership Program, supporting schools in addressing cross-cultural challenges. Passionate about equipping young people and educators with essential skills, he brings extensive experience in education program management, research, and language teaching. Before joining TFH, Beau was the Education Programs Coordinator at the Asia Education Foundation, University of Melbourne. He authored the Environment Scan of Intercultural Understanding (2020–2022) for South Australia's Department of Education and led research for Victoria's Sister School Partnerships review.



### **Justin Roberts**

National Program Director, ReLATE – The MacKillop Institute

Justin is a nationally recognised leader in inclusive education, drawing on more than 15 years of experience as a teacher and educational leader in both mainstream and specialist school settings. His early career in mainstream education fuelled a deep commitment to creating learning environments that respond to the diverse needs of all students. He has held senior leadership roles, including Principal and Deputy Executive Principal, and has consistently championed approaches that prioritise student wellbeing and equitable access to education. In 2024, Justin was named one of Australia's Most Influential Educators in recognition of his significant contributions to the field.



## **Keeva Mostyn**

Seasons for Life Lead – MacKillop Seasons

Keeva brings a rich background in both Creative Arts and Social Work, with professional experience spanning the health, community, and education sectors. Since 2010, her work has been dedicated to the education field, where she has collaborated with primary and secondary schools across all sectors. Keeva is deeply passionate about supporting children and young people, as well as the adults who care for and work alongside them. Her approach encompasses both individual support and system-level initiatives, reflecting a commitment to fostering inclusive, responsive, and holistic educational environments.



## **Dr Trixie James**

Lecturer, School of Access Education – CQUniversity

Dr Trixie James is a lecturer and researcher in the STEPS enabling program at CQUniversity, where she is deeply committed to fostering positive educational experiences for adult learners. Her work centres on supporting students who often return to study after extended absences and may carry the burden of past negative educational experiences. With a strong belief in the transformative power of education, Dr James employs innovative, student-centred approaches that help learners rebuild confidence, challenge limiting beliefs, and develop strategies for academic success. Dr James completed her PhD at the University of Tasmania and has since led numerous research projects focused on the engagement and success of under-represented adult learners in tertiary education. Her areas of expertise include student engagement, quality teaching practices, social innovation, generative AI, and positive psychology.



## **Kathy Karatasas**

CEO & Founder – CulturalWorks

Researcher – University of Western Sydney

For more than 40 years, Kathy Karatasas (Totidis) has been a tireless advocate for improving outcomes for children by ensuring they remain safe and connected to family, community, and culture. With qualifications in Social Work and Management, her career spans frontline service delivery and leadership roles. As a second-generation migrant raised in a Greek Orthodox household and having lived overseas, Kathy brings deep insight into the experiences of children and families from diverse cultural backgrounds. Her personal journey—including raising four children following the early death of their father and supporting a family member in kinship care—has strengthened her belief in the vital role of family and cultural identity in a child's development. Kathy has championed the rights of over 46,000 children in out-of-home care across Australia, particularly the more than 40% who are First Nations children and up to 30% from multicultural backgrounds.



## **Simangaliso Nyoni**

National Multicultural Practice Lead – MacKillop Family Services

Simangaliso is a Social Worker and Counsellor with over 16 years of experience, currently serving as a Cultural Practice Lead at the national level. Specialising in multicultural communities, she works to embed culturally responsive best practices across services and policies. Previously, she was Principal Practitioner and Cultural Advisor Coordinator at MacKillop Family Services and a Counsellor at Deakin University. She holds a Bachelor of Social Work and a Master of Counselling from La Trobe University and is currently pursuing a Juris Doctor at Monash University. A passionate advocate for decolonising social work and counselling, Simangaliso co-authored a chapter in *Intersecting Stories: Narrative Therapy Reflections on Gender, Culture and Justice*.



## **Daphne Yarram**

Chief Executive Officer – Yoowinna Wurnalung Aboriginal Healing Service

Daphne Yarram is the Chief Executive Officer of Yoowinna Wurnalung Aboriginal Healing Service (YWAHS). A proud Noongar woman from South West Western Australia, Daphne has been a strong advocate for Aboriginal people and communities throughout her career. She has held various leadership and governance roles, including being a Board Director of Respect Victoria and Chairperson of Aboriginal Housing Victoria. Daphne's dedication to family violence prevention and cultural preservation is evident in her work at YWAHS, where she integrates traditional practices with modern approaches to support healing and empowerment within the Aboriginal community.



## **Dr Tracy Castelino**

Founder – ShantiWorks

Dr Tracy Castelino has been working in the field of violence against women for more than 30 years. This has included direct service and management roles with women and children's services and perpetrator intervention services. She continues to work with women and children who have been subjected to violence in their homes and provides supervision to domestic violence and men's family violence teams. She values partnerships and collective responses to systemic and social injustices and offers development and facilitation of community coordinated responses. She is skilled in working with the local politics and taking care of people and process to bring forward meaningful outcomes.



## **Josh Darby**

Project Lead – Whanaungatanga – Fire and Emergency New Zealand

Josh Darby is a Senior Firefighter and Project Lead of the Whanaungatanga Programme. With over 20 years of frontline experience, he brings a unique blend of operational, research, and lived experience to his presentations. A peer supporter and health researcher, Josh received the 2017 Firefighters Scholarship for his research examining suicide and psychological injury in Fire and Emergency. In 2021, he secured Movember funding to develop and evaluate a mental ill-health and suicide prevention programme. His work on this programme earned him the Mental Health Champion of the Year award at the New Zealand Health and Safety Awards.



## **Kate Martin**

Head of Practice Quality and Impact-Endeavour Foundation

Kate has over 20 years' experience across child protection, disability, domestic and family violence, and youth services. Formerly the Strategic Manager of Programs and Operations with Churches of Christ Care Children, Youth and Family Services (CYF), Kate provided statewide practice leadership across out-of-home care, early childhood, family support, and transition to independence services. She led the successful implementation and re-certification of The Sanctuary Model within CYF. Kate holds a Master's and Bachelor's Degree in Social Work, along with a Graduate Diploma in Developmental Trauma. She is an experienced facilitator in professional development, with expertise in team dynamics, emotionally intelligent leadership, and constructive conflict management.



## **Dr Nikki Jamieson**

Strategic Advisor – Suicide Prevention, Lived Experience and Moral Injury  
Department of Defence & Founder of Moral Injury Australia

Dr Nikki Jamieson is an Author, Suicidologist, Social Worker and Researcher & has undertaken pioneering research on moral injury in Australia following the suicide loss of her son in 2014. Published nationally and internationally on moral injury Nikki also delivers keynotes and workshops and written two books and micro-education app on moral injury for first responders and their families. Nikki has worked in several government departments in suicide prevention including Health and the Departments of Veterans' Affairs and Department of Defence. Nikki continues to advocate for suicide prevention and engaging lived experience.



## **Cameron Burgess**

Program Director, Sanctuary – The MacKillop Institute

Cameron Burgess brings over two decades of leadership experience across the Community Services, International Development, Social Enterprise, and Child Protection sectors. He holds formal qualifications in Social Work (Honours), Business Management, and Leadership. From 2012 to 2017, Cameron founded and led Mission Australia's Strengthening Communities initiative, delivering impactful community development projects in public housing estates and remote Aboriginal communities nationwide. This innovative work was recognised as a finalist in the national Collaboration for Impact awards. Cameron has also worked extensively across Southeast Asia, particularly in Myanmar, Vietnam, and Cambodia, and has served as Chair of the Board for an international non-government organisation.



## **Cleo Westhorpe**

Founder – PIVOT Professional Learning

With nearly two decades in education, Cleo is a passionate leader, educator, and innovator in inclusive learning and professional development. As co-founder of Pivot Professional Learning and The Inclusive School, Cleo is committed to amplifying student voice and using evidence-based insights to build inclusive, responsive, and high-impact learning environments. Her experience spans classroom teaching, educational consultancy, and the design of data-informed tools that support teacher growth and student engagement. Through Pivot, Cleo helps schools harness student feedback to drive meaningful change. The platform transforms classroom data into actionable insights, supporting continuous professional learning and ensuring every student's voice is heard.



## **Robert Boucher**

Principal – Swifts Creek P-12 School

Robert Boucher is the proud principal of Swifts Creek P-12 School. Leading the school since 2006 has provided an opportunity to understand the complexities of leadership in a rural context. As the current network chair for the Far East Gippsland geographic network and a member of the state committee of VASSP he has been able to contribute to system leadership. As an inaugural member of the CEP P-12 Alliance and a member of the Victorian Children's Council since 2019 this work has enabled a network of contact to ensure a curious disposition when leading within and beyond the school gate. This gives every student at school the opportunity to learn the skills and knowledge to be the best that they can be.



## **Kathleen McInnes**

Student Wellbeing Case Manager – Coburn Primary School

Kathleen McInnes is a dedicated Student Wellbeing Case Manager with extensive experience working with children, families and staff in Primary School settings. Kathleen continuously advocates for practices focused on holistic wellbeing, inclusion and social justice. She has a deep commitment to fostering strong supportive relationships with students and families, promoting inclusion, empowerment, enhancing student wellbeing and engagement and culturally responsive practices. She is passionate about promoting student voice, engagement, connectedness and belonging to empower students to grow and thrive academically, socially and emotionally. She has a deep understanding of the practical implementation of embedding wellbeing, engagement, trauma informed and culturally responsive practices across a school, promoting care, empathy, cultural pride, celebrating diversity, resilience, identity and belonging. Kathleen recently co-led the 'We Belong' Program alongside Emma Esposito, a transformative initiative focused on co-design, increasing student engagement, strengthening family partnerships, shifting school culture, building staff capacity, and creating sustainable connections to culturally specific support services.



## **Emma Esposito**

School Social Worker – Coburn Primary School

Emma Esposito is a dedicated and values-driven social worker with a Bachelor of Human Services and a Master of Social Work. She is passionate about creating meaningful change through collaboration, connection, and systemic advocacy. With extensive experience promoting community connection, safety, and wellbeing, Emma has supported students, families, and staff across diverse educational and community settings. A strong advocate for inclusive and culturally safe environments, Emma is committed to empowering individuals and communities by ensuring their voices are heard and respected. Her approach is grounded in building trusting relationships, which she sees as the foundation for supporting holistic development and long-term success. Emma recently co-led the 'We Belong' Program alongside Kathleen McInnes—a transformative initiative focused on co-design, increasing student engagement, strengthening family partnerships, shifting school culture, building staff capacity, and creating sustainable connections to culturally specific support services.



## **Alison Parolo**

Principal – Baldivis Secondary College

Alison is a passionate educational leader committed to unlocking the potential of every young person, regardless of background or ability. She leads inclusive practices, champions student wellbeing, and builds strong school-community partnerships, with a focus on supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and CALD students. Alison creates culturally responsive environments where all students feel seen, heard, and valued. She promotes student agency through voice, choice, and meaningful participation, and empowers educators to embed inclusive, strengths-based approaches that enable every learner to flourish.





## **Douglas Russell**

Senior Research Officer – Institute of Child Protection Studies, ACU

Douglas is a qualified primary school teacher with 15 years of experience teaching in Australia, the United Kingdom, and Dubai. Throughout his career, he has worked with children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, bringing a strong understanding of inclusive and adaptive teaching practices. In addition to classroom teaching, Douglas has worked as a behaviour therapist supporting children with developmental disabilities, further deepening his knowledge of child development and individualised support needs. Most recently, he has lectured in higher education, focusing on developmental psychology in both teaching and research contexts.



## **KA McKercher**

Founder – Beyond Sticky Notes

KA (they/they) is the founder of Beyond Sticky Notes and author of the acclaimed book by the same name. Based on unceded Aboriginal land, KA is an internationally recognised leader in co-design and facilitation. With over 13 years of experience in public health, community health, and social care, they specialise in helping organisations and communities collaborate more meaningfully and equitably. Their work spans teaching design and co-design, mentoring practitioners and leaders, developing co-design frameworks, and co-facilitating both in-person and virtual processes. KA is particularly known for creating accessible, practical tools and resources that support inclusive practice. They intentionally bring care, empathy, and cultural humility into their work, particularly when engaging with individuals and communities who experience trauma, oppression, or minority stress. KA's practice is grounded in the belief that design processes must centre lived experience and aim to make challenging spaces safer and more compassionate.



## **Matthew Spicer**

Director, Clinical Training Services – The Centre for Positive Behaviour Support (CPBS)

Matthew has over 20 years of experience working across government and non-government services as a practitioner, clinical manager and consultant. His work across health, education and community service sectors has included leadership and service development as well as training and supervision of staff. Matthew's values of compassion, social justice and effective practice are evident through his work with people impacted by trauma, people living with disability, their families and staff members. Matthew has worked as a leader implementing sector wide training initiatives and leading change management processes for services implementing trauma-informed practice. He has presented at conferences in the areas of staff and systemic responses that support both client and staff wellbeing whilst supporting people with complex needs.



## **Alex Dalton**

Peer Researcher and Consumer Coordinator – Orygen

Alex Dalton (he/him) is a Peer Researcher and Consumer Coordinator on the Whole of Self Affirming Care Project at Orygen. He is in his final year of his undergraduate degree at the University of Melbourne, majoring in psychology.



## **Tenille Abell**

Sanctuary Faculty Consultant – The MacKillop Institute

Tenille is a Principal Consultant for the Sanctuary Faculty and a Senior Leader with MacKillop Family Services; based in the ACT she leads internal Therapeutic Practice Development and Family Services teams across Southern NSW. As the Executive Director of Service and Practice Innovation at Anglicare NSW Southwest and ACT, she oversaw portfolios including innovation, tenders, policy, research, marketing and communications, and led the implementation of the Sanctuary Model for which the organisation was certified in 2022. At Anglicare she established an internal therapeutic and clinical service program and led the clinical team which covered services across the ACT and Southern NSW. Tenille holds a Master's degree in Clinical Family Therapy, Advanced Diploma in Neuroscience of Leadership and undergraduate qualifications in adult education, developmental psychiatry, Arts and Asian studies. Tenille has spent the past 25 years working in the human service sector in Australia and abroad, in research, training, counselling, practitioner and leadership roles, specialising in building safe organisational cultures and workforce capacity building initiatives.



## **Tammy Wallace**

Sanctuary Faculty Consultant – The MacKillop Institute

Tammy Wallace Mann is a Jirrabal woman with strong cultural ties in the Atherton Tablelands in far north Queensland. Her people are the rainforest people and lived and walked on that country for thousands of years. Her traditional name is Mahjah which means lore giver, this name was given to her from her grandmother, Maisie Barlow. Yarracali was her grandmother's traditional name, the Princess of their tribe, the Jirrabal people. She is an emerging elder in her family and a proud Aboriginal woman.

Tammy has worked within government and the non-government sector for over 25 years in areas including: acute and community health settings, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy, service and program development, child, youth and families. She previously held the role of Strategic Manager, Inclusion and Engagement for Churches of Christ Queensland, working in Children, Youth and Families (CYF). Tammy is particularly interested in child safety and building family and community resilience through cultural strength, community engagement and development.

Tammy has completed postgraduate studies in Politics and Policy Analysis and has a Bachelor's Degree of Health Science, specialising in childhood development and Indigenous women's health needs.



## **Clare Pritchard**

Trauma Center Trauma Sensitive Yoga Facilitator (TCTSY-F)

Clare has 25 years of experience working alongside survivors of trauma and the people who support them and is passionate about the importance of bringing the realms of both mind & body into all aspects of healing and wellbeing. With a gentle, warm approach infused with humour, Clare has worked and volunteered in spaces supporting survivors of complex trauma, including experiences of childhood abuse, sexual violence, homelessness, family violence, addiction, and the refugee journey. She is a certified Trauma Center Trauma Sensitive Yoga Facilitator (TCTSY-F), having completing her certification with the Trauma Center, Boston in 2018 and brings a mindful, trauma-informed approach to the yoga and therapeutic work that she offers.



## **Lee Bromley**

Chaplain – Reiby Youth Justice Centre

Lee has served faithfully for over 25 years as Chaplain at Reiby Youth Justice Centre in Campbelltown, where she provides care, mentorship, and emotional support to both staff and young people in detention. Lee is also the Chaplains Co-Ordinator for all Youth Justice Centres across New South Wales.

Lee holds a Bachelor of Theology, Postgraduate Diploma in Counselling and Cert 4 in Child Complex Trauma. Her work continues to be driven by a deep compassion for those on the margins and a commitment to long-term transformation. This deep commitment to long term change and healing has led to over 17 years of facilitating Seasons for Growth with her good friend Trish Quig. Together they were recipients in 2019 of the Catherine McAuley Award for Excellence in Volunteering in recognition of their Seasons for Growth programs with Indigenous and incarcerated young people.

Lee is also the founder of Eternity Aid, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to supporting at-risk youth, with a particular focus on Indigenous young people. Lee has spent more than 25 years working alongside vulnerable children and teenagers across regional and remote New South Wales.



## **Camille Schloeffel**

Founder – The STOP Campaign

Camille Schloeffel is a PhD Candidate, social worker and sexual violence prevention practitioner. Camille founded The STOP Campaign, a grassroots organisation addressing sexual violence at Australian universities, and has a Churchill Fellowship exploring ways activists and universities can work together to prevent sexual violence on campus. Camille has worked in gender-based violence prevention and response in government, university and non-profit sectors. Her experience includes policy reform, program management, resource creation, prevention education development and delivery, and facilitation of co-design processes with people with lived experience. She has also contributed to several research projects and advocacy campaigns on sexual violence and child-on-child sexual abuse as a lived experience expert. As a survivor, she is passionate about building communities of care, leading collective action and supporting others to share their truths.



## Genevieve Bloxsom

Researcher – University of Melbourne

Genevieve Bloxsom is a Power to Kids Scholar and child protection practitioner dedicated to enhancing the understanding of coerced "self-produced" child sexual exploitation material (CSEM). She is currently completing her PhD at the University of Melbourne in the Department of Social Work, supervised by Professor Cathy Humphreys, Dr Gemma McKibbin, Dr Jennifer Davison and Dr Nick HalfPenny. Genevieve's research focuses on how children are financially coerced to "self-produce" child sexual exploitation material, with a focus on understanding how this emerging form of exploitation can be identified, disrupted and prevented. She is passionate about research methodologies that empower children to influence practice enhancements, and she believes the risk of child sexual abuse and exploitation can be reduced when children and adult victim/survivors are respected and listened to. Genevieve is also a Senior Advisor at Queensland Child Safety.



## Kathy Warwick

Head of Trauma Consulting – Alannah and Madeline Foundation

Kathy is a qualified social worker with over 30 years of experience in child protection and community services. She has worked closely with children, families, and professionals to emphasize the value of healthy relationship attachments in strengthening families. As Head of Trauma Consulting at the Alannah & Madeline Foundation, Kathy is deeply committed to child safety, wellbeing, and building others' capacity to support healing and connection for children and young people.

Together, Peta and Kathy bring complementary expertise in education, safety, trauma, and advocacy for vulnerable children and families.



## Peta Simpson

eSMART Engagement Manager – Alannah and Madeline Foundation

Peta is the eSmart Engagement Manager at the Alannah & Madeline Foundation, working with educators, students and families to support the development of digital citizenship skills and resources. With extensive experience working with young people in educational settings, she is passionate about amplifying their voices and supporting educators to help future generations thrive in online spaces.

Together, Peta and Kathy bring complementary expertise in education, safety, trauma, and advocacy for vulnerable children and families.



## Phil Slade

Behavioural Economist, Psychologist and Founder – Switch4Schools

As co-founder of Switch4Schools—a globally recognised wellbeing software company recently named by HunderED and the International Baccalaureate as one of the top 10 most significant wellbeing educational innovations worldwide—Phil is dedicated to unlocking human potential and helping people live fuller, more meaningful lives. He firmly believes that many of the world's greatest challenges—social, environmental, economic, and political—can be addressed by better understanding, managing, and harnessing our emotions.

With a gift for making neuroscience accessible, engaging, and entertaining, Phil is a sought-after keynote speaker, known for his dynamic and down-to-earth approach. He empowers individuals to take control of their choices and shape their own futures.

Beyond speaking, Phil advises and coaches leaders in top organisations, specialising in decision-making, strategy, systems design, incentives, human dynamics, critical thinking, high performance, negotiation, and emotional intelligence.



## **Hayley Wainwright**

Researcher – Monash University

Hayley Wainwright is a final-year PhD candidate at the School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, Monash University. Her research uses implementation science to examine how transition planning can be more effectively delivered in residential out-of-home care to improve outcomes for young people.

She has worked in research, policy, and frontline roles across the youth homelessness, family violence, and child welfare sectors, including at the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, where she supported statewide implementation of the Family Preservation and Reunification Response.

Hayley holds a Bachelor of Arts (Psychology), Master of International Relations, and a Specialist Certificate in Implementation Science. Her work focuses on bridging research, policy, and practice to strengthen service systems for children and young people.



## **Dr Justine Grogan**

Senior Advisor for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education at the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)

Dr Justine Grogan is a First Nations Wongaibon descendant and Senior Advisor for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education at the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). Prior to working at AITSL she was Indigenous Lead, Course Coordinator and Lecturer in First Nations Education for over a decade. Her PhD, Honours and research areas focus on embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Knowledges and Perspectives in curriculum with key areas in colonisation, anti-racism, privilege, power and professional responsiveness. Justine was awarded the prestigious Aurora International Scholarship which gave her the opportunity to study at universities in the United States of America including Berkeley, Stanford, Harvard, Columbia and New York University (NYU). She has written and published many journal articles with highly ranked publishers such as Cambridge University Press and Higher Education Research and Development.



## **Skye Staude**

Co-Principal – MacKillop Education

Skye is a dedicated educator with over a decade of leadership experience across independent, government, and Catholic school sectors. She is the current Co-Principal at MacKillop Education in Geelong, a specialist setting that supports young people who have experienced complex trauma and educational disruption.

Skye holds a Master of Instructional Leadership from the University of Melbourne and a Diploma of Community Services Work, and is Dare to Lead™ certified, having completed Brené Brown's research-based program on courageous leadership.

She has presented extensively on trauma-informed practice in schools, with a strong focus on supporting vulnerable and at-risk students by building educator capacity and fostering relational, inclusive school cultures. Her leadership is grounded in the belief that connection and belonging are essential to learning and wellbeing.



## **Margaret Hepworth**

Founder – The Gandhi Experiment

With over 30 years in education, Margaret is an energetic and passionate peace educator who's all about connecting with students and making a lasting impact. She has worked with thousands of young people, leading Intercultural and Global Citizens workshops around the world. She brings key principles like ethical leadership, inclusivity, belonging, conflict transformation, and intercultural understanding to life in a way that feels real and practical. Author of The Gandhi Experiment, Teaching our Teenagers How to Become Global Citizens, and Collaborative Debating, Margaret also pioneered the 'Positive Reality' methodology, helping students embrace creativity and critical thinking. Her mission? To empower everyone to play a more active role in creating mindful, hope-filled solutions for the future.





## **Selba-Gondoza Luka OAM**

Chief Executive Officer – Afri-Aus Care

Selba-Gondoza Luka OAM is the Founder and CEO of Afri-Aus Care Inc., a not-for-profit organisation providing culturally appropriate mental health and community support to African and CALD communities in Melbourne. Affectionately known as Mama Selba-Gondoza, she founded the organisation in 2015, inspired by her own lived experiences and the journey of settling in Australia.

Her work is grounded in the African philosophy of UBUNTU, which emphasises humanity, shared care, and collective healing. Through her leadership, Afri-Aus Care developed the Positive Change Model, supporting at-risk youth, families, and individuals within the justice system.

Mama Selba-Gondoza works in partnership with government bodies, philanthropic organisations, and universities to drive grassroots, community-led solutions. Her contributions have earned multiple Awards, national and state recognitions, including the Order of Australia Medal (2025), Victorian Honour Roll of Women (2021), and Citizen of the Year, City of Greater Dandenong (2021).



## **Anish Varghese**

Afri-Aus Care

Anish has worked in the not-for-profit sector since 2020, with a strong track record in co-design, program development, and mentoring. His work has been instrumental in driving initiatives that empower young Australians to achieve excellence across education, leadership, and community engagement. He specialises in delivering multifaceted, community-led projects that address intersectional priorities, including mental health, sports development, justice involvement, and educational equity. Anish has collaborated with the Victorian State Government, local councils, and philanthropic organisations to implement culturally responsive programs that deliver lasting impact and systemic change.



## **Frazer Bekele**

Afri-Aus Care

School Community Liaison Officer with the Department of Education

Frazer is a School Community Liaison Officer with the Department of Education, working closely with schools and the African community to strengthen the connection between home and school. As a mentor and coach with Afri Aus Care, he supports young people in custody and in the community. Deeply committed to community outcomes, Frazer believes that meaningful engagement and strong support systems empower young people to thrive and see education as a pathway to success.



## **Jasmine Perry**

National Leader Foster Care Development – MacKillop Family Services

Jasmine Perry has over 20 years' experience working in child protection systems both nationally and abroad, focusing on developing, implementing and managing services in child safety, youth justice, disability, homelessness and community development. As the National Leader, Foster Care Development at MacKillop Family Services, Jasmine is passionate about supporting carers to provide safe and nurturing homes and breaking the stigma of children in care.



## **Taryn Hopper**

Social Worker

With over 20 years of experience, Taryn is a dedicated social worker based in Albury-Wodonga. Her career spans frontline work in a sexual assault service and, for the past five years, supporting young people in a Catholic secondary school.

She is passionate about helping adolescents build emotional intelligence, resilience, and the skills to engage meaningfully in learning and life. Her work is grounded in a trauma-informed, compassionate approach that prioritizes connection and growth.

For the past two years, she has facilitated the Seasons for Growth program, witnessing firsthand the positive transformation that occurs when young people are given tools to process change and loss.

Taryn strives to achieve a warm and insightful presence and holds a deep belief in the strength of young people and the importance of safe, supportive adult relationships in their development. Taryn is enthusiastic when delivering Seasons For Growth in schools to young people, as she observes students develop insight, language and confidence to navigate life's challenges with strength and hope.



**Nicole Lempriere**  
Secondary School Nurse

Nicole is an experienced Secondary School Nurse working across several schools in regional Victoria as part of their school wellbeing teams. Nicole has an interest in supporting and empowering young people by health promotion and health education. Nicole is a trained Companion in the Seasons for Growth program, helping students build resilience and develop coping strategies through times of change, loss and grief in a safe, supportive environment. Nicole strives to create a nurturing space where students feel heard, empowered, and equipped to thrive.



**Renae Pettit**  
-Seasons for Life Coordinator, NSW & ACT

Renae is an experienced secondary school educator, having worked as a High School teacher, Year Leader, Leader of Curriculum and Head of Junior School in rural and regional NSW and the ACT. In addition to a love of learning and belief in young people to meet their potential, Renae is a strong advocate for supporting youth mental health and wellbeing, particularly young people living in rural and remote locations.



**Hannah Jamieson**  
Seasons for Life Coordinator, Vic and Tas

Hannah is an experienced Secondary School teacher and leader, having worked as a Year Level Leader and Head of Middle School. Hannah has also worked in mental health, including supporting schools that have been impacted by a death by suicide or other critical incidents, and assisting schools to engage with whole of community wellbeing initiatives.



**Graham Briggs**  
Chief Executive Officer – Kirrip Aboriginal Corporation

Graham Briggs is the Chief Executive Officer of Kirrip Aboriginal Corporation. With a distinguished career spanning decades, Graham is a respected leader and strategist dedicated to Aboriginal self-determination. His work focuses on community, culture, and systems change, advocating for the rights and empowerment of Aboriginal people. Graham's leadership at Kirrip is marked by his commitment to fostering inclusivity and driving impactful initiatives that support the growth and development of Aboriginal communities. His vision and dedication continue to inspire positive change and progress within the organization and beyond.



**Ian Hamm**  
Chairperson – Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation

Ian Hamm is the Chairperson of the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC). A Yorta Yorta man, Ian is a respected advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. His distinguished career spans both government and community sectors, where he has been instrumental in contributing to Closing the Gap and advancing Aboriginal representation in high-level decision-making. Ian has led strategic reforms and numerous organizations, demonstrating a deep commitment to advocacy and mentoring. He also holds leadership roles in various other organizations, including the First Nations Foundation and The Healing Foundation



## **Kris Bardon**

Principal – MacKillop Education

Kris Bardon is the Deputy Executive Principal at MacKillop Education. In this role, Kris is dedicated to creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment for students impacted by disability, adversity, or trauma. He is committed to the Reframing Learning and Teaching Environments (ReLATE) model, which ensures a safe and nurturing educational experience. Kris's leadership and passion for education help empower students to re-engage with their learning and achieve academic and social success.



## **Brona Walsh**

Director MacKillop Education Engagement Programs – MacKillop Education

Brona Walsh is the Education and Engagement Program Director at MacKillop Family Services. She plays a pivotal role in the Paw Pals program, which uses therapy dogs to help students re-engage with their education. Brona's work focuses on improving students' confidence, self-regulation, and behavioral management skills. Under her leadership, the program has supported over 1,300 young people across Melbourne, Geelong, Bendigo, and Ballarat. Brona's dedication to trauma-informed education and her innovative approach have made a significant impact on the lives of many students.



## **Jose De La Garm**

Learning and Development Manager – MacKillop Family Services

Jose De La Garm is the Learning and Development Manager at MacKillop Family Services. In this role, he supports the production, allocation, and delivery of consistent learning outcomes. Jose is part of the Learning and Development team, contributing to the strategic delivery of an integrated national learning and development culture at MacKillop. His responsibilities include supporting MacKillop's Carer Recruitment and Development program as well as the employee Learning and Development program. Jose is known for his excellent interpersonal, organizational, and problem-solving skills, which help him effectively manage his workload and develop systems to meet deadlines.



## **Nina Levin**

Specialist Clinical Advisor

Yoowinna Wurnalung Aboriginal Healing Service.

Nina Levin is a versatile Family Therapist with expertise in child, youth, and family services, education, and program development. With over 35 years of experience, she has successfully delivered programs and services to families. In the past 15 years, she has focused on leading prevention, intervention, and response services in the family violence sector, while also implementing innovative pilots for DFV and Sexual Therapeutic services for the Aboriginal Community. Within child & family and domestic family and sexual violence services across Australia, Nina has led multiple projects focused on capacity development and service reform, bringing together research, policy, and practice. In her career, she has held different positions, including leading teams in child & family and domestic family and sexual violence services in regional and remote Communities in the Northern Territory. Furthermore, she has held positions as a private practitioner, consultancy manager, and Chair of a Women's Refuge in the NT. She has led national capacity-building programs with domestic and family violence services to enhance the implementation of evidence-informed practices and program development at Tangentyere and more recently at the Victorian Aboriginal Child and Community Agency (VACCA) in Victoria. In her position as Executive Manager Practice Excellence at Safesteps, Nina leverages the principles of Family Violence Best Practice, Clinical and Systemic Practices to support DFV practitioners and improve outcomes for children and families impacted by violence. Nina's passion lies in improving the impact of valuable work in the community and government sector, with a focus on marginalised and vulnerable communities.



## **Gaye Titcombe**

Assistant Principal – South Lismore Public School

Gaye Titcombe is the Assistant Principal at Lismore South Public School. She has played a crucial role in implementing the Mackillop Season's Stormbirds program, which supports young people in understanding and managing the impacts of natural disasters. Gaye's dedication to student well-being became evident after the February 2022 floods, where she prioritized creating a safe and nurturing environment for the children. Her compassionate approach and commitment to resilience have significantly contributed to the recovery and growth of the students at Lismore South Public School



## **Larissa Polak**

Principal – South Lismore Public School

Larissa Polak is the Principal of Lismore South Public School. She took up the principal's position in January 2020 and has since been dedicated to supporting students in achieving their full potential. Larissa focuses on creating the best possible learning environment and values positive relationships with families and the community. Under her leadership, the school emphasizes the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) values of being safe, respectful, and responsible. Larissa is committed to providing quality academic programs and fostering a supportive and inclusive school culture



## **Chris Procter-Abraham**

National Training Manager – Stand Tu Maia

Chris Procter-Abraham is the National Training Manager at Stand Tū Māia. In this role, he is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of training programs that support the organization's mission to provide therapeutic care and education to New Zealand's most vulnerable children. Chris's work focuses on ensuring that staff are well-equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to deliver high-quality services. His dedication to professional development and continuous improvement plays a crucial role in enhancing the effectiveness of Stand Tū Māia's programs



## **Tegan McDonald**

Principal – St Patrick's School – Koroit

Tegan McDonald is the Principal and Child Safety Officer at St. Patrick's Primary School in Koroit. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to her role, having previously worked at St. Joseph's Warrnambool as a Foundation Teacher and Foundation Learning Leader. Tegan has also held a leadership position in Religious Education at St. Joseph's. Her bright and enthusiastic personality complements the existing team at St. Patrick's, where she is dedicated to creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment for all students

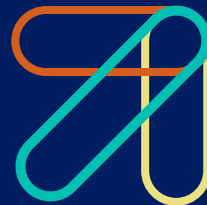


## **Shona Loudon**

Assistant Principal – St Patrick's School – Koroit

Shona Loudon is the Assistant Principal and Wellbeing/Child Safety Officer at St. Patrick's Primary School in Koroit. She also serves as a Specialist Teacher, contributing to the school's commitment to providing a supportive and inclusive learning environment. Shona's role involves ensuring the well-being and safety of all students, integrating child safety practices into the school's culture, and supporting students' academic and personal growth





# Who we are

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MacKillop Family Services is a leading provider of education, child and family support, and out-of-home care services across Australia. Guided by our values of justice, hope, and collaboration, we are committed to supporting vulnerable children, young people, and families by delivering programs that promote healing, resilience, and long-term wellbeing.

At MacKillop Family Services, we are committed to supporting some of Australia's most vulnerable children, young people, and families. Across 53 locations, our 2,300 dedicated staff deliver integrated family services, out-of-home care, disability support, and trauma-informed education to over 16,000 families each year. All our programs aim to create safe, nurturing environments for children, families, and the staff who support them.

Our work is grounded in evidence-based practice, research, and community engagement, ensuring that we provide effective, sustainable solutions to complex social challenges. The Lead the Way Conference is an extension of our mission to empower professionals with the tools and knowledge they need to drive change within their organisations and communities.





MacKillop  
Family  
Services

The MacKillop  
Institute



# Have Questions? Contact Us

**For sponsorship enquiries, please contact:**

**Christopher Higgins**

**National Programs Director,  
Development and Innovation  
The MacKillop Institute**

M 0499 521 461

[christopher.higgins@mackillop.org.au](mailto:christopher.higgins@mackillop.org.au)

 [\*\*mackillopinstitute.org.au\*\*](http://mackillopinstitute.org.au)

 [\*\*linkedin.com/company/themackillopinstitute\*\*](https://www.linkedin.com/company/themackillopinstitute)



*MacKillop Family Services acknowledges  
the Traditional Custodians and their  
Elders in each of the communities where  
we work.*



*As a Rainbow Tick organisation, MacKillop values  
an inclusive culture where lesbian, gay, bisexual,  
trans, queer, gender diverse, intersex and asexual  
people (LGBTIQ+) have the right to be safe.*