



Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow

The Compassionate Friends Mandurah Chapter

Volume 20 Issue 1 June 2019

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Welcome

The fifth of May is the anniversary of my grandson Jackson's death by SIDS. On that day this year I was spending a quiet few moments in a memorial garden dedicated to babies and infants and a small family group were nearby. The two young children were wandering around the garden when they stopped and showed the other that a ladybird had landed on their hands. I smiled and silently thanked little Jack for reminding me that he was nearby. Later that day, my granddaughter, Jackson's sister, was telling me that her 7 year old daughter Eden had spoken that morning about a dream she had about her Jessie Nana (great great grandmother) the previous night. Jessie Nana had brought her a blue butterfly and a ladybird. Eden had no way of knowing that day was a special one and why. I love receiving these signs which assure us that our children are here with us in some way. I've always regarded my son's symbol as a butterfly and often see one nearby when I most need to. Over the years I've heard similar stories from many bereaved parents.

When my practical minded husband says that this is just wishful thinking, I respond by saying if that's the case then all I know is that many people from very different walks of life have had similar experiences. During the TCF International Gathering in Costa Mesa, California, Mitch Carmody presented a seminar about "Signs" which Carolyn Lee from TCF Mandurah attended. A couple of days later she and I went to Santa Monica Pier and there we came across a talented artist. The lady was drawing beautiful flowers and names and the first thing we saw was that she had two completed drawings there with the name Christopher on one and Jessica on the other. These are the names of Carolyn's children, Christopher has died and Jessica is the surviving sibling. That was a special experience for Carolyn. Some might say that was a coincidence but out of all the names to have drawn – let's just say that I'm not a great believer in coincidences but I do believe in timing.

A few years ago at our "Flowers on the Water" ceremony for International Children's Memorial Day at Palm Beach a few of us walked to the end of the jetty to put our flowers on the ocean. Then I drew the others attention to a heart shape on the water. It was beautiful and I'd never seen that on the ocean before. I believe that as bereaved parents we are entitled to take comfort from these occurrences. So be open to the possibility that we may see signs from our children to let us know that they are with us. The body dies but the spirit and love continues on.

So be open to any sign

Margot McAllister

Mother of Kevin, Nana of Jackson



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Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow

Coming Events

SAVE THE DATE!!

Father's Day Lunch

Saturday September 7th
12pm

Hog's Breath
Mandurah
51 Pinjarra Rd

Please call office
to let us know you
are coming.

Nanga Bush Camp Dwellingup

1st—3rd November

The 2019 weekend retreat will be held from Friday 1st to Sunday 3rd of November at Nanga Bush Camp in Dwellingup. The bush land setting amongst the tall gum trees is the perfect venue for our retreat. Participants will arrive at the camp from 5pm to 8pm on Friday evening and leave on Sunday afternoon from 2pm. Full catering will be provided from Saturday breakfast through to Sunday lunch. You can choose to bring your own snack for Friday dinner or combine to have a shared meal. This is a Healing Retreat so a number of practitioners will be available on Saturday to provide a range of massage, Reiki and other therapies. The Saturday programs will be available on Friday evening. Individuals can choose to participate in as much or as little as they like. If you are unable to attend the whole weekend, you can attend on Saturday only for a small cost of \$30 (catering provided). The subsidized cost of the retreat to participants is \$100 for members (annual membership is \$20) and this amount will be required in order to secure a booking. The retreat is an opportunity to stop the world and look after yourself, something which many bereaved parents find is almost impossible to do. If you would like to attend this years retreat, please contact the drop in centre and further information will be sent to you.

Carolyn Lee Vice President.

RSVP 19th October 2019

Please call: 95357761

Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow

Kerry O'Connor

from the

Pathways Community Spiritualist Church

is holding a fundraising event at

Mandurah Lotteries House

on Friday 7 June

from 7.30 to 9.30p.m.

Cost \$35.

Fancy a
cuppa?



Don't forget the monthly Waroona information and support display continues, coinciding with the Community Cuppa morning, held at **Waroona Resource Centre.**

Annual General Meeting

24th September 2019 11 am Lotteries House

You are warmly invited to attend the above. We need you all to ensure we have a quorum. New members are also welcomed for their input and ideas and if you are two years on since your bereavement we are asking you to consider joining us on the Committee. We meet bi-monthly for a couple of hours. To have voting rights on the day you need to be a financial member for at least two weeks.

After the AGM we will provide a light lunch followed by a Committee Meeting in which we hope to welcome new members.

To continue, we need you!

Tel: 95357761 or email tcfmandurah@bigpond.com

TCF Mandurah needs you!!

Are you at least two years into your grief journey?

Do you have one day a week that you could volunteer in our office? We would love to hear from you!

Please phone Margot on 9535 7761.

Some women say that there is no greater pain than to bear a child.

I say there is no greater pain than to bury one.

Past Events

A Walk to Remember

It was good to be back at Dalrymple Park for our 14th annual Walk to Remember. Mandurah MLA David Templeman and Dawesville MLA Zac Kirkup attended and it was lovely to see two of David's children eagerly carry the small banner. The second banner was proudly carried by two young men who did so in memory of their good friend. The weather was perfect and we were able to walk along the foreshore to the MPAC and return. The members of the Lions Club of Mandurah had the sausage sizzle ready for us.

We are so grateful for their support and also those who sponsored us this year including the **City of Mandurah** for a Community Assistance Grant, **Mayday Op Shops**, **Soroptimists International Mandurah**, **Bendigo Bank** and **Halo team Inc.** for their donations.

Thanks go also to **Greenfields Funerals** for the donation of bottles water, the congregation of **Our Lady's Assumption Catholic Church** for their contributions, **J.F.K Electrical** for the generous donation and the **Drop Inn** for the donation of the raffle prizes.

Well done to **Emily Pinnell**, **Wendy & Tim Hancock**, **Margaret Gallagher**, **Heather Doy** and **Margot McAllister** for the donations collected and to all the volunteers whose teamwork again brought this event to fruition..

With our piper **Viv Riley**, leading the way, we certainly caught the attention of the many people on the foreshore. Our publicity and collecting has helped to raise awareness of TCF and the most beautiful outcome from the walk was the responses from those who attended for the first time and found friends and comfort.



Local legend

On Tuesday 26 March 2019 John Lawrence was presented with a "Local legend" award by the Mayor Rhys Williams at the City of Mandurah council chambers. People from the community agencies of PEACH, WA Mums Cottage, Mandurah Muscateers and The Compassionate Friends Mandurah were present to see him recognised for the years of volunteer support he has given in the role of treasurer.



Past Events (Cont.)

Mother's Day Lunch

3rd May 2019

Lotteries House

Twenty-four members and friends gathered together to support each other before one of the most difficult days of the year. All enjoyed a beautiful buffet lunch and the Mother's Day cake, with some even winning a raffle prize or the door prize. Sincere thanks to all those who volunteered on the day, and to everyone who donated prizes throughout the year. Thanks also to the Soroptimists International of Mandurah for their generous donation to the catering and also to our Memorial Walk. We received from one of our members a surprise generous donation from Pathways Spiritualist Church which was very much appreciated. Thank you Danica for leading us all in a sing-a-long. It was a very special time of caring and sharing for each other and on Mother's Day we will light a candle and send warm fuzzies to one another. See you next year!!

Tina Pearce



Blue Tree Event

Saturday 27 April.

The inaugural Blue Tree Event was held on Saturday 27 April at Bortello Oval in Greenfields.

The sun shone warmly and brightly to fill the hearts of those who were providing help, and those who were seeking help, about suicide.

There were many organisations that gathered with display tables offering all kinds of information to the public including The Compassionate Friends. 'Storn' and his partner had travelled from Bindoon with their magnificent car and trailer full of amazing information, help and advice. They travel the countryside to share their message.

The day's events were very well supported by the general public, indicating there is a constant and very strong need in and around the Mandurah community for information and general support surrounding the difficult word that is 'Suicide'.

Throughout the day, people were invited to participate in painting part of a large tree that had been placed on the oval *blue*. Many of these blue trees can be found in a variety of locations, so be sure to keep your eyes open for them!!

Needless to say this inaugural Blue Tree Day, was a tremendous success and a day that is sure to be firmly booked to become a regular annual event.

Sylvia Watts



**Sometimes, you just have to bow your head, say a prayer and weather the storm.
~ Mother Teresa**

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General Notices

Thank You!

We are currently updating and printing several pamphlets thanks to a grant from **PEACH and the AWA Bank**. We couldn't have attempted this without this grant and are very grateful.

A grant has also been obtained from the **Department of Social Services Volunteer Grants** and this grant will assist us to reimburse our volunteers for some of their travel expenses. We will also be able to have a training course for facilitators and telephone friends.

Soroptimists International of Mandurah once again sponsored our lunch for bereaved mothers. We appreciate this donation because this luncheon gathering is very important. See the item & photographs.

Our grateful thanks go to **John from JFK Electrical** for his generous donation to the Walk to Remember. One of our volunteers had occasion to use his business and gave us positive feedback on the experience.

An unexpected donation from **Pathways Spiritualist Community Church** was received when Kerry O'Connor arrived at the Mother's Day lunch. This came at a good time and we are thankful for this support.

Tina & Eddie Pearce are always warmly welcomed at the **Drop inn Warnbro** where they raffle a meat tray. The customers are keen to buy tickets and now know about TCF and our services.

The residents of **Parklands Villas, Halls Head** gave us a donation from those who attended a recent sausage sizzle. Following our visit in March, they know and appreciate what we do.

It's wonderful to receive the support from the sources noted above. This is how we're able to provide our grief support services for the families who need it so very much. Thank you all.



Facebook

From April 19 to May 15 we had a 33% increase in people looking in. We had 15 likes to our Mother's Day lunch photos and Blue Tree Day. This is an important social media page for people to touch base and find out what we are doing in the coming weeks.

Tina Pearce



Mother's Day Raffle Winner

Volunteers held a one day display at Farmer Jacks Halls Head shopping Centre on 9 May. This was very successful and we thank all who contributed items to the basket of Mothers Day Gifts.

Special thanks to **Headshed** of Sutton square, Mandurah for the donation of a \$30 hairdressing voucher.

Gina Conway is pictured with the winner of the Mother's Day Raffle. He would have made his mother very happy!!



Why not join us as a friend on Facebook?

If you have something special you would like to share, please email to the office and we will post on the main page with your first name only.

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Poems and articles

Dear Newly Bereaved Parent

This will likely be the hardest thing you'll ever do. *Survive* this. And eventually, maybe even thrive again.

At times it will feel virtually impossible. You'll wonder how a human being can survive such pain. You'll learn you know how to defy the impossible. You did it from the moment your child's heart stopped, and yours kept beating. You do it with every breath and step you take. You're doing it now. And now. And now.

Your fingernails will become bloodied from clawing your way from the depths of despair. Your spirit will grow weary from fighting to survive. Your eyes will cry more tears than you ever thought possible. Your arms will ache an ache for which there aren't words. For a *lifetime*.

Your heart will break into a million tiny pieces. You'll wonder how it will ever mend again.

But with every morsel of unspeakable pain, there is love. An abundance of love. A love so strong, so powerful, it will buoy you. You will not drown.

Others will say things that are intended to be helpful, but aren't. Take what is, leave what isn't.

Still, you'll meet others along the journey who will get it without ever saying a word. Kind souls who will breathe you back to life again. Let them.

Years down the road you'll tire of hearing the same advice and clichés, over and over again. Advice you don't want or need. Everyone will try to tell you how to best "fix" your broken heart. The trouble is, you don't need fixing.

There is no fix for this.

Eventually you'll learn how to carry the weight of this pain. At times it will crush you. At other times you'll learn how to shoulder the burden with newfound grit and grace. Either way, you'll learn how to bend with the weight of it.

It will not break you. Not entirely.

And even if you don't believe in hope— not even a little— hope will light the way for you. At times you won't realize your path is lit. The darkness feels all consuming when you're in it. But know the light is there. Surrounding you now. And now. And now.

Know you're being guided, by all of us who have survived this impossible hell. You may not hear us, or see us, but we are with you. Beside you. Hand in hand, heart to heart. Always. Just like your child still is.

Above all else, know that no one can save you but yourself. You are the heroine/hero of this sad story. You are the one who gets to decide how, and if, you'll survive this. You are the one who will figure out a way to survive the sleepless nights, and the endless days. You are the one who will decide if and when you'll find a purpose again that means something to you. You are the one who will choose how you'll live with the pain. You are the one who will decide what you'll cling to, what will make your life worth living again. You, and only you, get to decide how you'll survive.

by **Angela Miller** January 27, 2016



Courtesy of

Compassionate Friends

Okanagan Valley Regional Newsletter

If you need help, we are here for you. TCF Mandurah has a range of grief support services and resources available for bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. We offer understanding, friendship, compassion and hope.

There are no strangers at TCF meetings — only friends you have not yet met.

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THE GRIEF OF GRANDPARENTS

The relationship between a grandparent and a grandchild is very special and unique. When a grandchild dies, the grief associated with the loss is often so intense and painful, it leaves bereaved grandparents feeling hopeless as they experience what many refer to as a double loss. Not only do they mourn for their grandchild, they may also feel a sense of helplessness because they are unable to take away the pain felt by the parents of their grandchild, one of whom is their own child.

Grief Is Unique

As with any type of loss, the grief of a grandparent is unique to each individual. Some grieving grandparents can easily express their pain through tears and talking about their loss. Others find it difficult to express all they are feeling and may have difficulty with tears or may not cry at all. Research has shown that the amount of tears shed and words spoken are not a correlation of how rapidly grief is processed. Some people cry on the inside and talk when others aren't listening.

Emotional Aspects of Grief

The grief journey has many emotional peaks and valleys and lasts far longer than society in general recognizes. Grandparents may initially experience overwhelming feelings of denial, shock and numbness. In time, the shock will wear off and other emotions such as anger, guilt and regret may surface. The death of a grandchild isn't something a grandparent ever expected to experience; they expected their grandchild to outlive them. Many grandparents say "I wish it had been me who died instead of my grandchild". There are times when the emotional rollercoaster of grief can be very confusing as bereaved grandparents experience a variety of intense emotions which may vary from one moment to the next.

Numbness and Shock

There are many facets of grief, but no certain order in which they will be experienced. When a grandchild dies, most grandparents feel a protective numbness or shock. Even though they may know their grandchild has died, their minds may want to deny it and the numbness allows this. They may find themselves talking to and about the grandchild as if he or she were still alive. They may "see" the child somewhere, only to realize it is someone else.

Trauma

As the numbness lessens, the pain and frustration a bereaved grandparent experiences may become more intense. It has been said that grief truly begins when the shock has worn off. As grandparents begin to fully feel the extent of their pain, they may feel overwhelmed with sadness, anger, guilt, regret and questions of why. It can be helpful to seek the support of others who have experienced a similar loss who can provide a safe place to share feelings and offer encouragement.

Anger

Not everybody experiences anger as part of their grief journey, but many do. Anger may be directed inward or outward toward others. Anger may be focused at God, the spouse, the child or even the grandchild who has died. It is not uncommon for a bereaved grandparent to have anger at themselves for not being able to prevent the death which has devastated the family. While anger is often associated with being a negative aspect of grief, it can also be used constructively. Anger over injustices and diseases, for example, have led those in grief to turn their anger into action toward raising money, funding scholarships, changing laws and making the world a better place in honor of their loved ones who died.

Love Remains

Grief is the price we pay for love; love doesn't die when a grandchild dies. Because love remains, the work put forth to process grief will eventually lead to a life no longer solely focused on the death but rather a life filled with good memories and shared joy about the grandchild. Many bereaved grandparents have found hope and support through The Compassionate Friends.

TCF Membership Reminder

Annual Membership Fee is now \$20 and is due on 1st July. This is only payable after the first year of bereavement.

This can be paid by cash, cheque, money order or directly into The Compassionate Friends Mandurah, Bendigo Bank BSB 633000 A/C # 157735895.

Remembered With Love

June, July and August 2018

NOTE: TCF Mandurah has decided to adopt the policy, held by the USA and other countries, of omitting the full details of birth and death dates from our newsletter. This policy is required to help prevent the risk of "Identity Theft", which is becoming more common. We have a responsibility to avoid placing our members families at risk. The year/years will not be included.

Adam Francis BORG

12th June to 28th July

Son of Connie and John, brother of Mario, Sav and Jason.

Our dear son, brother-in-law and uncle of 5.

If you knew how much we love and miss you, you would come back to us.

Love you more every day. xxx

Vivian CHANDLER

11th October to 14th June

You are always with us Viv, Love from Mum and Dad, Karen, Marlene and Adam, daughters Emily, Sophie and Olivia, nieces and nephew.

Blake Joshua EVANS

29TH March to 23rd July

Dearly loved grandson of Rosemary. I never got to say goodbye, my brave grandson.

You could not run and play like other boys, so run and play with the Angels and play your guitar in their band. Love always, Nanna xxxx

Ruben John HODDY

9th June o 1st January

Forever in my heart my beautiful son. Always in our thoughts, Mum and brother Tama oxox

James John KLESSENS

17TH July to 19th August

Grandson of Bill and brother of Jessica.

An exceptional, talented young man with a gentle, humorous nature.

Departed too soon from us xxx.

Kevin John PERRY

18th November to 13th July

Son of Margot, brother of Lorraine

23 forever, always loved and missed

Jamie PURSLOWE

10th August to 15th April

Son of Craige. Our brave little man Jamie. The intensity of love for you never diminishes.

McKenzie Jean McGUIGAN

18th November to 29th July

My Darling girl. Another agonising year without you. I miss you so much my Angel.

Your infectious laughter no longer surrounds my home. Love and hugs, Mum.

Mark John RATCLIFFE

17th August to 8th July

Remembered daily with so much love and pride. Sadly missed.

Geoffrey James STAFFORD

31st August to 5th May

Dearly loved son of Rosemary.

My little blue eyed blonde angel in heaven with Nana.

The years have rolled by, but I miss you each and every day.

Love Mum xxx

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Remembered With Love

June, July and August 2018

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Susan Anne WALKER

Love you and remembered always.

21st June to 24th June

Kris Ronald WITHERS

Remembered Forever

22nd January to 21st August

Sarah SOM DE CERFF

Our darling gorgeous daughter, partner, mummy and sister.

We love you forever and miss you every second. We will meet again in heaven, from Ryan and Emily, John, Amanda and Sue and Geoff.

11th June to 19th June

REMEMBERED
... WITH ...
Love ♥

Library

We have a substantial library of resources at our Mandurah Drop in Centre, offering excellent **books, magazines, tapes, cds, etc.** on grief issues associated with the death of a child/ren and siblings. All library resources are available for loan by our members. Access to the library is available by visiting the Drop in Centre. In return, we need our members to be vigilant and return these items back to the Drop in Centre so other TCF members are able to avail themselves of this useful service.



Support Groups

Bunbury Coffee Morning

When: Held as required
Contact: Wendy Ph.: 9725 0153 or centre 9535 7761



Evening Support Group

When: Thursday, June 7th
Thursday, July 5th
Thursday, August 2nd
Time: 7pm—9pm
Where: Eastlake Church cnr Lakes Road and Murdoch Drive, Mandurah
(Opposite Peel Health Campus)
Contact: The centre on 95357761



Metro Groups

Contact: TCF WA on 6107 6257 for details

Bereaved by Suicide Group

Dates: Friday, June 21th
Friday, July 19th
Friday, August 16th
Time: 9.30 to 12.30 p.m.
Where: Mandurah Lotteries House.
Contact: The centre on 9535 7761



Changed Your Contact Details

Please let us know if you have changed your telephone number or your address, or if you would like your newsletter e-mailed.

Please contact us on:-
tcfmandurah@bigpond.com

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Unsubscribe

If you no longer require the newsletter please e-mail or phone to cancel.



Telephone Friends - The Compassionate Friends

Please call a telephone friend whenever you need to talk "We need not walk alone"

BUNBURY	Russ	9797 0625	<u>Siblings</u>	
BUNBURY	Wendy	9725 0153	<u>Grandparent Contact</u>	
DONNYBROOK	Sue	9764 1262	Lyn	9581 9957
PINJARRA	Sheri	0457 747 772	<u>Bereaved Fathers</u>	
KOJONUP	Roberta	9833 6232	Gary	9593 2317
MANDURAH	Drop-In	9535 7761	Peter	0447741219
MANDURAH	Judy	0456852233	<u>Suicide</u>	
MANDURAH	After Hours	9582 8113	Margot (Centre)	9535 7761 (a/h) 9582 8113
TCF WA	Drop-In	6107 6257	Russ	9797 0625
WARNBRO	Barbara	0433 816 445		
WAROONA	John or Val	9739 1281	<u>Miscarriage/Infant/Stillbirth</u>	
			Joanne	0403 336 392 or 9535 7092

(After 6pm & Weekends)

TCF Interstate and Overseas Contacts

	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>Web Site</u>
ACT/QUEANBEYAN	(02) 6286 6134	www.thecompassionatefriends.org.au/ACT.htm
NEW SOUTH WALES	(02) 9290 2355	www.thecompassionatefriendsnsw.org.au
NORTHERN TERRITORY	(08) 8927 1320	
QUEENSLAND	(07) 3254 2657	www.compassionatefriendsqld.org.au/
SOUTH AUSTRALIA	(08) 8351 0344	www.compassionatefriendssa.org.au
TASMANIA	(03) 6261 4250	
VICTORIA	(03) 9888 4944	www.compassionatefriendsvictoria.org.au
UNITED KINGDOM	(08) 451 20 37 85	www.tcf.org.uk
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		www.compassionatefriends.org
SOUTH AFRICA		www.compassionatefriends.org.za
SWITZERLAND		www.verin-regenbogen.ch
CANADA		www.tcfcanada.net/

Some Internet Resources

<u>www.dougy.org</u>	National centre for grieving children & families; a non-profit resource
<u>www.grieflossrecovery.com</u>	Poems, articles, memoirs, memorials, links - professional site
<u>www.silentgrief.com</u>	For those who have suffered a miscarriage and later child loss
<u>www.bereavement-poems-articles.com</u>	
<u>www.menslines.org.au</u>	Phone: 1300 78 99 78
<u>www.kidshelp.com.au</u>	Web & email counselling
<u>www.beyondblue.org.au</u>	National depression initiative
<u>www.parentsofsuicide-aunz.com</u>	Suicide grief support internet community
<u>www.mesotheliomaweb.org</u>	Resource information & support
<u>www.gonetoosoon.org</u>	A forum for questions, answers and support from others with similar loss.

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Other Useful Contacts

Alcohol & Drug Information Services	Free Call	1800 198 024
Allambee (Sexual Assault Counselling)		9535-8263
angelwasisterstracy@gmail.com	Gowns for born still babies	0438 901 791
ARAFMI (Mental Health Carers & Friends Association (WA) Inc.)		9535 5844
	Country Callers Free-Call	1800 811 747
Beyond Blue Depression Helpline	www.beyondblue.org.au	1300 224 636
Centre Care		9721 5177
Coroners Counselling Services		9321 2491
Crisis Care	Free Call	1800 199 008
Coronial Enquiries		9420-5200
Headspace.org.au	Support for people 12 to 25 struggling with mental health issues	1800 650 890
Lifeline		13 11 14
Mensline Australia; Professional & Online support for men.		1300 789 978
Mental Health Emergency Response Line	Peel Region	1800 676 822
Relationships Australia		9583 6090
Samaritans	Free Call	1800 198 313
Suicide Call-Back Services (SCDS) - Bereaved by Suicide National Free Counselling		1300 659 467
S.I.D.S & KIDS Western Australia	Free Call	1800 199 466
The Safe Woman Safe Family Murray Centre		9507 5834
S.I.D.S & KIDS Bunbury	Narelle	0406 630 119
South Coast Women's Health Services – R'ham	www.schs.com.au	9550 0900
State Coroner		9425 2900
Peel Legal Services		9581 4511
Palmerston Counselling Services	Drug Related	9581 4010
Peel Youth Services / Family Support Officer	Tanya: 0459-020-179	9581 3365
Victim Support Services	Rockingham	9527 7699
Victim Support Services	Mandurah	9583 1120
Youth health Services	Rockingham	9527 7464
Young Widow & Widowers Association	Ruth: 0407-983-093 or	9581 8443

If any TCF member has found an agency or counsellor, other than those listed, To be helpful, please advise us and we will consider their information for inclusion in future issues.

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