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Important Dates

Thursday 14th & Friday 15th November: Key stakeholder workshop 3

Where: [Aborigines Advancement League](#), Thornbury, Melbourne

Registration has now closed – but we encourage Aboriginal applicants interested in attending to make contact, as we have a few places left

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Perinatal support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents who are experiencing complex trauma

Investigators' report

We are pleased to share the fifth Healing the Past by Nurturing the Future (HPNF) project newsletter which we send out three times a year. With a recent focus on parent discussion groups we are more aware than ever of the insight and wisdom of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents. We look forward to bringing together all the research information to share at the third Key Stakeholder Workshop on November 14th and 15th.

Congratulations!

We're pleased to congratulate [Dr Yvonne Clark](#) who has been awarded a highly competitive NHMRC Emerging Leader 1 Fellowship. This is a terrific recognition of Yvonne's work on lateral violence, and will see this explored with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth. Yvonne will start her fellowship next year with SAHMRI, and continue to be a Chief Investigator on the HPNF project.



Dr Yvonne Clark



Dr Graham Gee

We're also happy to congratulate [Dr Graham Gee](#) on receiving the NHMRC Rising Star Award, for the top-ranked 2018 application by an Indigenous researcher in the Early Career Fellowship Scheme. Graham began his Fellowship in 2019 and continues to be a Chief Investigator on the HPNF project, building knowledge on safe and effective approaches to improve resilience and recovery from complex trauma.

We are so delighted to celebrate the contribution these fellowships make to Indigenous research.

New project staff



Dr Shannon Bennetts

We welcome [Dr Shannon Bennetts](#), a Research Fellow with the Judith Lumley Centre, who will be working on the HPNF project two days a week. Shannon is a social scientist with a focus on supporting and understanding the needs of parents, children and families. Her research interests include children's language, social and cognitive development, parenting during social adversity, parent and child mental health, work-family conflict and enrichment, and the role of social media in contemporary parenthood and for use in research.

Parent Discussion Groups

With the tremendous support of our partner organisations in South Australia, Central Australia and Victoria, we have held parent discussion groups with 17 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents.

The aim of the parent discussion groups is to gain insight into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents' perceptions of the hopes and dreams, challenges and support strategies that would be acceptable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents that have complex trauma.

The parent discussion groups use a scenario or the story [Tjulpu and Walpa](#) (Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara Women's Council, 2016) in a tree of life activity to talk about things from the past that may be affecting the parents in the story - what's keeping them strong, their hopes and dreams, and what things might help them achieve these. After this, a series of cards that summarise main themes emerging out of the qualitative systematic review were considered, with parents selecting those that they felt were most relevant.

The insight and wisdom of these parents has been striking, and we have incredibly rich data to work with. After all of the transcripts have been checked by the parents, we will start the process of coding and generating themes based on what the parents shared with us. These will again be checked with the parents that took part, before being presented as part of the discussions at the third key stakeholder workshop.



Images of a tree of life created during one parent discussion group, and card selection.



Nunkuwarrin Yunti of South Australia Inc.



Central Australian Aboriginal Congress
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION | ICN 7823



Sun rising over native grasses, Pitjantjatjara country. Reweaving futures is a recurring theme in the research.



Baby's hand on river gum, Arrernte country. Ancestral knowledge guides us.



Image of first research summary and Women and Birth special issue

Evidence reviews

The team have been working hard to collate evidence to inform the co-design workshops. In addition to the published scoping review, a meta-synthesis of perinatal views and experiences of parents who have experienced childhood maltreatment is currently under review. PhD candidate Carol Reid is leading two reviews of evidence regarding perinatal strategies or interventions that are reported in the literature for discussion at workshop 3. Dr Stacey Hokke is leading a second systematic review on the experiences of parents with child maltreatment backgrounds and their hopes and dreams, challenges and strategies for parenting from 6 weeks to two years after the birth of their baby.

Presentations

The team have continued to share learnings from the project across the sector. Associate Professor Cath Chamberlain presented at the [Australian Nurses and Midwives conference in Melbourne \(September, 2019\)](#). Cath is also going to present similar sessions at the [Society of Obstetric Medicine Aust and NZ annual meeting](#) in Melbourne and the [Ngar-wu Wanyarra Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Conference](#) in Shepparton over October.

Dr Yvonne Clark and Joy Makepeace presented to the [Infant Mental Health conference in Adelaide](#) (September, 2019). Dr Graham Gee presented to the Orygen Centre for Youth in Melbourne about Aboriginal resilience programs and introduced our work on developing a complex trauma assessment tool that includes a strengths-based focus.

Publications

Dr Shannon Bennetts is developing a series of plain language research summaries for all the academic publications arising out of the HPNF project. The first of these summaries, relating to the PLOS One scoping review and evidence map of parenting after a history of child maltreatment is [now available](#).

Women and Birth recently published the Birthing on Country in Australia special issue, with Professor Rhonda Marriott and A/Professor Cath Chamberlain acting as guest editors to bring together the collective knowledge and experience of experts working in this area.

[https://www.womenandbirth.org/issue/S1871-5192\(19\)X0005-0](https://www.womenandbirth.org/issue/S1871-5192(19)X0005-0)

Other news

The website for the *Women's Journey: Bagganook Yurrongi, Nuraagh Manma Buliana* is [now live](#) and the project was recently featured in a NITV report <https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/nitv-news/article/2018/10/04/women-leading-way-towards-birthing-country>

Planning for third key stakeholder workshop

Planning for the third key stakeholder workshop is ramping up, with only a month to go until this important event. The workshop will be held over two days, to allow attendees the opportunity to contribute fully to the co-design of awareness, recognition, assessment and support approaches for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents experiencing complex trauma.

The two-day program is packed full of highlights, held at the historically significant Aborigines Advancement League in Thornbury (Melbourne), with catering provided by a range of local Aboriginal small businesses, and featuring weaving with Aunty Dot Lovett, Wayapa® Wuurk with Lee Couch, and performances by the Wurundjerri and WoiWorrung Djirri Djirri Dancers, and Palawa, Kurna and Ngadjuri musician and singer Kartanya Maynard.



Images of Pawa Catering, the Djirri Djirri Dancers (photo by Deon VanDerBerg), and a tree-fern on Boonwurrung country

Self-care tip 😊 SING IT

Singing connects neural pathways and fires up the right temporal lobe of the brain, releasing endorphins which make people healthier, happier, smarter and more creative*. Singing with others amplifies the neural activity, and can help people to feel connected, supported* and part of something larger than themselves. Commonly used in many different clinical and therapeutic settings, singing can be a wonderful outlet.

So SING IT out loud in the car, in the bush, with your kids or a group.

We also like listening to the [Deadly Nannas -Nragi Muthar, and their Ngarrindjeri Lullaby songs](#)

The [Love and Hope Music Video](#) developed by youth at the National and World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference held in Perth November 2018

And the awesome Mitch Tambo and [Guwiirnga-li \(Love\) song](#)



Kartanya Maynard singing

*Tania de Jong discusses the neuroscience of singing in this [Radio National interview](#).