



ACROSS

Caregivers' Newsletter

ACROSS Social Services
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Message from Graeme Munford, Director of ACROSS



This is our first newsletter to caregivers and I wanted to take the opportunity to acknowledge the support you all provide children and young people in our care.

The role and responsibilities of caregivers looking after children who for various reasons can not live with their own families has changed over the years. Children and young people have complex needs and their behaviour will present the same type of challenge. We don't expect you to have all the answers which is why the role Shu-Fei has is so important, I encourage you to

use the sort of support Shu-Fei can give you.

We want caregivers to provide a safe and secure environment for children, rest assured we do not expect you to save the world! In all the work we do with families we need to trust the fact that while we cannot do everything we know that in children there is a future promise, a sense of liberation from knowing that we can do some things to help people improve their lives. So the message in the mission statement of ACROSS is especially relevant ... *to help people support themselves ... and find the help they need.*

I wish you all a safe and happy Christmas and New Year and look forward to meeting many of you next year.

Greetings from Shu-Fei....

It has been a long time since I first wished a publication like this newsletter to widen the communication channel between ACROSS and its caregivers. I would like to express my appreciation to Graeme who supports the publication of this newsletter.

I am glad to be back to ACROSS from my parental leave and continue my supporting role to all of you. This is my fifth year in this role. In this period of time, I have learnt a lot from working with you and the children in your care.

I have seen many of you have grown in confidence by being able to identify strengths and resources that you possess, and to provide them to children in your care. It is also a privilege to work alongside with you, to explore issues, identify and question your own values when challenges arise from placements.

I look forward to meeting you all next year and wish you all a safe and merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Strategies on Developing Secure Attachment in Foster Care

- noticing things about the child and giving them feedback about this so they become more aware of themselves
- treating children at a younger age than they are chronologically
- accepting the child's feelings for their birth parent—this allows a child to be able to accept a new caregiver without the dilemma of having to give up their birth parents
- allowing the child to talk about the past rather than expecting it to no longer concern them
- giving the child small indications that they are part of the family
- care to meet their "emotional age"
- Talking about feelings and helping the child to identify and label their feelings
- caregivers can be more sensitive and be less angry with the child's behaviours by developing an understanding about the reason behind the behaviours, the child's assumptions about relationships are and the impact of their life experiences.
- Showing the child that they are remembered and thought about when they are away from the caregiver.
- Helping the child to develop a sense of themselves through talking about their life, sharing photos or writing a life story book. (adapted from Care Matters, issue 8, March 2006)

Issue 1, Dec 2006

ACROSS will close at 1 pm, on 22nd December and re-open on 3rd January. In case of any emergency arises during this period, please phone duty social worker. (phone number is attached with this newsletter)

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Introducing ACROSS Staff:

Director— Graeme Munford

Admin — Jeanette Conheoney

Heather Mansell

Jinny Anderson

Counsellors — Sharon Elkington

Rose Allan

Social Workers — Bee Barrett (Senior S/Worker)

Brian Annear

Kylie MacManus

Feiona Fraser

Wyllis Russell

Shu-Fei Lin

Training & Coming Events

IFCO XV Biennial International Foster Care Conference

Please contact Shu-Fei at ACROSS or go to www.ifconzo7.org.nz for further information

National Caregiver Training Courses Website

National caregiver training courses for 2007 is not planned yet. I will inform you when it is released. You are welcome to visit www.caregiver-training.org.nz for information & training calendar.

Resources & Useful Websites:

NZ Family and Foster Care Federation Website

www.nzfostercare.org.nz or call 0800 693 323 (NZFFCF)

Parenting Support—SKIP (Strategies with Kids/ Information for Parents)

www.familyservices.govt.nz/skip/

Recipe for Xmas

Sesame-coated date and almond sweetmeats (makes 30)

1 cup blanched almonds, 1 cup toasted walnuts

1 cup chopped, pitted dates, 1 cup raisins, 1/2 cup honey

50g butter, melted, 1 tsp each ground ginger and cinnamon

1/2 cup sesame seeds, lightly toasted

1. chop almonds, walnuts, dates and raisins in a food processor until a sticky paste forms, this may need to be done in two batches.

2. Melt butter and honey together in a saucepan. Add spices, then stir in the paste mixture. Stir over a gentle heat for a minute, until thoroughly combined.

3. Remove to cool, then shape into 30 walnut-sized balls and chill for 1 hour to firm. Roll balls in sesame seeds to coat. Store in the fridge.

Would you please ring and leave you contact details to the reception, if you are available

Welcome New Caregivers to Join ACROSS

Murray Larsen & Belinda Harvey-Larsen

Margaret Ponga & Dean Cootes

Kerry Watson

Welcome Kylie MacManus (Social Worker)

My name is Kylie MacManus. I joined the ACROSS team as a full time social worker in August this year. I have been associated with ACROSS since 2004 in the roles of a placement student and as a volunteer.

I completed my Masters in Social Work (Applied) at the beginning of year. My social service experience has involved working with intellectual disability and dual diagnoses clients and with youth. I recently built on this, when I undertook voluntary work in teaching and youth worker roles in Ghana and Kenya this year. This work taught me a lot about myself and reinstalled a passion of working with children and young people.

I am currently a phone listener and a committee member for Youthline. I am also working with RMS in assisting a refugee family settle into Palmerston North.

Welcome Wyllis Russell (Social Worker)

Firstly I would like to thank the caregivers for the support you provided me, whilst I was completing my placement here at ACROSS during the year.

Two years ago I left Gisborne, I was employed as Senior Whanau Support Worker and Caregiver Co-ordinator for Turanga Social Services. I left to continue and finalise my studies at Massey University as an internal student to complete the last two years of the Bachelor of Social Work, I was previously an extramural student for many years.

I was also previously a caregiver



Kylie & children in Kenya

of many years, then I became a Care Co-ordinator, so I am familiar with many of the issues that caregivers undergo.

This year I was lucky enough to complete my placement in Fieldwork Practice here at ACROSS.

I worked alongside Sharon Elkington in fostering and care with Graeme Munford being my supervisor and the rest of the able staff, all have greatly assisted my learning and knowledge of ACROSS values, the organization culture, policies and processes. I thoroughly enjoyed working alongside the caregivers and also recruiting caregivers. I think you are amazing and do a wonderful job providing care for displaced children.

With the completion of the BSW, I am now remaining in Palmerston North for work purposes and have now gained employment as a Social Worker (part time) for ACROSS. I look forward to continuing working alongside the caregivers and the children they have in care and any other areas where I may be needed for support.

Merry Christmas to all of you and have a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Wish you all a very merry Christmas and a prosperous New year.