



# Child Friendly Cities & Communities Network Meeting - Minutes

**Thursday 12 March 2019 10am – 12pm**

**Location: VLGA, 60 Leicester St, Carlton VIC 3053**

**CFCC Network Purpose:** We've come together as a network because we can imagine a world where children are supported and empowered to be active citizens, and individually and collectively, we can make a difference. In our network, we will discover new ways to lead our colleagues and our communities to become child friendly and share with each other examples of good practice.

**Meeting Chairs:** Kate Beveridge (Cardinia Shire Council) & Virginia Lloyd (City of Casey)

## **Meeting Theme: How do we listen to children?**

**Attendees:** Kate Beveridge (Cardinia Shire Council), Virginia Lloyd (City of Casey), Vivian Romero (CQ University), Neil Rogers (City of Whitehorse), Claire Sideras (Monash City Council), Myf Evans (Communities for Children), Carmen Cappello (City of Whittlesea), Penny Karagaslis (City of Whittlesea), Andrea Lemon (Kids Thrive), Nicole Lindsay (Brimbank City Council), Marg Kent & Anna Dollard (Kids Own Publishing), Nicole Fray (Boroondara Council), Amy Carson (Moreland City Council), Linda Harman (Maribyrnong City Council), Jo Smale (Darebin City Council)

**CFCC Website:** <https://www.vlga.org.au/advocacy/child-friendly-cities-and-communities-cfcc>

Please check it out and in particular look at 'what other organisations are doing'. We would appreciate people completing case studies that can be added to share what other great work people are doing.

**Acknowledge:** Cardinia Life, indoor sports and aquatic facility in Pakenham has endorsed CFCC-first non-kinder, school, childcare or LG.

Guest speaker 1: **Andrea Lemon, Director Kids Thrive**

Bio for Dr Andrea Lemon

A playwright, director, dramaturge and author, Dr Andrea Lemon has written and directed over 50 community-based and professional scripts and productions. She was Artistic Director of Melbourne's Women's Circus (2002-2003) for women who identify as survivors of sexual abuse or assault, and Coordinator of the Royal Children's Hospital Wyndham region Arts and Mental Health program working with primary and special needs schools, community agencies and mental health professionals.

Andrea Lemon is also Co-Founder / Creative Director of Kids Thrive, together with Artistic Director and co-founder Andrea Rieniets. Kids Thrive is Victoria's leading arts and community development organisation nurturing child-led social change. Kids Thrive partner artists with specialists in children's education, health, welfare and social justice to create ground-breaking programs tackling issues children experience arising from trauma, disadvantage and cultural conflict; supporting

children to be brave and creative; promoting their personal growth, passion and ability to lead community change; and cultivating positive celebrations of diversity in schools and communities.

Kids Thrive has received numerous awards including Vichealth's Improving Mental Wellbeing Award; and featured on Radio National's Life Matters program.

Over the past 10 years Kids Thrive has developed nine ground-breaking, creative programs with children aged 0-12, in disadvantaged communities across Victoria.

"Kids Thrive child-led change programs empower children, their significant others and ultimately their communities through community action, civic engagement, increased and strengthened community networks and positive individual development. The Kids Thrive child-led change strategy promotes individual and community resilience, and builds social connectedness and social capital."

Kids Thrive Child-led Change Evaluation Report – University of Melbourne, 2017.

Resources provided- annual report and 'kids manifesto'- can be found <https://kidsthive.org.au/>

Using music to work with children with disability, Kids Thrive was established 2010 as a not for profit, prevention, early intervention organisation where children become active facilitators of change in their community.

Due to circumstances of children's lives, many were unable to communicate affectively and didn't have well developed social skills. Kids Thrive teaches them how to step into conversations, teaching adult skills with practical demos and practice. Asks 'how do you influence adults?' How do we activate kids to identify issues and advocate for change? Children are taught how to research issues, interview key stakeholders, make phone calls etc.

'How do you see the world'- activity

Childs voice and agency- consulted and included in solutions, kids have capacity to take action, children co-design. Encourage children to develop questions to ask adults

**How do we engage with children?** E.g. cards (Buzz, discovery); end of every session 'give the person next to you a compliment'

**Partnerships with schools-** how do you find the person in the schools to work with? Finding the right person- word of mouth, asking around, researching e.g. connect with Smith family, Connections, Windermere- as they would all have connections with schools

**Responding to disclosure/s-** don't directly respond or act upon theses, rather the issues that come with the children e.g. lack of social skills

Guest speaker 2: **Myf Evans- Program Manager, Communities for Children with Mission Australia**

<https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/servicedirectory/194-strengthening-communities/communities-for-children-cfc-facilitating-partner-dandenong1>

**Communities for Children:** place based early intervention addressing key priority areas identified by local community (family violence, language literacy, parent support, family support)

**Project 1: Voice Lab - Case Study [available here](#).**

Voice lab: dome-like shape, immersive experience, child places hooded cap on their head and speakers feed questions to child, tech person in there who can ask additional questions to pre-recorded questions asked of everyone

**Video:** [https://youtu.be/469yL1\\_PZKo](https://youtu.be/469yL1_PZKo)

9-12 years of age; x14 children were included

Outcomes from voice lab: using feedback to support reports and funding submissions – 2 big issues were safety & homelessness

When children feel heard and listen to they feel comfortable to talk and share

**Project 2: logo competition**

In partnership with City of Greater Dandenong- children advisory group were consulted

Children's Conference 'Spill the Beans' which I thought might be of interest to your network - <https://www.spillthebeans.events/>

**Information sharing & complete feedback forms**

Marg Kent & Anna Dollard- Kids Own Publishing

Jo Smale: middle years engagement, partnering with Melb Uni- x2 focus groups to ask what should be asked, who should be asked- how to work with the middle years

Neil Rogers: 2019- media release to promote 'why adults should listen to children?' available for network to use soon

Virginia Lloyd: 2020 question for CFCC network is '**what can adults learn from children?**'

Amy Carson: advocating to engage children in different ways- videos on the importance of kindergarten

**Next meeting: Thursday 28 May 10am – 12pm, VLGA, 60 Leicester St, Carlton VIC 3053**