



The Bouverie Centre Where Families Matter

DIRECTIONS 2026–2030

Purpose, Values and Goals



Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin nation as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the unceded land on which the Bouverie Centre stands.

We acknowledge First Nations people across all lands on which we meet and work, recognising their continuing connection to land, water, and community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Acknowledgment of lived and living experience

The Bouverie Centre acknowledges people with lived and living experiences as workers, consumers, family members and carers, including those who have gone before us or are no longer with us. It is only by being informed and driven by the voices, collective experience, and wisdom of those with lived and living experience that we may create meaningful change.

Acknowledgment of diversity

The Bouverie Centre honours the diverse experiences and ways of living that define humanity. We strive to create safety and inclusion in all we do, to have regard for all perspectives, and to avoid incorrect assumptions. We welcome feedback to inform our work.

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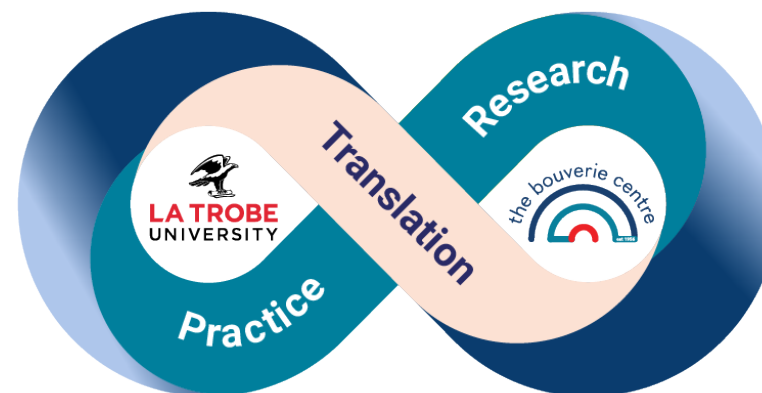
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Our Vision

Healthy relationships in families, organisations and communities, for the wellbeing of society.

Who we are



Established in 1956, the Bouverie Centre is a long-trusted leader in family therapy and systemic practices.

We are an integrated practice-research centre within La Trobe University and a statewide specialist family therapy and training service within the Victorian Government's mental health care system.

Our global and national partnerships are widespread, informing policies that support family, community and societal wellbeing.

From individual practitioners to entire workforces, we provide learning and development opportunities to build systemic practice capabilities.

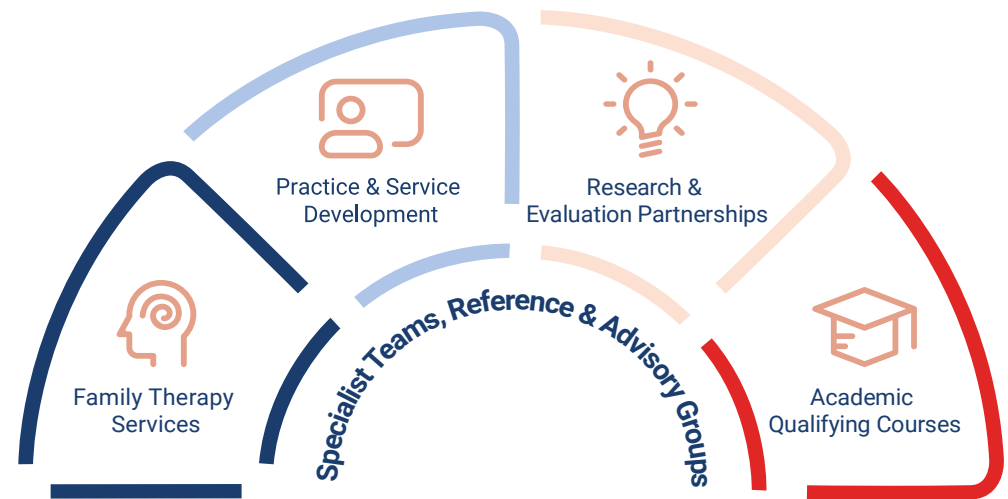
Artwork by Robyne Latham

Our specialist family therapy service supports families across the life course who are experiencing mental health, alcohol and other drug, or trauma-related challenges.

Evidence-building research and translation underpins our clinical, training, and education pillars. Our shared focus is on accessible, effective practice innovations that uplift relational health in challenging times, across diverse family contexts. We support the next generation of family therapists through our La Trobe University home, providing postgraduate certificates, master's and higher degree by research programs in family therapy.

Across all our work, we have an abiding commitment to supporting families whose contexts call for deep knowledge of intersectional challenges, including First Nations families, families with an LGBTIQ+ member, families living in rural and regional areas, and military and veteran families.

Our multidisciplinary staff of family therapists, First Nations advisors, researchers, educators, and professionals, together with our family member advisors, bring compassion, diverse knowledge, and lived experience to all elements of our work.



Families

Our work centres on and radiates from family contexts.

By family, we mean people connected by biology or by choice, who share caregiving bonds, and influence each other's wellbeing. Family takes many forms and is a uniquely personal, yet completely shared, human experience. Family is embedded deeply in cultural systems, past and present, which connect and influence all family members.

Since Bouverie's establishment in 1956, our purpose has been to nurture the relational ties that make us well – from families to nations.

What does 'change' look like in family therapy?

The word cloud features the following terms and phrases:

- Calm** (large, vertical, teal)
- Clearer boundaries** (vertical, orange)
- Feeling safe** (teal)
- Being realistic** (teal)
- Accountability** (large, dark red)
- New ways of asking** (orange)
- Hope** (large, dark blue)
- Kindness** (orange)
- New perspective** (teal)
- Listening** (large, dark blue)
- Connecting** (large, orange)
- Bonding** (teal)
- Managing feelings** (dark red)
- Acceptance** (teal)
- All voices heard** (small, teal)
- What our Bouverie families say** (teal)
- Belonging** (vertical, teal)
- Sharing goals** (vertical, dark red)
- Learning** (vertical, dark red)
- Compassion** (vertical, dark red)

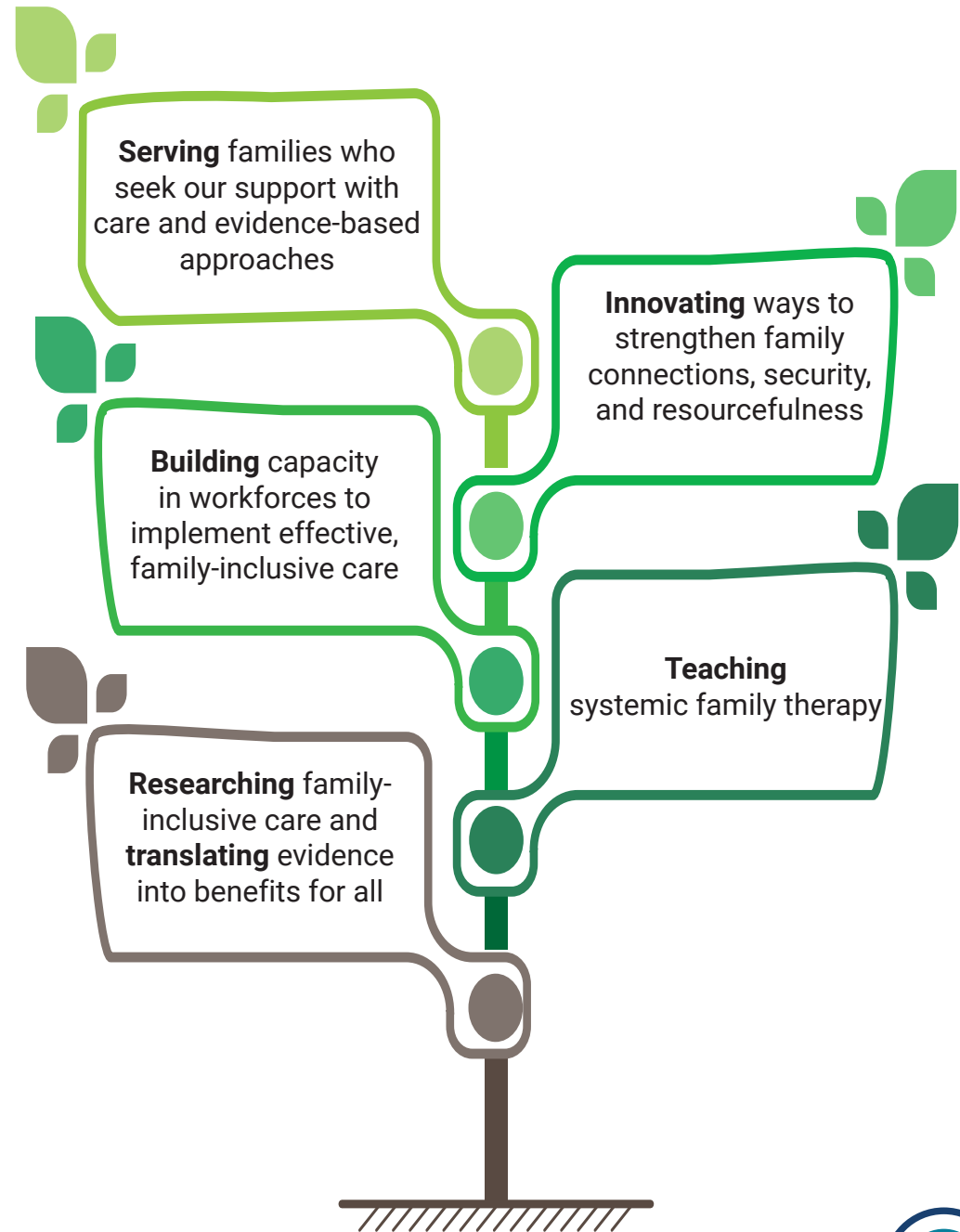
Our Purpose

We share old wisdoms and generate new knowledge about relational health, the bedrock of personal and societal wellbeing.

Bouverie has long been a hub for connecting practitioners from all disciplines to ongoing professional learning and development.

We are a touchpoint for lifelong learning for many family therapists.

From individuals to governments, we enhance relational capacities and help to build skills.




Our Values

Bouverie has a long history as a values-based teaching organisation. Our work is embedded in multiple contexts.

We understand the privilege of our systemic service and leadership roles.

We always aim to conduct our work in ways that respect, safeguard, and enhance the ecosystems within which we operate: human, cultural, and environmental.

We respect and learn from many people:



First Nations
traditional owners of the
vast lands across which we work

Our staff, alumni and friends,
in all their rich diversity

Our partners:
industry, university
and government

The families we serve

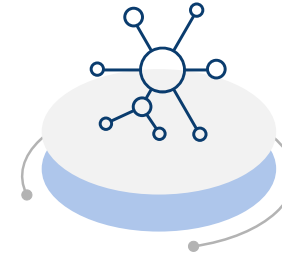
Our history

Our values shape how we learn, serve, teach, and lead – at every level.
At core, we are...



CURIOUS

Approaching people and ideas with openness and genuine willingness to learn



COLLABORATIVE

Working together in ways that strengthen relationships and outcomes



INCLUSIVE

Ensuring every voice has space and value



INNOVATIVE

Developing evidence-based ideas to create lasting impact



Our Values

Expressed another way, our staff built the word cloud below, in response to the question:

“What values do you most want to see reflected in our next strategic plan?”



The Bouverie Centre's 2026-2030 Directions

In this chapter of Bouverie's life, we aim to deepen five dimensions of our work. These goals collectively reflect our drive for inner and outer impact.



1 Lead in contemporary accessible family & systemic practice

- Remain a trusted leader in family and systemic practices, research, and learning
- Centre First Nations knowledge in our work
- Provide tested, empowering, accessible ways of supporting diverse families facing challenges

2 Partnerships for social impact

- Prioritise collaborations that enhance social equity and justice
- Broaden our reach into allied national sectors, to support a diversity of family populations
- Nurture partnerships for greater impact in local and national mental health practice and policy

3 Increased systemic research capacity

- Conduct innovative research that advances our evidence base, to shape policy action
- Create a dynamic research funding strategy
- Build current capacity and nurture the next generation of systemic researchers

4 Business sustainability

- Earn funded partnerships through excellence, aligned with University's and government priorities
- Maintain financial strength through strategic and diverse funding
- Elevate our work and its translation through contemporary, environmentally sustainable technologies

5 Workplace well-being for sustained leadership

- Nurture workplace enjoyment and unified teamwork to support staff wellbeing and to retain expertise
- Maintain sustainable workloads and a work culture of connection, valuing, authenticity, and humour
- Support personal and professional development to build inner and outer capability and capacity

The Enablers of our Goals



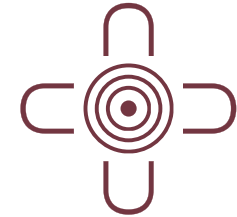
Our staff
and their personal
and team well-being



Friendly professionalism,
to share expertise with
warmth and authenticity



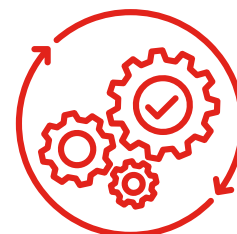
Robust governance
to support leadership
and continuous
improvement



First Nations
co-leadership and
cultural safety across
all areas of our work



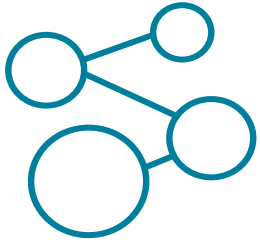
**Environmental
frameworks** to guide
ethical partnerships and
resource investments



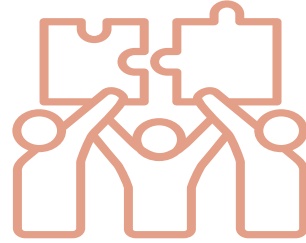
**Alignment with
University values and
and procedures**
to ensure compliance
and quality



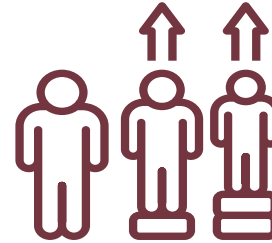
Knowledge mobilisation
to translate our work
generously through open
resources



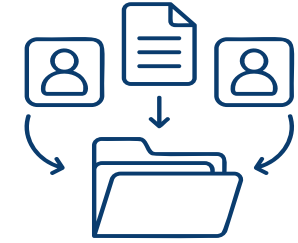
Structured integration
across program areas
to ensure contemporary,
advanced practice



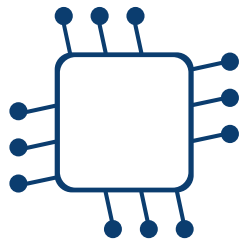
Meaningful co-design
with families and
stakeholders



Equity lens
that prioritises inclusion
of underserved and
culturally diverse groups



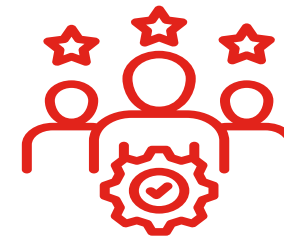
Data-driven decisions
from evaluation feedback
loops to guide ongoing
improvement



Leveraging AI
and digital platforms
across all areas of
our work



**Research as core
business**, with leadership
support and time
allocation across the
organisation



Recognition
and celebration of
achievements



2026-2030 Our Directions... for Families

Our Family Advisory Network translated Our Directions into this family-friendly version.

While you know us through our work with your family, we do a lot more beyond our therapy service. For example, we teach others to work with families, and we research everything we do. With feedback from our family advisors, the Bouverie team has mapped out our next chapter. Here are our priorities.

Priority 1: Be a Trusted Leader in Family Therapy

- Continue to lead in family therapy practices and education, partnering with families to ensure lived experience shapes our approach.
- Respect and include First Nations knowledge and the wisdom of diverse families.
- Offer effective, easy-to-access therapy services for families during tough times, from cities to the outback.



Priority 2: Work With Others to Increase our Impact

- We work with others to create a fairer, more inclusive mental health service, to create a healthier society and environment.
- We help improve the mental health system by teaching and supporting workers to safely include families in care.
- We build strong partnerships to do work that makes a big difference, from families to governments.



Priority 3: Learn More About What Works

- Do more research that improves how families are supported.
- Make plans to get funding for this research.
- Help young researchers learn and grow so they can keep doing this work in the future.

Priority 4: Partner Well to Keep Our Work Going

- Do our work well, so that our partners value and continue to seek our input.
- Ensure our resources are safeguarded and find new funding sources to build our impact on family and community wellbeing.
- Build a strong sustainable organisation so families can rely on us for generations to come.



Goal 5: Be a Great Place to Work Now and for Future Leadership

- Support our people to thrive – because when staff are well, the families and the services we support receive our best care.
- Create work that is manageable, enjoyable, and helps grow future leadership
- Be a friendly, welcoming place where everyone feels valued.



A Storied Legacy: The History of The Bouverie Centre

The Bouverie Centre has transformed from a modest parenting and children's clinic in 1956 into a pioneering organisation shaping family therapy practice in Australia – continually evolving through innovation, cultural inclusivity, and research-based approaches.

Origins (1956)

Our journey began as a small mental health service, known as the Collins Street Clinic, which operated as a parenting guidance clinic specialising in children and adolescents.

In **1956**, the clinic relocated to Bouverie Street in Carlton and was renamed The Bouverie Clinic.

Pioneering Family Therapy (1970s)

In the **1970s**, under the direction of Dr Geoff Goding and inspired by international developments in family therapy, including the first International Family Therapy Conference, Bouverie shifted from a child psychiatry orientation to become the first family therapy centre in Australia.

Family Therapy Training (1981 - Present)

In **1981**, supported by the Victorian Government, Bouverie initiated a two-year family therapy training program. This became the Mental Health Division Training Program in Family Therapy.

The Centre remains a state-funded training hub in family-inclusive practice, for mental health, alcohol and drug, and allied health workforces.

Partnership with La Trobe University (1996 – Present)

In **1996**, with growing academic and research programs, Bouverie moved to La Trobe University and in **2019** became a designated Research Centre within the School of Psychology and Public Health. Here, Bouverie continues to partner with LTU to deliver graduate certificate programs and a master's course in clinical family therapy.

Relocations and Rebranding (1984 - 2025)

The Centre moved to Parkville and was renamed The Bouverie Family Therapy Centre in **1984**, adding in **1996** the subtitle Victoria's Family Institute. In **2007**, Bouverie moved into its current home, a Victorian government-funded, purpose-built facility on Gardiner Street, Brunswick.

We are now (since **2025**) known as The Bouverie Centre: Where Families Matter.

Today (2007 Onwards)

Bouverie is now a premier clinical, teaching, and research hub, operating across family therapy services, professional training, service development, and academic programs.

Today, Bouverie stands as Australia's largest family therapy organisation, employing over 60 staff.

First Nations Allyship (2006–Present)

Since **2006**, Bouverie has delivered culturally-safe family therapy training for Indigenous workers. This program was the first of its kind and was recognised in **2012** as national best practice in Indigenous postgraduate education. Sixteen cohorts have since graduated from the Graduate Certificate in Family Therapy: First Nations.

Our "*Workin' with the Mob*" program continues to offer innovation in cross cultural knowledge sharing and family healing.



www.latrobe.edu.au/bouverie



Where Families Matter