



MHYF Vic Newsletter No. 84 June 2023

This edition

MHYFVic Annual General Meeting 2023

News from 'Emerging Minds'

Working collaboratively

Our Website

MHYFVic Annual General Meeting 2023

Our Annual General Meeting this year will return to its traditional format of a brief business component followed by dinner and a presentation by an after-dinner speaker.

It is two years since the Royal Commission published its recommendations for changes to the mental health system. There have been a number of developments, mainly relating to adults. These are reported in the "Hot Issues" page of the MHYFVic website. However, there has not been much on services for young people. For this reason, we have asked Assoc.Professor Paul Robertson to be our after-dinner speaker. His topic is:

Transforming the Victorian Mental Health System for Child and Youth and their Families – Where are we up to in responding to the Royal Commission in the Victorian Mental Health System

Dr Robertson is the Victorian Director of Training for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at

the University of Melbourne 'mindful' centre, and Deputy Chief Psychiatrist for the Department of Health.

The meeting will be on Thursday 24th August, at the Bleak House hotel, Beaconsfield Pde, Middle Park (corner of Victoria St) at 7pm.

Anyone attending the dinner must book, select from the menu and pre-pay through TryBooking. Don't forget to notify us of your choices so we can tell the chef.

<https://www.trybooking.com/CJOGQ>

News from Emerging Minds.

Exploring children's relationship with video gaming

Many parents and caregivers worry about how often and how long their child spends playing video games. They may see gaming as having a negative impact on their child's mental health, or behaviour, and as part of any broader problems their child and family are facing.

However, children's participation in gaming can also provide many options for therapists to support their mental health and wellbeing. So, what understandings and approaches can support practitioners to work effectively with children and caregivers in response to these

concerns?

In this episode, we talk with Nikki Taranis about working with children and caregivers to explore children's relationship with video gaming. Nikki was most recently a team leader with the Australian Childhood Foundation, and draws on her experience as a social worker, therapeutic specialist, and supervisor, as well as her own interest in gaming. She discusses the key understandings and approaches for working with children and caregivers in relation to video gaming.

Listen to *Exploring children's relationship with video gaming* on:
emergingminds.com.au

A Note from Stephanie

We know that our website records many hundreds of 'hits', but we don't often hear what people think. It was gratifying to receive this email from Stephanie, a teacher at a Californian online educational program:

"My name is Stephanie and I am teaching for homeschooling students. I am reaching out because our class found your website www.mhyfvic.org/mhyf_links/ very useful while researching mental health and psychology. Many of our current students are interested in learning more about psychology. Your website ended up being featured by our students, so we wanted to notify you and say thank you!

As a part of the assignment, one of our students, Cheryl, did some research for her extra credit and researched this website - www.psychologymastersprograms.com/child-

[psychology](#)

I was hoping you would be able to include this resource on your website, even if it's only for a short time. I think your other visitors might find it helpful, and it also helps our group of students cite appropriate resources and stay engaged whenever outreach yields positive feedback everyone can see."

ISSUES OF CONCERN

MHYFVic wishes to sponsor seminars or workshops on topics that are issues of concern to our readers. We have previously run one on "Attachment". We are currently involved in formulating one on "Helping non-indigenous caseworkers to engage in culturally sensitive ways with aboriginal clients". Another has been suggested about "Legal liabilities of clinicians".

We need our readers to tell us what issues are of such concern that they would like to see addressed at a workshop. Our Secretary is distributing a questionnaire by which you can provide your feedback.

Please give us your opinion.

WORKING COLLABORATIVELY

The main goals of MHYFVic are to promote the mental health and wellbeing of young people and to lobby for improvements in services. We believe that everyone supports these goals in principle.

MHYFVic is aware that, as a lone organization, it has limited power to bring about change. The same applies to virtually every organization. Even the most praiseworthy proposals can be lost in the daily news noise. However, when there is a groundswell of public support for change, politicians take

notice. The challenge is to translate the praiseworthy proposals into public desire.

MHYFVic believes that when a range of organizations give support to a proposal, and share their advocacy in a common campaign, the public and the politicians are more likely to take notice. It is in our organizations' common interests to support each other's praiseworthy proposals.

Every organization has its own range of interests, but there are often overlaps. Although it is not expected that any organization would support all policies and proposals of other organizations, it should be feasible for support to be given for specific proposals in the shared area of interest. This requires a mechanism of communication to explore the ramifications of proposals to ensure that they are worthy of support. Participation in such communication would not presuppose approval of the whole range of the other organization's policies and procedures.

MHYFVic wishes to appoint liaison persons to regularly communicate with authorised liaison persons in other organizations with overlapping areas of interest in young people's mental health and wellbeing.

The general purpose of liaison is to understand the scope of the shared area of interest of our organizations and the potential for shared advocacy or action.

The specific purpose of participation in support for any action proposal would be subject to approval on a case-by-case basis; no occasion of support would imply further support or any limitation of the autonomy of the other organization. At this point in time, MHYFVic is not proposing any particular advocacy projects that would involve other organizations.

MHYFVic's specific request to like-minded Organizations is to find a volunteer who is willing to be the Liaison Person. MHYFVic will assign a corresponding Liaison person. The task is to spend a few minutes in the middle of each month summarising (in email) the important issues that the organization is grappling with. These summaries would be brought to the attention of the other organizations. In the event that there is interest in pursuing any joint action, the communication would extend as appropriate. There would be no problem in later changing the Liaison Persons, but the point of person-to-person communication is that issues are less likely to be lost in transit.

MHYFVic is developing a regular Bulletin in which issues of concern can be articulated and possibilities for shared advocacy identified. If you would like to explore this potential avenue, please send an email to admin@mhyfvic.org

THE CHILDRENS' LOBBY

The political lobbying for children's services is in an invidious position. Children are a treasured resource and there is minimal opposition to advocacy on their behalf. However, services for adults are overwhelmingly greater than for children, and advocacy for children is largely ignored by simply by diverting attention to similar adult services. There is rarely an opportunity to say, "Yes, but you haven't answered the question about services for children."

All minority groups experience this difficulty being heard. There is no simple answer to this problem. Our suggestion is to share as much as possible in working collaboratively.

OUR UPDATED WEBSITE

After much thought our website has been significantly revised to give casual visitors immediate information about what we do and what we stand for, whilst at the same time allowing members to go straight to specific sections such as Projects or Newsletters or Events, without having to navigate past reams of information.

Now that the main revision has been implemented we are working on tasks of development of Projects to give us the evidence base for our advocacy. There are quite a few items under development at the present time which are not yet reflected in the website but over the next few months we expect to see a burgeoning of activity.

Visit us on **mhyfvic.org**

MHYF Vic Membership

Annual membership of MHYF Vic is now due.

Our mission is to promote improvements in mental health for the young and their families, so you receive our newsletters and notices whether or not you are a paid-up member.

Membership subscriptions of \$50 per annum enable the organisation to maintain its website, mailbox, telephone service and to undertake its administrative tasks. If you value the work that MHYF Vic does, we need your financial as well as your ethical support.

Send cheques to MHYF Vic, PO Box 206, Parkville, Vic 3052; or Transfer funds to MHYF Vic, BSB: 033 090 Account: 315188; write your name in the Reference tab. In addition, please send a confirmatory email to admin@mhyfvic.org

2023 MHYF Vic Committee

- * President : Jo Grimwade
- * Past President: Allan Mawdsley
- * Secretary : Cecelia Winkelman
- * Treasurer/Memberships: Kaye Geoghegan
- * Projects Coordinator, Allan Mawdsley
- * WebMaster, Linda Purcell
- * Newsletter Editor, Allan Mawdsley
- * Youth Consumer Representative, vacant
- * Members without portfolio: Suzie Dean, Miriam Tisher, Celia Godfrey, Andrew Wake.