

Breaking free

asca

Adults Surviving Child Abuse

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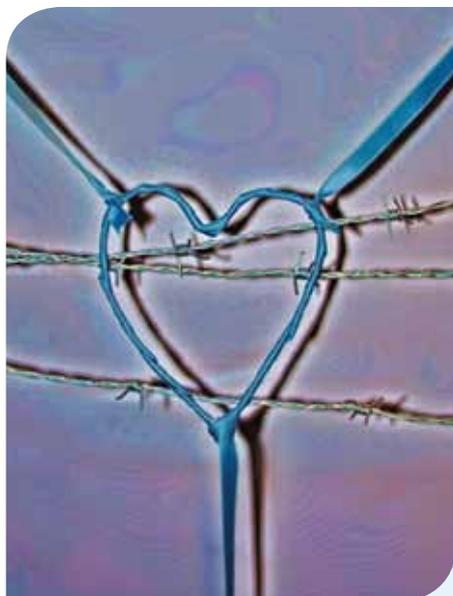
Royal Commission gets underway

The Royal Commission Into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse held its first sitting in Melbourne on April 3.

At the first sitting Justice Peter McLellan, the Commissioner, and Gail Furness SC, provided information about the establishment of the Commission, what to expect, and certain parameters that have been put in place. No stories were told and no testimony was given.

Key points from that sitting include:

- The Commission expects to hear from at least 5,000 survivors and possibly more.
- An interim report will be provided by June 2014 but the proposed end date of December 2015 might not be achievable.
- There will probably not be any public hearings where evidence is taken until at least the last quarter of 2013. "I appreciate that there will be many people who may be stressed by the fact that the Commission cannot immediately hear their account of their personal circumstances. To those people I offer the assurance that we will receive your account as soon as we are able." Justice McLellan
- There would be public notice of any hearing so that any institution or individual who has not previously contacted the Commission may have an opportunity to make an application to appear.
- Because the Commission is not a prosecutorial body it has established links with the appropriate authorities in each State and Territory to which a matter may be referred.
- The Commission will not determine whether a person is entitled to compensation.
- The Royal Commission has requested details of current and concluded enquiries of the last 20 years from all governments and all civil cases to which the government is a party where allegations of child sexual abuse in an institutional context have been made.
- The provision of the option for private sessions was announced, for which Commissioners would travel. It was acknowledged that certain information and evidence provided in private hearings would remain confidential to the Commission. Legislation had been passed to allow one or two Commissioners to receive accounts of alleged abuse from individuals in private sessions. A support person can be present but representatives of the institution or person about whom they wish to speak will not be present
- The Commission has the power to overcome confidentiality clauses. Concerns about such clauses should be discussed with a Commission officer before telling a story so appropriate steps can be taken.
- The Commonwealth Government has provided funding to establish a National Legal Advisory Service. That service will provide advice on the legal implications of providing statements and other forms of evidence, and on general legal enquiries about dealing with the Royal Commission. The service will not represent people appearing before the Royal Commission but will offer referral advice and advice on accessing financial assistance for legal representation.



You may contact the Royal Commission as follows:

- Telephone the national call centre between 8am and 8pm on: **1800 099 340**
- To register your interest in being contacted to tell the Commission your story, email **registerinterest@childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au**
- To contact the Royal Commission by post:
**Solicitor, Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse,
GPO Box 5283 Sydney NSW 2000**

"Callers will be asked for their contact details, the name of the institution they wish to speak about, an indication as to when the events occurred, although it is not expected that people will remember precise dates, as well as whether they have any particular needs that the Royal Commission should take into account when speaking to them, such as the need for an interpreter or any impairment that might need special access or requirements.

In addition, people can send a letter or a statement to the Royal Commission at GPO Box 5283, Sydney, NSW 2001. Those who would like assistance in preparing a written statement should contact the Commission and will be given that help. Some people may want to speak with a Commission officer and have their story recorded and we will then transcribe it and take that as their experience. Others may want to tell a Commissioner in a private session.

Some people may want to describe their experience in a public hearing. Others may want to come to us in groups arranged by their support or advocacy group. Some people will have given evidence or information to another Inquiry and will want us to take into account that evidence or information, without having to repeat it. We will happily take their experience in that way. We also expect to hear from people who might describe themselves as whistle blowers or people from within institutions who want to give us the institutional perspective."

Gail Furness | Senior Counsel

From the Editor



I am delighted to present this April edition of *Breaking Free* – the first issuing from our new premises. ASCA is in a growing phase which will see us extend our reach to more and more people impacted by the insidious effects of complex trauma. Part of that growth has seen us move into larger premises - read about wisdom gained through the moving process in Olimpia's column

below. This month we have elected to publish Cathy Kezelman's important feature on the impact of complex trauma on women, instead of our usual My Story on page 3. Cathy's feature tells the story of many women – one in three, in fact – who will have been sexually assaulted before they reach 18. If you would like to share your story for publication next month, please submit a first person narrative of no more than 750 words to newsletter@asca.org.au.

Meanwhile, this issue is packed with media coverage of the Royal Commission and other tales of ASCA's media adventures. We are particularly proud of Cathy's successful attempts to address ignorance in the media through her interview with radio veteran John Laws. See page 6 for details. New funding from DoHA is set to roll out extra workshops (see page 7) and our usual workshops continue to be available across the country (see page 8).

Kath O'Sullivan | Editor

Taking care of business

We are pleased to announce that we have somewhat successfully settled in our new, roomy, and sunny premises in Neutral Bay. Usually the thought of relocating is as appealing as watching paint dry; after all, moving business or home is considered one of the most stressful life events. Add to this the possibility of losing valuable time, and you can understand why at times we wanted to escape as far as possible.

Of course leaving the office, stepping aside and allowing the movers to do their thing was the wisest action we took in the process, along with four other steps that kept our services connected, available, and our people engaged.



- 1. Have a vision, a plan but keep it fluid.** We had a great, co-operative team of furniture suppliers, electricians, IT professionals, telephone suppliers, even Telstra, working in concert with our requirements. They asked all the right questions so that we could cater for the business to grow; moved the network, numerous PCs, and equipment; and set up work stations as per the plan, which had been revisited and customised many times. So we did have a careful plan with our ducks all lined up in a row, but made some adjustments along the way which have proven to be wise choices for the business and its staff.
- 2. Deal with the surprises.** Any move forces people to think on their feet and be ready for surprises. On the first day at the new premises, while the Internet and telephones were temporarily unavailable, we had one of our Counsellors unpack and wash the new dishes. His day turned into a real surprise when he had to assist one of our staff members with a nasty thumb injury. Meanwhile it was no surprise that the IT professionals scuttled about rebooting things to quickly get us connected and fully operational.
- 3. A great excuse to upgrade.** We saw moving as the perfect opportunity to replace our clunky, high maintenance printer with a state of the art model we love, as well as upgrading our network and phones. Our surroundings have also undergone a refreshing makeover with light coloured matching furniture, ergonomic chairs, and greenery to soften the ambience.
- 4. Allow time to complete the relocation loop.** Both people and displaced archived boxes need time to find their place, and it takes a little longer than the physical move itself. A few things to get used to such as whether to walk to and from the next public transport connection or wait for the bus, which days to visit the PO Box, and daydream about a nice coffee place at the doorstep! In terms of the displaced boxes, they will soon be dealt with and comfortably stored, and be left alone to gather dust until the next move

Olimpia Mazza | Head of Operations

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Donations can be made online at www.asca.org.au Donations to ASCA of \$2 and over are tax deductible.

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Have your contact details changed?

If your contact details have changed, you can update them at www.asca.org.au (or contact ASCA on (02) 8920 3611 if you do not have access to the internet or email).

Forgotten your Username and Password?

If you have forgotten your username and/or password, go to join/login on our website and click on *Forgot your User Name?* or *Forgot your Password?* as appropriate.

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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this newsletter have been included to allow our members to consider a variety of therapeutic options and spiritual views. ASCA does not support any particular spiritual stance over another; nor does it uphold any particular therapy as superior. The Editorial Team accepts responsibility for all editorial comment.

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Improving outcomes for women impacted by childhood trauma



As the Federal election approaches Dr Cathy Kezelman, ASCA President, reflects on 'improving outcomes for women impacted by childhood trauma' as part of a panel for Australian Centre for Leadership for Women

The long-term effects of trauma experienced in childhood are a public health challenge of major proportions. Yet, despite its prevalence and impacts, such trauma often goes unacknowledged, unrecognised and unaddressed. Those affected often fail to receive the help and support they need and experience compounded disadvantage as a result, often right through the life cycle. While boys and men are subjected to diverse traumas, sexual abuse, in particular, affects girls and women in greater numbers.

In the 1980s feminists highlighted the often gendered crimes of sexual violence. Sexual abuse was publicly named, personal stories were told and power imbalance and control were identified as key factors in its perpetration. We now hear more reports about child sexual assault and other abuses as well the impacts of growing up with domestic violence. Yet, a persistent collective consciousness of the lived reality of trauma, especially what we call complex trauma escapes us.

When trauma is protracted, repeated and extreme, and perpetrated in childhood by care-givers, it comprises complex trauma. Complex trauma is often gendered, interpersonally mediated and so, especially damaging. It occurs with experiences of child abuse in all its forms, chronic neglect, family and community violence and the effects of other adverse childhood events e.g. living with a parent with mental illness or one who abuses substances, as well as situations of grief, loss and separation.

Complex trauma affects not only its victims but, for those who become mothers, the children they go on to have. It can affect an individual throughout their life cycle or whole families and communities over many generations. Unaddressed childhood trauma can cause difficulties for individuals in learning how to trust others, how to establish healthy relationships and how to care for themselves.

Childhood trauma that is interpersonally mediated, affects early attachment dynamics. Individuals who, as children, observe violence in the home, who have a parent/s who is/are abusive towards the other, or who are themselves abused, will struggle as a result of the changes to their brain development and functioning which arise from this traumatic exposure.

Research suggests that the younger the child, the more harmful the traumatic experiences are in terms of brain development. Those affected may also incorporate abuse into their relationships as adults. Abusive

patterns, including gendered attitudes can seem normal to those living them every day. The use/abuse of power and control, experiences of betrayal, secrecy, silence, fear and shame are common elements in families in which abuse/violence occur. In turn, all of these factors help perpetuate cycles of violence/abuse.

In our society an estimated one in three girls and one in six boys will be sexually assaulted in some way prior to the age of 18. While more typically perpetrated by men, women can and do offend. Sexual violence has long been used as a tool of power and control, instilling and exacerbating fear, helplessness and humiliation in vulnerable populations. Children are inherently vulnerable, and women more susceptible to sexual violence than men.

As human beings we share a common experience. Inherent in our humanity is an accompanying vulnerability. War and civil unrest create vulnerable populations in which, fuelled by the oppression of women within those populations, the human rights abuses of violence and sexual violence can and do abound. Within Australia we have our own history of human rights violations. Cultural dislocation and entrenched disadvantage have presided over an epidemic of violence and sexual violence within Indigenous communities, with substantiated rates of child abuse and neglect being eight times those of non-indigenous communities.

Yet child sexual assault in Australia is widespread and not confined to Indigenous communities. We, in Australia, who live in the 'lucky country', must address the factors which enable child sexual assault to continue unabated. With the announcement of the Royal Commission into institutional child sexual abuse, we are seeing for the first time a national spotlight shone on the issue.

However the Terms of Reference mean that abuses other than those which are sexual in nature, as well as abuses perpetrated in the home and family are not being examined. The Royal Commission and the conversations it has generated are a start. They need to be supported by action in the pursuit of justice as well as by services which are informed about complex trauma and its impacts; services which are accessible and affordable to the large numbers of victims/survivors of all ages needing them.

While we have evidenced some changes in our societal approach to child abuse and domestic violence in Australia we have a long way to go in combating the collective denial, stigma and taboo which would still rather not speak about the 'unspeakable'. It is contingent upon all parties, in government as well as opposition, taking a bi-partisan approach to issues of trauma, violence and abuse; supporting survivors as they come forward and speak to the Royal Commission and other inquiries; and ensuring that as a society we take whatever steps we can to protect the most vulnerable amongst us and provide child and adult victims with the 'trauma-informed' support they need to reclaim their lives and overcome the repercussions of the often gendered assaults of power.

This article first appeared on www.leadershipforwomen.com.au

Dr Cathy Kezelman | ASCA President

ASCA Activities

ASCA President appointed to Community Advisory Council of NSW Mental Health Commission

The Mental Health Commission of NSW has recently appointed 15 members of its Mental Health Community Advisory Council. ASCA is pleased to announce that Dr Cathy Kezelman, ASCA President, is one of those appointees. The Council has been established to advise the Commission on any mental health issue it considers appropriate, or that is referred to it by the Commission.

Members have been appointed by the Minister for Mental Health, Kevin Humphries, to reflect the diversity of the NSW community and the Commission will rely on their expertise to help it refine a reform agenda to improve the mental health and wellbeing of people in NSW.

The Commissioner, John Feneley, said the appointments represented a crucial stage in the Commission's development.

"The Community Advisory Council will be our first port of call when we are considering services or other issues that may affect people's mental health," Mr Feneley said. "It is extremely important to us that the Council's composition echoes the geographical and cultural diversity of NSW. By calling on the Council to advise us, we can be confident any recommendations we make are truly relevant to the people they are intended to benefit."

ASCA Practice Guidelines go west

Dr Cathy Kezelman, ASCA President and Pam Stavropoulos, PhD, Head of Research and Program Development were keynote speakers at a recent symposium in Perth, organised by SARC (Sexual Assault Resource Centre).

The Symposium aimed to:

- increase understanding of best practice in trauma informed care for organisations and services;
- enhance awareness of treatment approaches to complex trauma for practitioners; and
- expand awareness of the challenges and successes experienced by trauma informed services currently operating in Western Australia.

ASCA's Practice Guidelines for Treatment of Complex Trauma and Trauma Informed Care and Service Delivery were first launched in Canberra in October 2012. The Guidelines had their official WA unveiling at the Perth Symposium in April 2013 where they were launched by the WA Commissioner for Mental Health, Eddie Bartnick.

Cathy and Pam would like to thank Tania, Fiona and Beth from SARC for their efforts in organising a most successful symposium. Fiona McMullen gave the following feedback:

"Thank you for taking part in the Symposium – you were both fabulous! Judging by the feedback we have received, it 'hit the mark' and left the audience members inspired and hopeful – both for trauma survivors and for the direction that service provision is taking."



SARC Manager & MC: Tania Towers
Director WNHS: Paula Chatfield
Keynote speaker: Dr Cathy Kezelman, ASCA
Mental Health Commissioner: Eddie Bartnick
Keynote speaker: Dr Pam Stavropoulos, ASCA

ASCA & MHCC: partners in trauma-informed care



John Feneley launches ASCA Practice Guidelines in NSW.

On Monday April 15 the NSW Mental Health Commissioner, John Feneley launched the ASCA Practice Guidelines for Treatment of Complex Trauma and Trauma Informed Care and Service Delivery in NSW along with MHCC's Trauma Informed Care and Practice Training.

The event took place as part of the MHCC (Mental Health Coordinating Council) Special Event – Trauma Informed Care Launch & Learning & Development Graduation.

MHCC and ASCA have collaborated over a number of years in association with other organisations including ECAV (Education Centre against Violence) and PMHCCN (Private Mental Health Carers and Consumers Network) to advance the national trauma informed agenda. The event acknowledged the work of Dr Cathy Kezelman and Pam Stavropoulos PhD, as co-authors of the ASCA Guidelines as well as that of Corinne Henderson, Senior Policy Officer MHCC for her work in driving the national agenda. Both MHCC and ASCA are delivering much needed trauma informed training to the sector.

SMH | 30 March | Flood of Tales for Abuse Inquiry

Victims groups are bracing for a flood of people wanting to give evidence about child sexual abuse, as the royal commission holds its first sitting in Melbourne this week.

The royal commission on child sexual abuse will outline how it plans to deal with the sensitive nature of the evidence it will hear at the session at the County Court of Victoria on Wednesday. It will not take evidence, but the sitting will be the first major update on how the commission will work since the six commissioners were appointed in January.

Tens of thousands of Australians are expected to come forward over the three-year life of the inquiry to tell their stories of abuse in institutions such as schools, churches and orphanages.

Given the huge workload for the commission, organisations such as child advocacy group Bravehearts are preparing to "triage" the information they receive before it reaches the commission to make sure it is useful and to support those coming forward.

Adults Surviving Child Abuse is also looking to use online templates and is moving to a new office space this week, to make way for a bigger call centre that takes calls out of business hours. President Cathy Kezelman said ASCA hoped to double its number of counsellors from next month to 16.

"We don't think we've seen the start of it yet," Dr Kezelman said.

Sydney truck driver Richard Parker, 53, who was abused as a schoolboy in the 1970s, has already contacted the commission to register his interest. While his case went to court in 2009 and the perpetrator – a teacher – was given jail time, Mr Parker wants to ensure that other victims get adequate support when they come forward.

"It's good to see it starting to happen," he said of Wednesday's sitting.

"I don't mind if it's 10 years. I've already waited for 30-something."

The commission is due to make an interim report in the middle of 2014 and a final report by the end of 2015.

AFR | 3 April | At least 5000 will want to appear at commission

The Royal Commission into Child Abuse would probably hear from thousands of people, take several years and cost many millions of dollars, its chair, Peter McClellan, said on Wednesday.

He predicted at its first sitting that the inquiry would change Australia and result in damage to the reputations of institutions.

"We expect that the work we will undertake will allow the community to move forward with a new determination that any

wrongdoing which has occurred in the past will not be repeated," said Justice McClellan, the NSW Supreme Court common law chief judge.

The six commissioners – Justice McClellan, former police commissioner Bob Atkinson, indigenous psychiatrist Helen Milroy, Justice Jennifer Coate of the Family Court, productivity commissioner Robert Fitzgerald and former senator Andrew Murray – appeared for its first session in Melbourne on Wednesday.

Prime Minister Julia Gillard told ABC Radio that the event was "an important moral moment".

"For the survivors of child sexual abuse I want this to be a moment of healing, for us to say to them as a nation we hear you, you're valued and you're believed. Because for too long so many of these survivors have just run in to closed doors and closed minds," Ms Gillard said.

The Age | April 13 | Royal commission counselling pledge

The federal government is to spend an unprecedented \$44 million on counselling for people who relive traumatic childhood experiences for the royal commission into child sex abuse.

Organisations that can deliver counselling, support and case management services before, during and after interaction with the royal commission are invited to apply for funding, the government said.

Prime Minister Julia Gillard established the royal commission to investigate how institutions entrusted with children had handled allegations and instances of child sexual abuse. The government is promising to do "everything it can to help survivors of past abuse receive support and justice", and to ensure such practices do not recur.

Trained counsellors have begun taking calls from abuse survivors, with 5000 or more predicted to come forward. Public hearings are expected to begin within six months.

Support groups have warned of the risk of further trauma to people recounting childhood abuse at the hands of authority figures in institutions such as churches, schools, orphanages and sporting organisations.

"Obviously when you have people who have waited sometimes decades to be heard that trauma is going to be raw and there are going to be lots of emotions flying around," said Cathy Kezelman, president of Adults Surviving Child Abuse, which has 5000 members and subscribers. *"They are going to be at risk. There need to be mechanisms in place for people to feel safe."*

This brings the known cost of the commission to \$66 million before it has taken any formal evidence. The lead commissioner, Justice Peter McClellan, warned at its first sitting that it *"will continue to require the commitment of very significant sums of public money"*



ASCA in the News

Radio Today | April 5 | Laws refuses to meet protesters schools



Cathy Kezelman from ASCA, Jenna Price from Destroy the Joint, and Erin McCallum from Getup with the petition outside 2SM.

GetUp, Destroy the Joint and **ASCA** have attempted to present the Super Radio Network's John Laws with a petition signed by 40,000 people.

The petition is referring to what they call 'victim blaming' comments on the air during Laws interview of a sexual abuse victim a fortnight ago.

Laws did not meet the protestors outside 2SM in Pyrmont, but instead sent a staff member down to collect the petition.

Laws has repeatedly defended the interview telling his critics to 'go to hell'.

ASCA president Cathy Kezelman was critical of Laws, telling AAP:

"He has implied that sexual assault can be the person's fault, even a child's fault, and he has tied it into a person's appearance and being 'provocative ... this is a very retrograde and very damaging step ... what he has done is reinforce the potential for a survivor to feel responsible."

[Watch a video from the protest and hear what Laws said on-air here.](#)

SMH | 5 April | Laws petitioned over sexual abuse questioning

Tens of thousands of people are petitioning to have 2SM radio host John Laws educated on how to deal with sexual abuse victims.

Campaign representatives from GetUp! and Destroy the Joint will be presenting 2SM with a petition today with more than 38,000 signatures from people concerned that Laws asked on-air if a woman had been "provocative" when she was sexually abused as a child.

After the woman said her mother believed the abuse was her fault, Laws asked: "Was it in any way your fault? ... you weren't provocative?"

GetUp! campaign director Erin McCallum said *"people like John Laws are perpetuating the culture of victim-blaming that's really damaging to the millions of Australians who have survived sexual assault and rape"*.

"We're giving Mr Laws a chance to redeem himself"

The petition is asking Mr Laws to apologise for perpetuating victim-blaming and requests that he and other 2SM staff be educated by speaking on-air with Dr Cathy Kezelman, a sexual abuse victim and president of the group Adults Surviving Child Abuse.

"It's not just about educating Mr Laws, but also other people who have these attitudes," Dr Kezelman said. "It's not OK to blame victims for their own assaults. Perpetrators are responsible and need to be brought to justice."

The interview, which aired on March 19, ignited fierce debate, with many people offended by Mr Laws' questioning.

More than 10,000 members of GetUp! and Destroy the Joint have written to 2SM with their complaints, while the Morning Show's Facebook page has received more than 700 comments about the interview.

At the time, Mr Laws stood by his comments and said the woman was not



John Laws on air at the 2SM studio.

offended by the interview. However, three days after the segment, the woman posted a comment on the radio station's Facebook page saying that while *"the conversation did not offend me, I would hope you word your questioning more carefully in the future when speaking with victims of child abuse ... You were lucky it was me you said those unfair comments to and it was not someone more fragile."*

Mr Laws has been contacted for comment.

2SM | 10 April | ASCA lays down Laws

Last month, John Laws made a number of ill-informed comments to a listener who suffered sexual abuse as a child. Nearly 40,000 Australians signed a combined **GetUp** and **Destroy the Joint** petition which resulted in John Laws speaking on air with **ASCA President, Dr Cathy Kezelman**.

From the editor: ASCA would like to acknowledge the opportunity given by 2SM and John Laws to have the issues aired and discussed. It is very important that people in positions of influence in the community are well-informed about sexual assault so communities can work together to create real change.



Image courtesy Destroy the Joint.

The Wire | 10 April | John Laws forced to back down over sex abuse comment

Radio 'shock jock' John Laws was forced to interview a group representing adult survivors of child sex abuse after a petition with nearly 40,000 signatures was delivered to his station, 2SM in Sydney. The petition followed Laws' asking a sex abuse survivor if the abuse she suffered was her fault. But did the interview change his mind?

[To listen to the audio featuring Dr Cathy Kezelman, ASCA President, go here.](#)

Workshop News

ASCA is excited to announce we have received additional funding from the Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) to run a series of pilot workshops by 30 June, 2013.

What does this mean for ASCA?

This enables us to continue creating awareness and knowledge of complex trauma and pathways to assist recovery for adults who experience complex trauma in its various forms.

Funding will support the following three pilots:

1. Workshop for Partners and Supporters (Carers) of Adult Survivors of Childhood Trauma & Abuse

This half-day workshop is designed for partners and supporters (carers) of adults who have experienced childhood trauma and/or abuse. It introduces the concept of a 'trauma-informed' approach to interpersonal relationships, and builds on the core principles of a trauma informed approach to assist individuals who are partners, supporters and/or carers in their interactions with adult survivors of childhood trauma/abuse.

2. Workshop for Adult Survivors of Childhood Trauma & Abuse

This half-day workshop is designed for adults who have experienced childhood trauma and/or abuse in all its forms. It provides information about childhood trauma/abuse, how it affects people, how they cope and how the brain responds to stress. Grounded in the latest research, the material presented enables participants to gain greater insight into themselves and their relationships, and to embrace hope and optimism about possibilities for recovery.

3. Working With Adult Survivors of Complex Trauma: One Day Workshop For Health Professionals

This full day workshop is designed for diverse health personnel who work with adult survivors in various capacities. It addresses the nature and impacts of unresolved childhood trauma. Drawing on the insights of current research in the neurobiology of attachment, it provides the foundations for understanding the cumulative effects of overwhelming childhood stress on the brain and body. It also presents key principles of recovery-oriented practice which assist neural integration, and which facilitate the healing and resolution of early life trauma.



Prenessa Moodley, Events & Marketing Manager, organising workshops from our new office space.

All ASCA workshops are grounded in the research presented in ASCA's *Practice Guidelines for Treatment of Complex Trauma and Trauma Informed Care and Service Delivery*. To download a copy go to www.asca.org.au/guidelines or purchase in hard copy at www.asca.org.au "Shop"

I encourage you to take advantage of these scheduled workshops, which are FREE to attend. Please book in as soon as possible to avoid missing out.

Further information and registration can be found on our website www.asca.org.au/workshops or you can contact us at the office on 02 8920 3611.

Prenessa Moodley | Events & Marketing Manager

Child Protection



Professor Freda Briggs.

Sky News | April 4 | Ignorance key to child abuse: expert comment

More education is needed to overcome ignorance about child sex abuse and how to handle it – or Victoria will have to hold another inquiry in 10 years, a child protection expert has warned.

The Victorian parliamentary inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations heard there was a reluctance to admit there was a problem, even among educators and professionals who work with abuse victims.

'What we're seeing is ignorance and also a reluctance to accept that this is a problem,' University of South Australia Emeritus Professor Freda Briggs told the inquiry on Thursday.

She described the attitude as 'it doesn't involve me, therefore I'm not interested'.

Professor Briggs said she set up a multi-professional child protection research centre seven years ago, whose role was in part to introduce child protection issues to all human service courses at Australian universities.

But the centre did not have a single person with any expertise in child sex abuse, she said.

'If that is the situation in a child protection centre, it is an indicator of the negligence within universities,' Professor Briggs said.

She said 20 years ago she had offered a whole semester's course on all aspects of child protection.

'Now my students get one 50-minute lecture on child sex abuse.

'So there is no wonder that mistakes are being made.'

She said professionals needed to understand not only child abuse but also how child sex offenders operate.

She also suggested specialists be brought into schools to teach a child protection curriculum to students.

Workshops

Workshops for Health Professionals

One Day Workshop for Health Professionals – working with adult survivors of complex trauma

ASCA's one day workshop for health professionals is grounded in a substantive research base, which identifies and outlines effective responses to complex trauma. The workshop is drawn from ASCA's Practice Guidelines for Treatment of Complex Trauma and Trauma Informed Care and Service Delivery www.asca.org.au/guidelines

This workshop covers:

- Understanding complex trauma – prevalence and impacts
- Neurobiology of attachment
- Supportive relationships
- Self-development and self-care
- Coping strategies – adaptive/risk factors
- Reflective practice and vicarious traumatisation
- Practice guidelines for working with adult survivors of complex trauma
- The workshop has been designed for health professionals including doctors, social workers, psychologists, mental health nurses, counsellors/therapists, psychiatrists and other health care professionals

Full-day workshop:
9.00am-5.00pm.

Date	Location
24 May 2013	Melbourne (Free*)
31 May 2013	Wollongong (Free*)

* These pilot workshops have been made possible with the support of the Department of Health and Ageing.

~~Cost: \$250 or student concession \$190~~

Professional development endorsement:

ACMHN- 7 ACMHN CPE Points

Book now online: www.asca.org.au/workshops

ASCA In-house workshops

ASCA workshops are now available in-house on request for organisations seeking trauma-informed training and/or professional development for working with adult survivors of childhood trauma.

Workshops cover topics such as:

- Principles of trauma informed practice
- Complex trauma vs. single incident trauma
- Practice guidelines for working with adult survivors of complex trauma
- Unresolved trauma (prevalence and impacts)
- Coping strategies – adaptive/risk factors
- Attachment, supportive relationships and self-care
- Neuroplasticity and recovery

ASCA in-house workshops provide many benefits as your team can request the topics which interest you and use the time to focus on issues pertinent to your clients and practice. Workshops of one day, two days and half day duration are available.

For more information about in-house workshops, please call **02 8920 3611** or email events@asca.org.au

Workshops for Survivors

ASCA's survivor workshops provide survivors and those supporting them with a safe space in which to learn about the impacts of childhood trauma, in all its forms, and possibilities for the process of recovery. They discuss ways in which trauma in childhood can impact current or past behaviours, feelings and/or physical and psychological health. They also build on existing strengths to foster a sense of hope and optimism about the recovery process and provide tools for positive change.

All ASCA workshops are grounded in the latest research presented in ASCA's Practice Guidelines for Treatment of Complex Trauma and Trauma Informed Care and Service Delivery.

www.asca.org.au/guidelines

These half-day workshops (9.30am – 12.30pm) are open to all adult survivors and their supporters.

Cost:** \$50 or \$25 concession.

Date	Location
18 May 2013	Newcastle
18 May 2013	Brisbane (Free*)
25 May 2013	Melbourne (Free*)

* These pilot workshops have been made possible with the support of the Department of Health and Ageing.

Book now online:

www.asca.org.au/workshops

** ASCA's philosophy is for our **Creating New Possibilities** workshops to be accessible to all survivors. If you are experiencing financial difficulties please do contact us.

register now

Workshops for Carers

Date	Location
25 May 2013	Brisbane (Free*)
1 June 2013	Sydney (Free*)

See page 7 for details.

* These pilot workshops have been made possible with the support of the Department of Health and Ageing.

register now

Trauma Informed Care

This whole day training for community workers provides tools to equip workers in their daily interactions with clients who experience unresolved trauma.

This workshop covers:

- Information about trauma – prevalence, impacts and costs
- Complex trauma vs. single incident trauma
- Attachment, supportive relationships, self-care
- Coping strategies – adaptive/risk factors
- Neuroplasticity and recovery
- Principles of trauma-informed practice
- Re-traumatisation and vicarious traumatisation
- Collaboration in care, between and within services and systems
- Need for broad-based change at all levels in systems and services

register now

Full-day workshop:
9.00am-5.00pm.

For Mental Health Workers

Book now online:

www.asca.org.au/workshops

Date	Location
31 May 2013	Sydney