

BECOME A CONNECTIONS
COMMUNITY PARTNER TODAY

MAKE A CONNECTION WITH TINA



Connections

child, youth and family services



CONNECTIONS
COMMUNITY PARTNERS

SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN NEED

Connections UnitingCare

31 Hardner Road Mount Waverley
Victoria 3149 Australia

T 03 9271 0800 F 03 9271 0888
E enquiries@connections.org.au

ABN: 90 676 577 035

www.connections.org.au

Connections aims to reduce our impact on the environment. This Connections publication is printed by a carbon neutral printer on recycled paper using vegetable based inks. Published by Connections in March 2010.



Tina's story

From a young age Tina was exposed to many things that a child should never have to endure, things that she will hold with her forever. Life was never easy. Tina had grown up in a challenging environment exposed at a very early age to physical, mental and sexual abuse, she experienced depression and a key family member was unable to receive effective treatment for a serious mental illness. It wasn't long until Tina found her life spiralling out of control...

After several attempts to get her life on track and with her addictions consuming her life, Tina and her young son were homeless and needed help. Tina was referred to Connections UnitingCare.

With Connections' SHIFT (Supporting Homeless Individuals and Families in Transition) program, Tina was finally able to receive the help she desperately sought and started putting the pieces of her life back together.

Connections has the experience, skills and grounded, creative responses to make a real difference in the lives of people like Tina, but we can't do it without you.



I wasn't being honest about my addiction and it wasn't until the day that I did, that I realised how long I had been screaming out for help. Through Connections, on strategies on how to cope and how to recognise issues.' – Tina

AS A CONNECTIONS COMMUNITY PARTNER YOUR REGULAR GIFT OF \$20 PER MONTH (\$5 PER WEEK) IS ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR CRUCIAL WORK WITH MARGINALISED AND DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES.



These regular monthly contributions are more than sponsorship of just one child. They support children, young people, families and the broader community at a very local level in your neighbourhood. They help us deliver specialised support for people in need enabling us to get in early and create a real difference in people's lives.

- › \$55 will fund emergency accommodation needs for a homeless family, as we work with them to overcome their crisis.
- › \$40 will fund an intense family support/counselling session for a low income family in crisis (due to difficulties including poverty, drug and alcohol addiction, family violence).
- › \$100 will fund a community education, parenting and playgroup session for a family as part of our culturally sensitive and linguistically targeted community development program.
- › \$200 will fund our early intervention, prevention and diversionary program that offers young people an opportunity to channel their energy, providing a real second chance for those who have already come into contact with the Juvenile Justice system.

Your support will help Connections' clients to overcome social isolation and gain self-confidence and a sense of worth – research shows that these are important in fostering well-being and resilience among those who experience marginalisation and disadvantage.

Why a community partner?

We say it is the responsibility of the wider community to value and care about children wherever they are.

We say that as a community we must invest in family support today to save a child tomorrow. And we say, as a community, we must accept our collective responsibility to ensure all children feel safe and parents are supported in times of need.

As a community, including parents, we have a responsibility to provide a safe and secure environment for children. We need to move to a focus on family strengthening, early intervention programs and services working in partnership with other community members to ensure we are working to prevent child abuse.

Hand-in-hand, with you as a Connections Community Partner, we can do this. We have the infrastructure, we have the skills and we have the experience to make a real and lasting difference in the lives of children, young people and families.

As a Connections Community Partner you will receive regular updates through our quarterly newsletter, showing you how your support is helping us to do more. Each July we will send you a single, consolidated tax receipt to assist you in your tax return preparation.

You can give via your credit card or by direct debit from your bank account. Of course, you can also alter or change your donation at any time.



'If it wasn't for Connections, I wouldn't be the person who I am now, and I say that so often and this big gush of feelings comes up every time I say it... I could still be on drugs and I could be still pegging down that long road, but they made me turn a corner. I don't have depression, I'm not on drugs, and I'm just so happy and life's good.' – Emma



Help local children and families

Connections works on the ground across the south eastern suburbs of Melbourne from bases in Beaumaris, Blackburn, Cranbourne, Croydon, Dandenong, Mount Waverley, Narre Warren, Pakenham, Ringwood, Mornington and Windsor.

We work with young Mums like Jessica...

Becoming a mother for the first time is often a rewarding experience, but adjusting to life with a new person in the house can be quite a daunting task. This was the situation that Jessica, a young first time mother, found herself in after the birth of her daughter. With a partner working nights and unaware of her anxiety, Jessica found herself struggling to cope with the pressures of raising a new baby.

'It's a really big thing adjusting to having a new baby in the house but I got through that with the support of my family and my Connections worker.'

Stressed and without knowing who she could turn to, Jessica was referred to Connections by her maternal and child health nurse.

'It was good to know that there was a place like Connections there offering support.'

Since her initial interaction with Connections, Jessica is not only seeing the benefits of a healthier relationship with her daughter, but also with her partner. They are communicating much more openly, and are sharing the responsibility of raising their daughter together.



'I just encourage young mums to know that they're not alone, there's support out there, there's Connections out there.' – Jessica

BECOME A CONNECTIONS COMMUNITY PARTNER OR MAKE YOUR DONATION TODAY...



FREE CALL

1800 137 036



MAIL

THE FORM IN THE TEAR, WET AND SEAL ENVELOPE
(REPLY PAID 2240, MOUNT WAVERLEY VIC 3149)



VISIT

WWW.CONNECTIONS.ORG.AU

All donations over \$2 are tax-deductible and a receipt will be mailed to you. For Connections Community Partners, each July we will send you a single, consolidated tax receipt to assist you in your tax return preparation.

Thank you for your support.

The problem:

- » Each year more than 42,000 reports of children at risk of abuse and neglect come to the attention of child protection services in Victoria.
- » The Victorian Ombudsman found that as of 19 June 2009, 2197 child protection cases, or 22.6 per cent, had not been allocated to a case worker.
- » Funding does not meet demand and services struggle to adequately support those that need it.
- » There isn't wide enough recognition of the important role played by a collective responsibility or what real family strengthening, early intervention programs and services can offer in terms of preventing abuse and creating safe and nurtured living.

The solution:

- » Connections has programs and services that can expand today with your support. Existing programs like our No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS®) for low income earners and our Music Together program fostering family connectedness can expand to help more people today with your help.
- » Connections' centralised intake and referral service, Child FIRST, is on-hand for families in need and is working beyond capacity. With your help we can boost our responses ensuring that we can respond to children, young people and families in need.
- » Connections is there across south eastern Melbourne with intense family support/counselling (including low cost psychological services to promote safe, stable and nurturing environments for children, families, parents and carers). With your help we can reach more people and roll-out more tailored intense family support/counselling services for those in need.
- » Connections is actively identifying important policy, funding and structural improvements to improve the whole child protection system. With your help we can more actively develop new and creative ways of providing effective family support.

- » Connections Permanent Care program creates stable, secure and caring family environments for children who cannot live with their own families due to risk or experiences of abuse or neglect. With your help we can recruit more carers.
- » Connections targeted Parenting Assessment and Skills Development Service (PASDS) for parents with infants between the ages of birth to two years, provides an assessment of parenting capacity followed by an intensive parenting skills development component including education and support for families. With your help this can reach more people.
- » Connections' Starting Out program for young, pregnant and parenting women up to the age of 25 years, improves young families' health and social outcomes. With your help we can expand this program to offer more including peer support training developing knowledge and skills to support other young parents in the community.

Why support us?

Connections delivers innovative and early intervention programs supporting marginalised and disadvantaged children, young people and their families giving them a better chance in life now and in the future.

We want to see empowered children, young people and families enjoying wholeness and fullness of life within inclusive communities.

To achieve this we boldly and sensitively seek out and actively engage children, young people and families experiencing marginalisation and disadvantage to create opportunities for safe and nurtured living. We do this with a grounded experience and high quality effective programs and services.

Connections works pro-actively in the community and campaigns for improvements in the system. We believe that with real early intervention and quality family supports, many community members would find positive solutions to their problems before they entered crisis.

Your involvement with us as a Connections Community Partner will make a difference. We have the experience, skills and grounded, creative responses to make an impact in your local community.



Why trust us?

Our commitment to children and families in need reflects the ongoing legacy of our ‘founding’ organisations. Connections was established through the merger in May 2000 of Canterbury Family Centre, Copelen (incorporating Grassmere Youth Services) and Wheeler’s Hill Family Centre.

The Canterbury Family Centre and Copelen began life as the Presbyterian and Methodist Babies’ Homes respectively. Through them, Connections has played a part in the life of people across Melbourne for more than eighty years. Grassmere Youth Services was one of the first community based support services for young offenders in Victoria and Wheeler’s Hill Family Centre was developed in response to local community needs.

Today, Connections UnitingCare is a progressive and innovative leader in the family services sector. We provide a range of innovative and early intervention programs and services and confidently challenge decision makers when funding or policy settings do not meet the high standards our clients need. Hand in hand with our supporters and the community we are forging the future for child, youth and family services.



‘...staff are confronted by sad and often horrific stories of abuse and neglect, yet endeavour to assist our families in recognising their own internal strengths and fortitude. Their work is a credit to themselves and to Connections’ principles of social justice.’ – Samantha

CONNECTIONS UNITINGCARE IS A COMMUNITY ORGANISATION WITH A LONG AND PROUD HISTORY OF SUPPORTING MARGINALISED AND DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE.

We offer a range of services across a continuum of care from preschool and childcare through to counselling and in-home support. We provide innovative and early intervention programs that support children, young people and their families giving them a better chance in life now and in the future.



MAKE YOUR CONNECTION... BECOME
A CONNECTIONS COMMUNITY PARTNER
FROM **UNDER 80 CENTS A DAY**

Connections UnitingCare has the experience, skills and grounded, creative responses to make a real difference in the community, but we can't do it without you. Become a Connections Community Partner today and see the impact your connection has on children, young people and families in your local community.

YES – I WANT TO BECOME A CONNECTIONS COMMUNITY PARTNER



Name (Ms/Mrs/Miss/Mr)

Address

Suburb Postcode

Phone Mobile

Email

Date of Birth / /

I want to become a Connections Community Partner, by donating each month

(all donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible).

\$20 \$30 \$50 Other \$.....

I want to make a one-off donation of \$.....

(complete credit card details below or cheques should be made payable to Connections UnitingCare)

I want to pay by credit card

Visa MasterCard Expiry /

Card number

Name on card

Signature

I want to donate by direct debit

Date of first payment Month Year

Financial institution

Account name

BSB Account number

Connections UnitingCare Direct Debit Request

By returning this form you request Connections UnitingCare to arrange for funds to be debited from your account at the financial institution identified. We will endeavour to debit the funds on the first day of each month (or as close to that as possible). If you wish to change or cancel any aspect to this arrangement please call 03 9271 0800 and ask to speak to the Communications and Fundraising Department of Connections.

Both signatures required if joint account

Signature Date / /

Signature Date / /

PRIVACY POLICY: Connections acknowledges and respects the privacy of all individuals. The agency will comply with the Privacy Principles contained in the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000 (Commonwealth), the Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic) and the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic). You can ask to see our Privacy Policy. If you have any questions call 03 9271 0800 and ask to speak to the Communications and Fundraising Department of Connections.

SEND THIS NOW

Post this coupon using the tear, wet and seal envelope attached or mail to Communications and Fundraising, Connections UnitingCare, Reply Paid 2240, Mount Waverley Victoria 3149.

Fax this coupon to 03 9271 0888

Email this coupon to fundraising@connections.org.au

Or you can call 03 9271 0800 and ask to speak to the Communications and Fundraising Department of Connections to discuss options.

Thank you for your support.