
Prepared by
Sandie Wong & Tamara Cumming
2016
Executive Summary

This paper reports on the findings of an evaluation of the Bathurst Child and Family Network (BCFN) - Building Child-safe, Child-friendly Communities Initiative (the Initiative) conducted by Dr Sandie Wong and Dr Tamara Cumming of the Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education, Charles Sturt University.

The Initiative was developed to support services in the Bathurst region to work on and showcase their child friendly practices and policies.

Findings from the evaluation demonstrate that:
1. The Initiative events were well targeted, clearly communicated & met a need in the community;
2. The Initiative events met participants’ expectations and were well received;
3. The Initiative raised participating organisations’ knowledge and awareness of child friendly policies and practices.
4. The Initiative contributed to some positive changes in participating organisations’ child friendly practices and policies and provided opportunities for organisations to share ideas about working in child-friendly ways.

Findings from the evaluation also demonstrate that there were some challenges to the effectiveness of the Initiative particularly in relation to:
- Participants’ inflated self-assessment of their organisations’ existing child-friendly knowledge, policies and practices may have had an impact on their commitment to change practices;
- Participating organisations’ lack of uptake of ongoing support offered;
- Conflicting priorities facing participating organisations;
- Participants’ lack of authority to bring about policy and practice changes;
- Inconsistent attendance at all three events;
- Low attendance at the Showcase.

Recommendations are provided for organisations aiming to implement similar Initiatives.

Acknowledgements

Sandie and Tamara gratefully acknowledge the support of the Charles Sturt University Community Partnership Grant that funded the evaluation.

We acknowledge Annette Meyers’ (Chair of the BCFN) championing of children’s rights and her enthusiasm and determination for working towards a more child-friendly Bathurst.

We also thank the services that participated in the evaluation for their contributions and insights. Thanks as well to Emily Wong for providing research assistance on the project.

Associate Professor Sandie Wong & Dr Tamara Cumming
# Contents table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background to the BCFN Building Child-safe, Child-friendly Communities initiative</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building the BCFN Focusing on Children’s Rights Initiative</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative Design</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Purpose, Funding &amp; Ethics, Data Sources &amp; Analysis</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Evaluation</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding &amp; Ethics</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Data Sources</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. A post Information session survey</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Pre and post Workshop survey</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Workshop policy planning documents</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Post Showcase survey</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Case study</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The Initiative events were well targeted, clearly communicated &amp; met a need in the community</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Initiative events met participants’ expectations and were well received</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The initiative raised participating organisations’ knowledge and awareness of child-friendly policies and practices</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Participating in the Initiative led to positive changes in some participating organisations’ child-friendly policies and practices</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study 1: Centacare Professional Family and Community Services, Bathurst</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study 2: Relationships Australia NSW – Bathurst</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Limitations of the Initiatives’ ability to support organisations’ become more child friendly &amp; lessons learnt</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where to next?</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1: BCFN Document – Major Initiatives and Aims</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 2: This is the story of the BCFN</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 3: Information Session Programme</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 4: Conference &amp; Workshop Programme</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 5: Showcase Programme</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 6: Pre &amp; Post Conference and Workshop Questionnaire</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 7: Showcase Information Letter and Questionnaire</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 8: Questions for case study and interviews</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 9: Newspaper clippings &amp; CSU Publication</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 10: Letter from Bathurst Council</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Background to the BCFN Building Child-safe, Child-friendly Communities initiative

Bathurst is a regional community in the NSW Central Tablelands with a population of over 42,000.

The Bathurst Child and Family Network (BCFN) is a proactive not-for-profit network of cross-sector organisations including early childhood, education, and health and family services. It has operated in its current form since 2011 driving a range of community events, initiatives and activities. Originally meeting as an early childhood group it was later established in 2004 as an interagency by the Schools as Community Centres (SaCC) program. Over the past 6 years the BCFN has grown to become a highly respected and proactive community network. The BCFN aims to:

“improve outcomes and opportunities for children and promote the value of the early years, children, young people, families and carers within the wider community” (see Appendix 1). To support their work, the BCFN has established a number of community events (such as the Bathurst Family Fun Day – See Appendix 2).

BCFN Focusing on Children’s Rights

Informed by UNICEF’s Building Child Friendly Cities: A Framework for Action, and Australia’s National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children: Third Three Year Action Plan, the BCFN considered how they could best support children’s rights within the Bathurst community. Annette Meyers (Chairperson of the BCFN) says:

“The BCFN wanted people to get together in Bathurst to start talking about what was right for kids”.

In 2015, the BCFN organised the Bathurst Big Banter. This community event, attended by Megan Mitchel the National Children’s Commissioner, was designed to:

“engage the community and key stakeholders in a consultation process and raise awareness of the importance and relevance of children’s rights at the practical level”.

Building on the success of the Bathurst Big Banter, the BCFN was successful in receiving a NSW Department Family and Community Services Western NSW Local Network Development Grant in 2016 to fund The Building Child-safe, Child-friendly Communities Initiative.

Building the Child-safe, Child-friendly Communities Initiative

Purpose

The purpose of the BCFN Child-Safe, Child-Friendly Communities Initiative (the Initiative) was to provide opportunities and resources for managers of organisations working with children and families in the Bathurst region to come together to:

- increase their knowledge and awareness of what it means to be:
  - child-aware
  - child-safe
  - child-friendly
- make changes towards child-friendly policies and practices;
• share experiences, learnings and expertise in developing and implementing child-friendly policies and practices.

Ultimately, BCFN aimed to support Bathurst become a child-friendly city.

**Initiative Design**

The Child-Safe, Child-friendly Communities Initiative comprised four components:

1. **Information Session**
   The Information Session was attended by 39 participants. The Session included an overview of the BCFN journey and purpose, overview of the National Framework, and United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in action, presentation highlighting Nordic experiences and approaches, BCFN vision for child-safe, child-friendly Bathurst. – see Appendix 3).

2. **Conference & Workshop (June 2016)**
   The Conference and Workshop was attended by 63 participants. The Conference and Workshop included (see Appendix 4):
   - information sharing sessions from Guest Speakers related to:
     - [National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children](#);
     - NSW Focus and Policy Directions;
     - Children’s Rights;
   - opportunities to work on plans for improving participating organisations’ child-friendly policies and practices; and
   - provision of resources to support increased understanding of children’s rights and working in child-friendly ways (e.g. UNICEF UNCROC posters; Children’s Rights Report 2013; Listen to Children, 2011 Child Rights NGO Report; and resources from Office of the NSW Children’s Guardian, NAPCAN and Save the Children).

3. **Showcase (November 2016)**
   The Showcase was attended by 24 participants and included (see Appendix 5):
   - Information connecting the Bathurst child-friendly Initiative to national and international initiatives;
   - A proposal for considering the formation of a Bathurst Chapter of the National Coalition on Children’s Safety and Well-being.
   - Opportunities for individual services to share their expertise and experiences in working in child-friendly ways.

4. **On-going support for developing plans**
   In addition to the three events outlined above, participants were also offered on-going support from the BCFN to further develop and implement their plans for working in child-friendly ways. No participants took up this offer.
Evaluation Purpose, Funding & Ethics, Data Sources & Analysis

Purpose of the Evaluation
The purpose of the evaluation was to:
1. Determine what changes (if any) occurred in participating services’:
   a. knowledge and awareness of child-friendly, child-safe practices and polices;
   b. child-friendly, child-safe policies and practices.
2. Share ‘stories’ of child-friendly policies and practices within organisations participating in the Initiative.
3. Contribute learnings from reflection on the Initiative for the benefit of similar initiatives elsewhere.

Funding & Ethics
The evaluation of the Initiative was made possible through a Charles Sturt University Community Partnership Grant. The grant was used to cover the cost of research assistance for conducting the case study and interviews; data entry and transcribing; and administrative tasks.

Ethics approval for the evaluation was granted by CSU Faculty of Arts and Education Human Ethics Committee (Protocol No: 300/2016/21).

Evaluation Data Sources
Data for this evaluation were gathered through five sources:
1. A post Information session survey was conducted by BCFN prior to the CSU evaluation. The survey was completed by 32 (82.1%) participants.
2. Pre and post Workshop survey (see Appendix 6) completed by 29 (46%) participants.
3. Workshop policy planning documents (n= 10) collected at the Workshop.
4. Post Showcase survey (see Appendix 7) completed by 10 (42%) participants.
5. Case study (n=2) & interviews (n=2): two child and family service case studies were conducted. These comprised: a visit to one organisation to observe practices and collect materials; and interviews with (n=4) participants. A further two interviews were conducted with a manager in other services (n=1), and the Chair of the BCFN (n=1) (see Appendix 8 for interview questions).

Data Analysis
Quantitative data were entered into SPSS and descriptive and frequency analyses conducted.

Qualitative data were analysed through coding responses as they related to each specific research question and then identifying themes across the responses.
Findings

Findings from the evaluation demonstrate that:

1. The Initiative events were well targeted, clearly communicated & met a need in the community

Findings suggest that communication about the Initiative events was well targeted and clearly communicated. Each of the Initiative events were attended by services that work with children and families (see Table 1).

Further, the events clearly met a need in the community. The reasonably high attendance at the full-day events, especially the Conference and Workshop, demonstrates that the organisations sending representatives considered the event to be valuable and worthwhile. As Annette Meyers noted:

“People want to do this, they see the value and are keen to make things better in their work and Bathurst.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work primarily with ...</th>
<th>Info Session</th>
<th>Conference &amp; Workshop</th>
<th>Showcase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: % of respondents to survey who worked primarily with each of the target groups.

Findings also suggest that the purpose of the Initiative and events was clearly articulated. Participants’ open-ended responses about what they hoped to achieve as a result of attending the Conference and Workshop aligned strongly with the purpose of the Initiative. One respondent noted, for example, that his/her reason for attending was to:

“Ensure our policies reflect best practice including current language around child aware, safe, friendly”.
2. The Initiative events met participants’ expectations and were well received

The findings demonstrate that the Initiative events largely met participants’ expectations. For example, Table 2 summarises the responses to closed questions asking participants at the Conference and Workshop to indicate what they wanted to get out of the Conference and Workshop (pre-workshop). Participants were also asked for their degree of agreement that the Conference and Workshop achieved these aims (post-workshop). There was strong agreement on most items that the workshop had achieved these aims.

Further, in relation to the Conference, respondents commented very favourably on the Guest Speakers. One participant noted that there was a: “Good array of speakers to reflect current legislation around child-safe, child-friendly environments and how can work together to create a better Bathurst.”

Other comments included that the speakers were: “insightful and relevant”, “interesting”, “inspirational” and had “a wealth of knowledge”.

Likewise, respondents to the post-Showcase survey commented positively on the Initiative. For example, one respondent noted that it was: “Very informative”.

Respondents also commented positively on the BCFN team. For example, one respondent noted that the:

“Commitment and dedication of team is evident”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% wanting conf / ws to achieve this (pre-conference)</th>
<th>% agreeing that the conf/ws provided this (post w/s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Networking opportunity</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
<td>96.4% agreed (35.7% agreed to a great extent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>no disagreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve children’s wellbeing</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>89.6% (17.2% agreed to a great extent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>no disagreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop own action plan</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>76.1% agreed (17.2 agreed to a great extent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13.8% did not agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer support</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>81.4% agreed (11.1% agreed to a great extent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.4% did not agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve engagement with children</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>75.9% agreed (13.8% to a great extent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.4% (i.e. one person) disagreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be part of this local initiative</td>
<td>53.3%</td>
<td>93.3% agreed (13.3% to a great extent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>no disagreement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Participants’ responses to closed questions pre-Conference and Workshop about what they wanted to achieve as a result of attending, and their perceptions post-Conference and Workshop about the degree to which these expectations had been met.
3. The initiative raised participating organisations’ knowledge and awareness of child-friendly policies and practices

The Initiative enabled services to share and expand their understandings of what being a child-friendly organisation entails by providing space, time and resources for participants to discuss what being child-friendly meant to them. Some of the understandings shared included:

- Being family-centred
- Being approachable
- Working collaboratively to engage with other services
- Ensuring all policies and procedures reflect the UN CRC Rights of the Child
- Having a key worker model – transdisciplinary team approach to ensure continuity of care and child-friendly practice.

Several Conference and Workshop participants noted that being child-friendly meant taking a child’s perspective and ensuring children are listened to within organisations:

“Seeing through the child’s eyes; ensuring the child’s voice is heard and actions reflect a child focus”

As shown in Table 3, Conference and Workshop participants reported an increase in their understanding across a range of issues as a result of attending the event. Despite participants’ pre-Conference and Workshop ratings of their understandings of the topics being high, the score on each item nevertheless went up post-Conference and Workshop (but the change did not reach statistical significance). The largest change in understandings related to understandings about the The National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children.

Likewise, respondents to the post-Showcase survey indicated that participating had increased their knowledge and capacity to work in child-friendly ways. For example, in response to a question asking “to what degree has the Showcase provided opportunities to learn things that could help your organisation be more child-friendly ...” the mean score was 5.2 (where 1 = not at all; and 7 = to a great extent).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understanding of...</th>
<th>Pre-Conf / WS rating out of 7 (where 1 = very limited understanding; 7 = very sound understanding)</th>
<th>Post-Conf / WS rating out of 7 (where 1 = very limited understanding; 7 = very sound understanding)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child awareness</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>6.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child safety</td>
<td>5.74</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child-friendly practices and policies:</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>6.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s rights</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>6.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>5.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Changes in participants’ understanding from pre-to post Conference and Workshop

Another indication that the Initiative was successful in raising awareness about working in child-friendly ways in the community, was the recognition the Conference and Workshop received from local media. The event was covered both by Channel 7 Regional News and the Western Advocate newspaper (see Appendix 9). It was also covered on CSU’s News webpage (see Appendix 9). The Initiative contributed to positive changes in participating organisations’ child-friendly practices and policies and provided opportunities for organisations to share ideas about working in child-friendly ways.
4. Participating in the Initiative led to positive changes in some participating organisations’ child-friendly policies and practices.

One of the most significant achievements of the Initiative was the resolution made by Bathurst Regional Council to (see Appendix 10):

1. Support the initiative of the BCFN to build awareness of child-safe, child-friendly Bathurst within the local business sector and Bathurst Community.
2. Take leadership to promote the principles of UNICEF’s Convention on the Rights of the Child, leading towards Bathurst being recognised as a Child-Friendly City.
3. Incorporate the Initiative into the Bathurst 2036 Community Strategic Plan.

This resolution indicates a significant commitment from Council to support a child’s right approach in Bathurst and to incorporate child rights approaches in Council planning.

Several participants at the Conference and Workshop noted the importance of following-up with action afterwards. For example, one respondent noted the: “need to act according to the messages / information [learnt at the Conference and Workshop].”

Indeed, 82.1% of the respondents to the Conference and Workshop survey agreed to some extent (7.1% to a great extent) that it was likely that they would change their practices as a result of attending the workshop. Some of the strategies participants committed to implementing in order to improve child-friendly practices and policies within their organisation included:

- Creating awareness among staff about child safety, neglect and responsibilities of a mandatory reporter.
- Updating all policies to reflect current procedures and research.
- Implementing a variety of systems to ensure children have a voice that is heard and responded to.
- Training staff in mandatory reporting responsibilities and how to talk to a child making a disclosure.
- Adopting and implementing a ‘person-centred framework’ which places the child at the centre of decisions.
- Providing more education for staff about identifying child abuse, who to talk to and what support networks are available.

Some organisations reported in the post-Showcase survey, that they had made changes to their policies and practices as a result of participating in the Initiative. For example, they reported they had:

- sought greater awareness and better understanding of community needs so that they were more able to respond appropriately to the needs of children from particular groups.
- created child-friendly waiting areas: (e.g. they now provided toys and books and child-sized
furniture and had set the waiting room TV on a children’s channel).

• better and more effective collaboration with schools especially in relation to supporting children’s transition to school.

• engaged with local Aboriginal land owners to create safe places for Aboriginal children in their organisation - including commissioning artwork representing the gathering of children in a meeting place.


• developed strategies to consult with children, and include the child’s experience in the organisation’s exit evaluations.

As one participant noted: “Our case planning is now about each child to meet the child’s needs. Lots more to do though!”

Furthermore, participating services agreed that the Showcase provided them with an opportunity to share ways they were working in child-friendly ways. On a scale of 1 – 7 (where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree), the mean score in response to the statement “The Showcase enabled me to showcase how my organisation works in child-friendly ways” was 5.2.

Finally, the two Case studies that follow (see pages 13 – 16) provide another opportunity to share how organisations in the Bathurst region are working in child-friendly ways.
Centacare Professional Family and Community Services, Bathurst

Centacare Bathurst has been developing its child-friendly, child-safe, child-aware approaches for some years, so there is a strong culture in place. These approaches are integrated with the family-focused service philosophy of Centacare. The organisation’s team works collaboratively to provide safe and welcoming spaces, and holistic, responsive, services for families – both adults and children.

Centacare Bathurst demonstrates child-friendliness through the creation of interesting and engaging spaces for families. Waiting spaces have toys and activities that are easily accessible by children. There are books for adults to share with their children, and a television showing children’s programs to occupy them while they are waiting.

Spaces for working and consulting with children have child-sized furniture and a range of well-kept, construction, socio-dramatic, sensory and creative play equipment. These are arranged attractively and invitingly, sending a clear message that children are welcomed and respected. Clinicians use a play therapy room with a range of creative and therapeutic play activities including sand play.
Centacare Bathurst also demonstrates child friendliness through having a flexible approach to meetings with families. Meeting times and places are organised to accommodate families’ child-care needs. One staff member noted, for example: “Clients are encouraged to bring their children along to a session if they can’t find childcare. If we’re seeing individual adults or couples or even parents around their parenting issues, they’re invited to bring the children along. Most of the practitioners will have a box of toys in their room that they pull out for the children to play with while they are seeing their parents.”

Another way Centacare Bathurst demonstrates child friendliness is through listening carefully to children. For example, a major child-aware approach is ‘Child Inclusive Mediation’. Children involved in the mediation processes (when their families are separating for example) are interviewed both individually and with their families. Children’s opinions are included in decision-making. At the same time parents are encouraged to make those decisions in the best interests of their children. Centacare Bathurst also demonstrates child-safety by insisting that both parents’ consent is obtained before a child is consulted. Centacare Bathurst are also committed to supporting their staff by providing a child friendly work environment, where appropriate. For example, staff with small children can access extra leave to care for sick children, or bring children to meetings when other care is not available, where appropriate.

Centacare Bathurst is committed to using common-sense processes to build a child-friendly organisation for staff and clients. Managers at Centacare Bathurst have a full understanding of why this approach is needed, the benefits it can deliver for clients and staff and proactively look for ways to continue to improve.
Relationships Australia NSW – Bathurst

Relationships Australia NSW is a non-government agency which provides counselling, group education and family dispute resolution services to individuals and families in the community. Given the prevalence of domestic and family violence, and the detrimental effect of violence on children and young people, the organisation has had to develop services with a focus on: *What keeps children safe?*

The organisation’s policies are informed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Examples include:

- **Access and Equity Policy** - ensures the service is available to all children.
- **Suitability of Services** - ensures the service is the correct service for the child.
- **OHS policy** - considers the safety of the environment for children.
- **Child at Risk** - ensures children are referred to appropriate authorities when necessary.
- **Data Management** – when in the best interests of the child, information about children is shared with other organisations.

These policies are ‘living documents’ which are intended to guide professionals at Relationship Australia NSW, including staff working at the Bathurst Family Relationship Centre. To this end, they adopt ‘child inclusive’ practices, assisting them to create welcoming, safe and supportive environments for children and their families.

There is an emphasis on the best interests of the child in all aspects of the work, from assessment through information sharing, to referral. For example, when facilitating family mediation, mediators carefully assess whether it is appropriate for the children to be consulted about family matters that will affect them, and will refer to the Child Consultant to conduct an interview with the children. The Child Consultant respects the children’s right to confidentiality and to having their views considered when choices are made about them. These rights are explained to children. But they are also informed that if the Child Consultant has concerns for their well-being this information may need to be shared with other agencies.
To facilitate conversations with children, and help them express their feelings and preferences, staff use child-friendly materials, such as the St Luke’s bear cards, drawings and storytelling. The Child Consultant then feeds back to the parents what the children want them to know.

Many of the services offered by Relationships Australia NSW aim to help parents focus on the experience of the current circumstances from the child’s point of view. Therefore, they:

• Aim to reduce negative and entrenched conflict between the parents.
• Assist parents understand the long-term negative effect of on-going conflict on children’s well-being. And
• Assist parents to learn what support children need within their families.

As one staff member noted: “We help parents see past their issues to focus on their children – it’s often a turning point for families.”
5. Limitations of the Initiatives’ ability to support organisations’ become more child friendly & lessons learnt

Findings from the evaluation highlight some limitations on the ability of the Initiative to bring about changes in organisations’ practices and policies.

First, the Initiative’s ability to bring about changes was impacted by participating organisations’ high self-assessment of their level of understandings and existing ways of working. Many survey respondents participating in the events self-rated their understanding of being child-friendly and child safe, and their organisations’ child friendly policies and practices, highly. It may be that these self-assessments were accurate. However, from discussions with participants, it was clear that for many, their understandings were somewhat limited and their organisations’ practices were not particularly child-friendly. Without an accurate assessment of their capacity it is unlikely that participants would invest the resources necessary to bring about change

Lessons learnt
A more effective way of bringing about change may have been for the Initiative to support participants to make accurate self-assessments of their existing knowledge, practices and policies.

Second, the ability of the Initiative to bring about lasting change was limited by the lack of uptake of ongoing support. The Initiative provided three point-in-time events. Whilst it did offer individual ongoing support this was not taken up by organisations. Lasting and meaningful change within organisations’ policies and practices towards more child-friendly approaches, often requires organisational cultural shifts and this takes time and commitment. As one respondent noted: 
“I think this is not about changing a policy document. This is about cultural challenge in the workplace and reflective practice. In my mind this will take longer. It needs long-term commitment.”

Another participant noted:
“The concept has been challenging for organisations to understand. There needs to be time for the service to digest and interpret and come back.”

Lessons learnt
The provision of ongoing individualised support could have led organisations to actively engage with, critically reflect on, and experiment with changes in, their knowledge and policies and practices.

The initiative may have increased its effectiveness if the ongoing support component was more actively promoted and encouraged.

Third, the Initiative was limited by organisations’ capacities to prioritise child-friendly ways of working. Whilst participants at the event did commit to making change, once back in the realities of everyday practice it proved difficult for some to follow through. As one respondent noted it takes: 
“More than plans – we need to act”. If organisations are to increase their capacity to work in child-friendly ways this focus needs to be prioritised.
Lessons learnt
It is difficult to know how the Initiative could have done more to encourage organisations to prioritise child-friendly ways of working. This is likely to be an ongoing piece of work.

Fourth, the impact of the Initiative was limited by the ability of some participants to make changes in their organisations’ practices and policy. The Initiative had been designed with the expectation that managers of organisations would attend and be in a position to make changes. However, managers often sent deputies. So that, of the 39 participants in the Information Session only 15 (38.5%) were managers; of the 63 participants in the Conference and Workshop only 19 (30%) were managers; and of the 24 participants attending the Showcase only 7 (29.2%) were managers. Thus the ability of these participants to implement changes was limited.

Lessons learnt
For such Initiatives to work it is essential that they attract participants who are in positions to change policy and practice.

Similarly, the Initiative’s capacity to bring about change was limited by the lack of consistency in participant attendance. The project had been designed with the three components building on one another. However, organisations tended to send different delegates to each of the events. Despite 97% of respondents to the Information Session saying they wanted to continue participating in the Initiative, only 25% of participants in the workshop had attended the information session. Further, only 20% of participants to the Showcase had attended both the Information Session and the Workshop and 40% had attended neither previous event. This lack of consistency in attendance at the events meant that participants did not deepen their understandings through successive event attendance.

Lessons learnt
Again, it is difficult to know how the Initiative could have done more to ensure that Managers attended all three events, other than make it clear that participation required commitment to attend all three components.

Finally, the capacity of the Initiative to support the sharing of child-friendly ways of working was somewhat limited by low attendance at the Showcase. Disappointingly, the Showcase which was intended to enable services to share resources, stories, experience and expertise in working in child-friendly ways was the least well-attended event.

Lessons learnt
From the current evaluation it is impossible to know why participation in the Showcase dropped off. It would be useful for the BCFN to survey participants who attended any of the events to seek feedback.
Conclusion

The Initiative was useful for raising awareness, knowledge and understanding about what it means to be a child-friendly organisation in the Bathurst community. It was also successful in supporting organisations to make changes to their policies and practices.

However, there were some challenges to the effectiveness of the Initiative which may or not have been overcome by the Initiative working in slightly different ways.

What is clear is that there is a great deal of commitment to working in child-friendly ways displayed by the BCFN and many of the organisations participating in the Initiative. The children of Bathurst can only but benefit from this commitment.

Where to next?

The BCFN continues to promote child-friendly way of working,

- It has formed the Bathurst chapter of the National Coalition of Child Wellbeing. Participants at the showcase who were interested in being part of the chapter were asked to submit their details to BCFN on the day.
- BCFN staff continue to develop their knowledge about working in child-friendly ways including developing understandings about International initiatives such as the Scottish “Getting it Right for Every Child” strategy.
References


Scottish Government (2016). *Getting it right for every child* [website]
  http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/what-is-girfec


  http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/Advance Versions/GeneralComment7Rev1.pdf
Appendices

Appendix 1: BCFN Document – Major Initiatives and Aims

The Bathurst Child and Family Network (BCFN) is a not-for-profit proactive network of cross-sector agencies that include members from a wide range of services, organisations, education and early childhood services. The network aims to improve outcomes and opportunities for children and promote the value of the early years, children, young people, families and carers within the wider community. We believe that “it takes a village to raise a child” and we must all play a part. Our vision is for all children and families to be happy, healthy, and safe and thrive in Bathurst. We have a genuine desire to provide opportunities for children, young people and families to be heard and taken seriously in a child-safe, child-friendly community.

BCFN Major Initiatives and Aims

1. The Bathurst Family Fun Day (BFFD) is a free family-focused event celebrating the importance and value of all families in our community during National Families Week. The fun day is a BCFN initiative that began in 2012 to help connect community building a sense of belonging and has grown to become a much loved annual community event. This community-based festival supports and connects families to and with the Bathurst community, services, information, facilities and resources. Community spirit and inclusivity are the key outcomes of this fun, entirely free child & family friendly highly regarded grassroots event. Families access a wide range of activities, games, demonstrations, local entertainment and information. As a result of the BFFD, families:
   - Feel more connected to their community
   - Recognise and take pride in the importance of families within our community
   - Recognise and appreciate the diversity of our Bathurst community
   - Engage with a range of inclusive cultural activities, demonstrations and entertainment
   - Find out about information, services, facilities, resources available to help them and/or their family within Bathurst
   - Increase their likelihood of accessing information, services, resources to support them and/or their family
   - Increase use and access of child-focused activities, resources and facilities within Bathurst

2. Embedding Children’s Rights: BCFN has previously led ground-breaking events such as ‘Bathurst’s Big Banter’ to engage the community and key stakeholders in a consultation process and raise awareness of the importance and relevance of children’s rights at the practical level. In closing at the 2015 Bathurst’s Big Banter, the National Children’s Commissioner Megan Mitchell said “our task is to grow capable informed children who have good relationships with adults.” She invited all to become children’s champions and “take what we are already doing a little bit further to become a true child rights champion. Think about the opportunities you have to make the Bathurst community more child-
centred. By listening and speaking up for children’s rights you will make a difference for children.”

3. **BCFN ‘working to build a child-safe, child-friendly Bathurst’:** This BCFN led ‘building a child-safe, child-friendly Bathurst’ initiative is a crucial step to inspire interest and confidence for the community to build a child-friendly city from the ground-up in Bathurst. A child friendly city is the embodiment of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) at the local level, where children’s rights are reflected in policies, laws, programs and budgets. In a child friendly city, children are active agents; their voices and opinions are taken into consideration and influence decision making processes (*UNICEF Child Friendly Cities)*.

The BCFN have been instrumental in developing and leading a range of activities, events, projects and initiatives to help make Bathurst a better place for children, families and the whole community.

**BCFN Projects and Aims**

Bathurst Child and Family Network initiatives are driven through project subcommittees. These subcommittees meet to plan, consult, research, prepare, communicate, promote and host each activity or event. Subcommittee members are representatives from a range of organisations from across sectors and are a key to their strength, diversity and success. **Project descriptions and aims are listed below:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event/activity/project</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Aim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bathurst Family Fun Day (BFFD)</strong></td>
<td><strong>What:</strong> Free, fun, family friendly grassroots community festival.  <strong>When:</strong> Held annually during National Families week (3rd Saturday in May).</td>
<td><strong>Connecting with the whole community</strong>  • Connect families to and with the Bathurst community, services, facilities, information and resources  • Promote a sense of belonging and connectedness  • Promote social inclusion and community spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kids Play</strong></td>
<td><strong>What:</strong> Free, fun, child-focused early learning sessions for young children and their family.  <strong>When:</strong> Held fortnightly for 1 hour at Hope Bathurst during 2016.</td>
<td><strong>Building relationships with families</strong>  • Provide quality learning experiences for young children in the community  • Promote play and its benefits for children and families  • Involve local volunteers via The Neighbourhood Centre  • Utilise an evidence-based continuous improvement approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building a child-safe, child-friendly Bathurst (CSCFBx)</strong></td>
<td><strong>What:</strong> Project introduced and led by BCFN with a briefing, conference and showcase.  <strong>When:</strong> From April – October 2016.</td>
<td><strong>Keeping children safe and well in Bathurst</strong>  • Increase awareness and understanding of children’s rights within the community  • Increase community desire, passion and commitment to improving children’s safety and wellbeing across Bathurst  • Utilise an evidence-based continuous improvement approach as recipients of the 2016 CSU CUP Grant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transition to School (T2S)</strong></td>
<td><strong>What:</strong> Local teachers, educators, professionals meet and plan a range of activities &amp; improvements to starting kindergarten.  <strong>When:</strong> meet 1-2 per term plus host events and participate in the BFFD.</td>
<td><strong>Connecting schools, services, families and children</strong>  • Develop cross sector collaborative practice  • Make transition to school better for families through valuing their knowledge and respecting their contributions and experiences  • Ensure a child focused approach to transition to school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Consultations | What: Consultations with children and families are embedded into all BCFN activities, projects and events.  
When: ongoing as part of all projects and activities | Embed UNCRC into practice ‘built in not bolted on’  
• Utilise child-centred & family-centred strengths-based approaches  
• Embed consultations with children, families and community into all projects, initiatives and activities |
|---|---|---|
| Annual Conference | What: Cross-sector professional development activities held annually to support & improve collaboration, networking and opportunities for improved work practice.  
When: annually | Cross-sector networking and professional learning opportunities  
• Provide high quality professional development opportunities in Bathurst  
• Ensure cross sector involvement and participation for all events/activities  
• Utilise and highlight local expertise in the delivery and provision of all events/activities |
| Community involvement | What: BCFN members participate in a range of other activities within the community e.g. White Ribbon Day, Mental Health Month….  
When: as relevant | Active participation in a range of other community projects and activities  
• Participate in a range of other community initiatives led by other organisations/networks e.g. White Ribbon Day, Mental Health Week, Youth Week, Disability Expo etc. |

Contact Annette on 6331 8944 or annette@centacarebathurst.com.au for more information.
**Appendix 2: This is the story of the BCFN....**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 1</th>
<th>Chapter 2</th>
<th>Chapter 3</th>
<th>Chapter 4</th>
<th>Chapter 5</th>
<th>Chapter 6...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CFN History</td>
<td>BELS meet BCFN...</td>
<td>Grassroots...</td>
<td>BCFN ‘the logo’...</td>
<td>Nordic influence...</td>
<td>Local, national and global convergence...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools as Community Centres (SaCS)</td>
<td>Bathurst Early Learning Support(BELS)</td>
<td>Kelso Community Hub</td>
<td>Strategic Planning</td>
<td>Working to build a child-safe, child-friendly Bathurst</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Early childhood focus</td>
<td>• Children &amp; families</td>
<td>• UNCRC</td>
<td>Bigger, more inclusive BFFD</td>
<td>Putting it into practice...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Early education</td>
<td>• Capacity building</td>
<td>• BCFN Mission, Vision &amp; Values</td>
<td>Multicultural activities</td>
<td>Kids Play</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Parent training</td>
<td>• Grandparent days</td>
<td>• Grassroots &amp; advocacy</td>
<td>Bigger crowds</td>
<td>Australia – VCI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tertiary training courses</td>
<td>• Bake-off events</td>
<td></td>
<td>CSU MC + T2S</td>
<td>International GIRFEC Scotland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Professional development and training</td>
<td>• Learning circles</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hearing children’s voices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collaboration</td>
<td>• Fun &amp; Games Friday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Child and Family Network (CFN)*

**Project subcommittees – let’s just do it!**
BFFD was ‘born’ 2012

* Growth of BFFD + Celebrating Aboriginal culture

*Kelso Community Hub*
  - Helping children succeed; Children in Focus; Engagement

*CFN Conferences*

**Strategic Planning**
- • UNCR
- • BCFN Mission, Vision & Values
- • Grassroots & advocacy

**Bigger, more inclusive BFFD**
- • Multicultural activities
- • Bigger crowds
- • CSU MC + T2S
- • Hearing children’s voices

*Bathurst’s Big Banter (BBB)*
Community conversation about children’s rights in Bathurst

*Transition to School meets BCFN*  
Meet & Greet Night Wellbeing Collaboration

*Child-safe, child-friendly Bathurst project (CSCFBx)*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early childhood focus</th>
<th>Guest speakers</th>
<th>Conferences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connect community to services</td>
<td>Child-focused</td>
<td>Actively involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actively involved</td>
<td>Free &amp; fun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other CFN projects...**
- Children’s speech
- Community stalls

**BFFD guiding principles**
- Keep Them Safe
- Community approach
- Working alongside CFN
- BCFN approached to ‘take on’ KTS in Bathurst

**UNICEF child-friendly cities**
- National Children’s Commissioner
- Local experts
- Aboriginal cultural tour
- Child safe workshop (OCG)
- Presentations to BRC

**Research Project**
evaluating the impact of the CSCFBx workforce development project
Bathurst project

**Bathurst local initiative into the future...**
Bathurst: where all children thrive
The unfolding National and Global story....

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global</th>
<th>International</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>NSW</th>
<th>Local initiatives</th>
<th>International approaches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ratified by Australia in 1990</td>
<td>Asia Pacific Forum on Families APFAM was launched in 1997</td>
<td>National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children (2009 – 2020)</td>
<td>NSW Office of the Children’s Guardian</td>
<td>BCFN grassroots initiatives, activities and projects</td>
<td>Finland: leading the world in educational outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>National Children’s Commissioner: Megan Mitchell</td>
<td>Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People (ACYP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BCFN CSCF Initiative Evaluation 2016
*Our Watch, ANROWS & VIC Health* |

| Valuing Children Initiative (VCI) 2016 |

Appendix 3: Information Session Programme

**BCFN Briefing**

When: 21st April 2016  
Time: 12 – 2.00pm  
Where: BMEC

**Agenda**

Upon arrival
- Invite organisations to add their label to the ‘net’ (displayed on the wall)
- Invite BCFN members to add BCFN projects/activities to the ‘net’

1. Welcome to all and acknowledgment of Country – (Annette)

2. BCFN journey: mins
   a. Child protection interagency
   b. Collaboration
   c. Children’s wellbeing

3. Purpose - Introduction & overview of the project

4. Survey
   a. Summary by Chika, invite services to complete the evaluation 5 mins
   b. benchmark data collection

5. National story
   a. Government Framework
   b. Children’s Rights in action

6. Megan Mitchell (BBB DVD)

7. Network vision for Child-safe, child-friendly project
   a. Practical examples
   b. Nordic examples
   c. Audience reflection / questions
   d. Participation in evaluation in own organisation

8. Invite to conference & showcase workshop

9. Close – Mayor
Appendix 4: Conference & Workshop Programme

Child-Safe, Child-Friendly Conference
28th June 2016
James Hardy Dining Room, Centre for Professional Development
Charles Sturt University

Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00am</td>
<td>Registration, Tea/coffee: children’s voices and CHILD reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30</td>
<td>Opening: Ardin Beech, MC, Bathurst Broadcasters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Welcome to Country, Aunty Joylene Simpson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:40</td>
<td>Conference aims and outcomes; Child-safe, child-friendly vision: BCFN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:50</td>
<td>Research Project: Dr Sandie Wong, Senior Lecturer, Charles Sturt University and Dr Tamara Cumming, Associate Lecturer, Charles Sturt University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children: Dr Brian Babington, Chief Executive Officer, Families Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:20</td>
<td>NSW Focus and Policy Direction: Tim O’Connor, Executive Director Strategic Planning, Department of Family and Community Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:40</td>
<td>Children’s Rights Presentation: Dr Frances Press, Associate Professor, School of Teacher Education, Charles Sturt University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>Reflection &amp; question time: Ardin Beech, MC, Bathurst Broadcasters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:20</td>
<td>Morning Tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:50</td>
<td>Child Friendly Presentation: Andrew McCallum, Chief Executive Officer, Association of Children’s Welfare Agencies (ACWA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:20</td>
<td>Child Aware Presentation: Brian Babington, Chief Executive Officer, Families Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:40</td>
<td>Child Safe Presentation: Kristy Lang, Subject Matter Expert, District Lead Design, Innovation, Safety and Permanency Directorate, Family &amp; Community Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:20</td>
<td>Reflection: Ardin Beech, Bathurst Broadcasters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>Child Safe, Child Aware, Child Friendly - Planning for improvement: Dr Tamara Cumming, Dr Sandie Wong &amp; Dr Frances Press, Charles Sturt University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:50</td>
<td>Workshop: Child-safe, child-friendly vision in practice (part 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30</td>
<td>Afternoon Tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:50</td>
<td>Workshop: Child-safe, child-friendly vision in practice (part 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00</td>
<td>Building child-safe, child-friendly communities together: what next?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30</td>
<td>Wrap up and conclusion: Dr Chika Anyanwu, School of Communication and Creative Industries, Charles Sturt University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00</td>
<td>Close</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Child-Safe, Child-Friendly Showcase

**27th October 2016**

Bathurst Memorial Entertainment Centre (BMEC)

## Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:30</td>
<td>Registration &amp; stall/display setup (optional): tea/coffee/morning tea provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Children’s voices and PowerPoint slideshow upon entry</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>Introduction: Bathurst Child and Family Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:10</td>
<td>Opening: Cr Bobby Bourke, Bathurst Regional Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:20</td>
<td>Local strategy – developing a child’s perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:20</td>
<td>Frameworks: Local meets National and International - GIRFEC, VIC and CSCFBx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:40</td>
<td>BCFN Top 10 + The BCFN story - the why, the how &amp; the what of it...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Research Project Update: <em>Dr Sandie Wong, Senior Lecturer, Charles Sturt University and Dr</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Tamara Cumming, Associate Lecturer, Charles Sturt University</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:20</td>
<td>Next steps: How can we be better champions for children in Bathurst?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bathurst Chapter of the National Coalition on Child Safety and Wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:55</td>
<td>Care for Kids: Community choir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>Networking lunch (mingle, peruse displays, talk, listen and share...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:45</td>
<td>Reflection and question time: <em>Sandie, Tamara, Leigh &amp; Annette</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:15</td>
<td>Show &amp; Share: <em>what are we doing? what’s working? how do we know?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:15</td>
<td>Action summary and conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:45</td>
<td>Wrap up and closing comments: <em>Dr Sandie Wong and Dr Tamara Cumming, CSU</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00</td>
<td>Close</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 6: Pre & Post Conference and Workshop Questionnaire

Bathurst Child & Family Network, Child Friendly Community Initiative: Conference / Workshop Evaluation

Dear Conference Participant

This Conference forms part of the Bathurst CFN, Child Friendly Initiative. Bathurst CFN’s, Child Friendly Initiative responds to, and is informed by, the ‘National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children: Third Three Year Action Plan’ and UNICEF’s ‘Building Child Friendly Cities: A Framework for Action’. The Initiative aims to support child and family services in the Bathurst region develop child friendly policies and practices.

To determine the effectiveness of the Initiative, CSU researchers Dr Tamara Cumming and Dr Sandie Wong have been asked to conduct an evaluation. As part of this evaluation we invite you to:

1. complete an anonymous pre- and post conference evaluation – place your completed questionnaires in the envelope provided; when both are completed seal the envelope and give it to Tamara or Sandie;
2. share your workplan – once completed Tamara or Sandie will photograph your workplan at the conference and return it to you immediately; and
3. consider participating in a case study – Tamara and Sandie will provide more details about the case study separately.

The data from this evaluation will be used to determine the effectiveness (or otherwise) of the Initiative and to provide examples of child friendly work policies and practices in the Bathurst region.

You can choose to participate in any or all of the three ways outlined above. Your input will be very valuable and the learnings from the evaluation will inform the on-going development of the Initiative in Bathurst and other communities. Findings may also be shared via scholarly conferences and publications. You are of course under no obligation to participate in any part of the evaluation.

NOTE: The Faculty of Education Ethics Committee has approved this project (protocol 300/2016/21). If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this project, you may contact the Committee through:

Ms Lisa McLean,
Executive Officer
Faculty of Education Human Ethics Committee
Charles Sturt University
Panorama Avenue
Bathurst
NSW 2795
Tel: +61 2 6338 4966
Email: FHEC_Education@csu.edu.au

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

31
BCFN CSCF Initiative Evaluation 2016
1. **What sector are you representing today? (please circle)**
   - Education: Early Childhood Primary School High School
     Tertiary Higher Education Other
     ___________________________
   - Health (please specify)
     ___________________________
   - Non-Government Organisation
     (please specify):
     ___________________________
   - Government department or agency
     (please specify):
     ___________________________
   - Other:
     (please specify state)
     ___________________________

2. **What is the *main* client group you work with? (please tick one only)**
   - [ ] Children
   - [ ] Young people
   - [ ] Adults
   - [ ] Families

3. **Did you attend the previous Bathurst CFN Child-Friendly Community briefing in April this year?**
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No
   - [ ] Not sure

4. **What brought you to the conference today? *(tick all that apply)*.**
   - [ ] Increase my knowledge
   - [ ] Network
   - [ ] Improve children’s wellbeing
   - [ ] Develop own action plan
   - [ ] Peer support
   - [ ] Be part of this local initiative
   - [ ] Improve engagement with children
   - [ ] Not sure
   - [ ] Other: (please specify)

Comment:
5. How would you rate your understandings about the following? (1 = I have very limited understanding; 7 = I have very sound understanding).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child awareness:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child safety:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child friendly practices and policies:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s rights:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The National:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comment: Would you like to tell us anything about your understandings of 1 – 8?

6. To what degree do your workplace policies and practices reflect the following? (1 = my workplace policies and practices are only minimally informed by these ideas; 7 = these ideas inform and underpin all of my workplace policies and practices).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child awareness:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child safety:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child friendly practices and policies:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s rights:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The National:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comment: (e.g. would you like to tell us anything about your work policies and practices?)
7. List 3 things that you would like to get out of today.

    1. 

    2. 

    3. 

    Comment: (e.g. would you like to tell us why you chose these three things?)

Thank you for sharing your thoughts.
Please place your questionnaire in the envelope provided.
1. To what degree did the conference provide opportunities to? (1 = not at all; 7 = to a great extent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Network:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Receive and/or provide peer support:</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop your own action plan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn things that would help you improve children’s wellbeing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn things that would help you improve your engagement with children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel part of this local initiative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comment:

2. How would you now rate your understandings about the following? (1 = I have very limited understanding; 7 = I have very sound understanding). Please note that sometimes when given the opportunity to reflect on our understandings we realise that we know less than we initially thought! So it’s ok if your ratings go down from your pre-conference ratings!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child awareness:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child safety:</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. In the pre-conference questionnaire you were asked to list 3 things that you would like to get out of today. On a scale of 1 – 7 (1 = not at all; 7 = to a great extent) how well did the conference address these expectations?

1. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment: (e.g. what could the conference have done differently to address your expectations?)

4. Which session/s did you find helpful for improving your understandings and work practices and policies? Please provide a brief explanation of what was most useful about the sessions?

1. National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children - Dr Brian Babington:
   ___________________________________________________________
   ______

2. NSW Focus and Policy Direction- Tim O’Connor:__________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ______

3. Children’s Rights Presentation - A/Prof Fran Press:________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ______
4. Child Friendly Presentation - Andrew McCallum:
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   ______

5. Child Aware Presentation - Brian Babington:
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   ______

6. Child Safe Presentation - Kristy Lang:
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   ______

7. Developing a workplan - Fran Press, Tamara Cumming, Sandie Wong:
   __________________________
   __________________________________________
   ______
   Comment:

5. Name three key messages of most significance to you arising from today’s BCFN Conference.
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 
   Comment:

6. How likely do you think it is that you will change your practices and policies as a result of attending the conference? (1= not likely at all; 7 = extremely likely)
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   Comment:

7. Do you have any other comments regarding the conference or child-safe, child-friendly project?

8. Would you like to continue to participate in the BCFN project and commit to building a child-safe, child-friendly Bathurst? This will include implementing your organisation’s action plan and attending the Showcase on Thursday 27th October
   □ Yes  □ No  □ Not sure  □ Other

Thank you for sharing. Please place your completed questionnaire in the envelope with your pre-conference questionnaire, seal it, and hand it to Sandie or Tamara.
Appendix 7: Showcase Information Letter and Questionnaire

Bathurst Child & Family Network, Child Friendly Community Initiative Evaluation

Dear BCFN Showcase Participant

This Showcase forms part of the Bathurst CFN, Child Friendly Initiative. Bathurst CFN’s, Child Friendly Initiative responds to, and is informed by, the 'National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children: Third Three Year Action Plan' and UNICEF’s ‘Building Child Friendly Cities: A Framework for Action’. The Initiative aims to support child and family services in the Bathurst region develop child friendly policies and practices.

To determine the effectiveness of the Initiative, CSU researchers Dr Tamara Cumming and Dr Sandie Wong have been asked to conduct an evaluation. As part of this evaluation we invite you to complete this questionnaire about your experience of participating in the initiative, what changes you have made to your policies and/or practices as a result of participating in the initiative, and any suggestions you may have for improving the initiative if it were to be ‘rolled-out’ in other regions.

Completion of the questionnaire is of course completely voluntary. If you decide to complete it, it should take no more that 10 minutes. Once complete, place your questionnaire in the envelope provided, seal the envelope and give it to Tamara or Sandie when you leave. If you decide not to complete the questionnaire you may chose to submit a blank form or simply do nothing.

The data from this evaluation will be used to determine the effectiveness (or otherwise) of the Initiative and to provide examples of child friendly work policies and practices in the Bathurst region.

Your input will be very valuable and the learnings from the evaluation will inform the ongoing development of the Initiative in Bathurst and other communities. Findings may also be shared via scholarly conferences and publications. You are of course under no obligation to participate in any part of the evaluation.
8. What sector are you representing today? (please circle)
   - Education: Early Childhood, Primary School, High School, Tertiary, Higher Education, Other
   - Health (please specify)
   - Non-Government Organisation (please specify):
   - Government department or agency (please specify):
   - Other: (please specify state)

9. What is the main client group you work with? (please tick one only)
   - Children
   - Young people
   - Adults
   - Families

10. Did you attend the previous Bathurst CFN Child-Friendly events?
    - Only the Briefing in April
    - Only the Conference in XX
    - Both the Briefing and the Conference
    - Not sure

11. To what degree do your workplace policies and practices reflect the following? (1 = my workplace policies and practices are only minimally informed by these ideas; 7 = these ideas inform and underpin all of my workplace policies and practices).

   **Child awareness:**
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5
   - 6
   - 7

   **Child safety:**
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5
   - 6
   - 7

   **Child friendly practices and policies:**
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5
   - 6
   - 7

   **Children’s rights:**
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5
   - 6
   - 7

   **The National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children:**
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5
   - 6
   - 7

Comment: (e.g. would you like to tell us anything about your work policies and practices?)
12. To what degree did the Showcase provide opportunities to? (1 = not at all; 7 = to a great extent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Network:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn things that would help your organisation improve children’s wellbeing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn things that would help you improve your engagement with children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showcase how my organisation works in child-friendly ways</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comment:

13. To what degree did participating in the BCFN initiative support your organisation to work in more child-friendly ways? (1 = not at all; 7 = to a great extent)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Comment:

14. What (if any) changes has your organisation made to its practices and policies as a result of participating in the BCFN?

15. Do you have any suggestions for improving the initiative if it were to be ‘rolled-out’ in other regions?

16. Do you have any other comments regarding the showcase or child-safe, child-friendly project?

Thank you for sharing. Please place your completed questionnaire in the envelope with your pre-conference questionnaire, seal it, and hand it to Sandie or Tamara.
Appendix 8: Questions for case study and interviews

- Can you tell me about any of the changes that have been made since your organisation has been involved in the child-friendly initiative?
- Can you tell me about any changes in people’s knowledge of child friendly policies and practices?
- Can you tell me about any changes in your organisation’s policies that have made them more child-friendly?
- Can you tell me about any changes in your organisation’s practices that have made them more child-friendly?
- What’s been useful about participating in the BCFN initiative?
- What could have been done differently to make it more useful to your organisation?
- Are there any suggestions or learnings for similar initiatives in other regional areas.
Appendix 9: Newspaper clippings & CSU Publication

Child-safe move support sought

Conference planned for later in month

By BRIAN WOOD

THE first step towards the recognition of Bathurst as a child-safe, child-friendly community is set to be taken.

An initiative of the Bathurst Child and Family Network (BCFN), it will be discussed when council holds its June ordinary monthly meeting tonight.

BCFN has asked the council for its support, in presenting a series of events that aim to build local knowledge and the expertise of local organisations.

A conference has been convened with a target audience of senior managers, principals, directors and board members from child-focused organisations.

The BCFN conference will focus on working to build child-safe, child-friendly communities and it will be held on Tuesday, June 28 thanks to funding from a network development grant from the Department of Family and Community Services.

The report to council notes the three key focus messages are child-safe (where physical environments are designed so children’s needs are catered for); child-friendly (where children are acknowledged and welcomed in organisations); and child-centred (where children are recognised as valuable members of the community).

Organisations are family sensitive, culturally aware and responsive to the needs of children. Building community awareness through the key focus messages presented by the BCFN will establish a foundation for further development and future direction for Bathurst being recognised as a child-friendly city, the report to council says.

“BCFN has successfully received a research grant from Charles Sturt University to evaluate the strategies of the Child-Safe, Child-Friendly Initiative.”

“Research data will be provided to council in support of the recommendation that Bathurst be recognised as a UNICEF Child Friendly City.”

“Bathurst is a vibrant regional city that provides a broad range of services, facilities and community spaces that already contribute positively to the development of a child happiness and well-being.”

“Council’s engagement and commitment to join the growing number of local councils in championing for children and working to develop a child-friendly city will serve as a long-term investment in the community, creating broad economic social and cultural benefits and enhancing the existing resources that exist.”

The report said the initiative would brand Bathurst as a welcoming destination for children and their families to live, work and visit.

Developing child-safe communities

21-2000203042

Reserve plan

LITHgow Council has engaged a consultant to prepare a plan of management for the Hassans Walls Reserve. Mayor Maree Statham says the reserve is a special place and the plan is needed to guide its use, management and development.

Gracemere Consulting will carry out the work and input, from the community will be sought, Ms Statham said.

A survey will be used for the initial information gathering stage of the project.

Airport tribute

PARKES Shire Council will officially open the upgraded Wilson Terminal and complete upgrades to the Parkes Regional Airport tomorrow.

The council will hold an opening ceremony and dedication to long-serving former Parkes mayor Robert Wilson.

Guests will include Mr Wilson’s family.

“Council believes it is fitting to dedicate the Parkes Regional Airport Terminal to our former mayor Robert Wilson,” Parkes mayor Ron North said.

www.westernadvocate.com.au
Child-safe, child-friendly conference at CSU in Bathurst

Mon, 27 Jul 2016

Advocating child safety and child-friendly initiatives is the focus of a conference being held at Charles Sturt University (CSU) in Bathurst on Tuesday 26 June.

The Bathurst Child and Family Network (BCFN) is hosting the ‘Working to build child-safe, child-friendly communities’ one-day conference to promote child protection initiatives within the Bathurst region thanks to local network development funding from the Department of Family and Community Services.

Nationally recognised speakers, Mr Brian Boettgerman, the CEO of Families Australia, and Mr Andrew MacCallum, CEO of the Association of Children’s Welfare Agencies, will address the conference.

The BCFN has been awarded a CSU Community-University Partnership (CUP) grant under the Rural and Regional Community Initiated Research Program, to evaluate the initiative.

Dr Selassie Wold (pictured), senior lecturer in CSU’s School of Teacher Education and researcher at the Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education (RIPPLE), said, “We’re very pleased to be able to be part of such an important local initiative that puts children’s rights first. Charles Sturt University academics will attend the conference, and Dr Terence Cumming and I will undertake the project evaluation ‘toolkit’.”

Ms Amanda Mayes, facilitator of the Bathurst Early Learning Support (BELS) and chairperson of BCFN, said, “We believe that it takes a village to raise a child and our vision is for all children and families to be happy, healthy, safe and thrive in Bathurst. We have a genuine desire to provide opportunities for children, young people and families to be heard and taken seriously.”

Conference participants will include senior managers, principals, directors and board members of relevant organisations.

Media contact: Smoke Andrews, (02) 6338 8034

Media Note:

Contact CSU Media to arrange interviews.

The BCFN conference ‘Working to build child-safe, child-friendly communities’ is from 9am to 5.30pm Tuesday, 26 June at the CSU Centre for Professional Development (building 1305), of Village Drive at CSU in Bathurst.

The Bathurst Child and Family Network is a not-for-profit, non-government organisation whose network of cross-sector agencies that include members from a wide range of services, organisations, education and early childhood services. The network aims to improve outcomes and opportunities for children and promote the values of the early years, infants, children, young people, families and elders within the wider community.

Appendix 10: Letter from Bathurst Council
21 June 2016

Ms Annette Meyers
Bathurst Child and Family Network
Centacare
PO Box 1215
BATHURST NSW 2795

Dear Ms Meyers

**Working to build a Child-safe, Child-friendly Bathurst**

I am writing with regards to Bathurst Child and Family Network’s initiative for Bathurst to establish child-safe, child-friendly initiatives.

A report regarding this initiative was proposed to Councillors at the Council Meeting held Wednesday 15 June 2016. For your information Council has resolved:

That:

(a) Council support the initiative of the Bathurst Child and Family Network to build an awareness of child-safe child-friendly Bathurst within the local business sector and Bathurst community.

(b) Council takes leadership to promote the principles of UNICEF’s Convention on the Rights of a Child, leading towards Bathurst being recognised as a Child Friendly City.

(c) The initiative is incorporated into the upcoming revised Bathurst 2036 Community Strategic Plan.

Thank you for the information provided to assist with the development of the report. Council looks forward to working in partnership with your organisation to investigate opportunities for the city of Bathurst to promote child-safe, child-friendly initiatives.

Yours faithfully

Alan Cattermole
DIRECTOR
CULTURAL & COMMUNITY SERVICES