

The Snapshot

Welcome to the FRMP Newsletter, Autumn Edition

MCM's Family Reconciliation and Mediation Program (FRMP) is a state-wide service funded by the Victorian Government. FRMP provides brokerage funding and other capacity building activities for the youth homelessness sector.

[Learn more](#)



Sonny Jane Wise (@livedexperienceeducator) workshop wrap-up

As part of the recent Neurodiversity Week in March, FRMP hosted a face-to-face workshop on March 19th with Sonny Jane Wise (they/them) titled "Supporting young people who are neurodivergent and LGBTQIA+ in a family inclusive way". 30 participants from approximately 20 different youth services organisations across the state attended.

The first half of the workshop covered a range of introductory topics including sensory differences, interoception, executive functioning differences, spoon theory, meltdowns, demand avoidance and much more. The second half of the workshop focused on neuro-affirming practice and strategies for supporting young people and their families.

It was an extremely informative day and we received some fantastic feedback:

"So engaging and relevant. Practical strategies that can easily be used. Loved it"

"It was wonderful to have a lived experience perspective. Their presentation style was relaxed and authentic and feel very privileged to have the opportunity to learn from someone so knowledgeable"

[Read more about Sonny Jane Wise](#)





Family Sensitive Practice Training wrap up

In partnership with The Bouverie Centre, FRMP offered Family Sensitive Practice training in Bendigo on April 1st 2025. There were 23 participants from a range of organisations in the Loddon Mallee region and surrounds. Subjects covered included:

- The importance of a family-relational framework
- Understanding family-sensitive practice
- Applying a trauma-informed approach
- Integrating culture
- Engaging families and fostering hope
- Implementing family-sensitive practice in the workplace
- Worker self-care

We received some fantastic great feedback from the day:

"Very well delivered the facilitator was really good. High quality content"

"This was great training, applicable to my work and directed at experienced practitioners"

There will be another Family Sensitive Practice training session in the metro area on July 23rd (venue TBC), to express

your interest please email Poppy at pfotiadis@mcm.org.au





FRMP Funding in Action

We asked one of our FRMP approved therapists, Dean Ferris of Mirror Bridge - Family Relationship Services to share their story. Dean said,

“MCM has referred me a number of cases to assist young people at risk of becoming, or currently, homeless. We help them and their family reconnect with each other in a safe environment. We support the young person and their family with individual counselling, as well as family therapy and mediation. Individual sessions can be via video conference or face to face. With up to 10 sessions being funded, families otherwise unable to afford it, can access this form of intervention, which can reduce risk factors and problems associated with family breakdown. With MCM’s support, we are achieving terrific outcomes reconnecting families and avoiding youth homelessness. Generational family violence is commonly a dominant back story when we commence our work with families. Increased understanding and empathy generated from individual and joint sessional work, leads to a greater awareness of existing family patterns. It is rewarding when young people change behaviours and make new choices. These changes are often a result of conscious efforts made by parents to connect with their child in new and purposeful ways.

Role modelling desired values and behaviours is also instrumental in all positive family relationship outcomes that are achieved.”

Barbara* and Sharni’s* story

16 year old, Sharni came to Mirror Bridge after a Magistrate ordered diversion, after an Intervention Order (IVO) against

Sharni for family violence against Barbara was being considered. Barbara felt guilty, fearful and was distressed, while Sharni was at risk of homelessness, noting that they were still living together along with Sharni's two brothers, and their father who was often away with work. Sharni and her family accessed Mirror Bridge's services via MCM FRMP. We utilised a combination of individual and family therapeutic sessions. Sharni was given a voice which then allowed acknowledgements, apologies and commitments to be made in a safe space. The outcome was fantastic in that Sharni was heard and understood, and was able to integrate successfully back into her family and continue living at home in a way that was safe and sustainable.

*Names changed for privacy reasons

Please meet Michelle Long, our new art therapist in Bendigo...



Hi - I'm Michelle (she/her).

I'm an art therapist and social worker. My main area of interest is in the space of trauma, using art making and other expressive outlets, including movement, music and creative writing to support recovery.

I have experience working with individuals and groups across the developmental life span and a wide range of cultural backgrounds. My clinical approach is influenced by feminist theory, client-centred approaches, and strength-based frameworks.

I have an interest in childhood and lifespan development, attachment, neurodiversity, LGBTQIA+ issues, diverse experiences of disability, First Nations issues and abuse/trauma care and recovery.

I provide counselling and the delivery of focussed psychosocial and psychological interventions to children, young people, their families and adults. This includes individual counselling, dyad (parent/child) counselling and therapeutic group work.

I believe that you are the expert in your healing journey. But we can always use someone to walk beside us, at least some of the way.

[Apply for FRMP Therapeutic Intervention brokerage here](#)

New therapists on the FRMP register

Please also welcome the following therapists who have recently signed up to support young people experiencing (or at risk of) homelessness:

- Jessica Mildren - Mental Health Social Worker (Bendigo)
- San Leenstra - Art & Family Therapist (Bendigo)
- Melinda Jane - Art Therapist (Castlemaine)
- Michelle Kozman - Mental Health Social Worker (West Melbourne)
- Lindsay Friebe - Occupational Therapist (Leongatha)
- Jayme Waites - Psychologist (Eastwood)
- Megan Rodgers - Psychologist (Sale)



Contact Us

The FRMP team has allocated contacts for the regions:

- **Poppy Fotiadis:** Metro West (incl. CBD), Metro North and Loddon Mallee
- **Cassie de Ruyter:** Metro South, Metro East and Gippsland
- **Linda Schwan:** Grampians, Hume and Barwon South West

Please contact the team on **03 9977 0046** or frmp@mcm.org.au with any enquiries.



Family
Reconciliation
Mediation Program



Family Reconciliation Mediation Program (FRMP)

Melbourne City Mission

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