

A whole child approach to disaster recovery



Christopher Gostelow Psychologist, WA

Chris is the former Chief Psychologist for the Western Australian School Psychology Service where he for many years led a workforce that grew to 600 school psychologists and was responsible for the delivery of quality services to all public schools.

He also worked in the private sector where he provided trauma related consultancy and mental health support services for adults and children affected by incidents, including armed hold-ups.

Chris has a longstanding involvement in critical incident management and suicide prevention in schools and was awarded a Churchill Fellowship on the topic. He has had experience in disaster related work throughout his career and close involvement in working collaboratively with school communities and inter-agency partners to ensure coordinated support for children and young people. His work has related to significant community and school critical incidents, including cyclones, floods, fires and other major events.

He developed and implemented a two-day suicide prevention training program, currently known as Gatekeeper, for professionals and para-professionals in 1990 that has continued to evolve and is still widely available in Western Australia.

Chris currently provides psychological consultancy services in Western Australia and Nationally.



Sarnia Ralston Child and Family Partner, Qld

Sarnia is a mum of three, wife and manager of a child abuse prevention organisation.

In December 2019, Sarnia and her family were in the midst of the NSW bushfires in Batemans Bay NSW. Sarnia and her family moved to Cairns shortly after the fires to begin a new adventure in the far north, only to experience another disaster amidst Cyclone Jasper and the subsequent flood across the far north, significantly impacting their local community of Machans Beach.



Tayla Iellamo Occupational Therapist, NSW

Tayla is an occupational therapist with extensive experience working with children and families in the areas of disability, private practice, rural health, and mental health.

She holds a master's degree in public health and global health and has spent the last four years focused on disaster recovery work, both in Australia and as a consultant internationally.

Tayla currently leads a team of allied health professionals at Royal Far West, supporting children, families and communities in NSW affected by disasters. She is passionate about amplifying children's voices in disaster recovery and empowering those around them to provide the best possible support to minimise long term adverse effects.



Facilitator: Jacquie Lee Practice Development Officer, Emerging Minds, SA

Jacquie Lee is a writer, editor and knowledge translator at Emerging Minds. She recently joined the Practice Development team after almost six years of guiding and shaping content as the Communications Advisor – Editing & Publishing.

In her new role, Jacquie enjoys combining the latest in research findings with the lived experience wisdom of parents and practitioners to create innovative, engaging resources. She takes a transdisciplinary and transdiagnostic approach to improving mental health outcomes for infants, children and families.

In her previous life, Jacquie was a marketing and communications lead at some of South Australia's leading arts organisations, including the Adelaide Fringe and Adelaide Festival of Arts. In 2023, she completed an honours degree in psychology at Deakin University, where she investigated the impact of bushfires and floods on family functioning.

Jacquie has a particular interest in neurodiversity-affirming practice, family and relationship therapy, and disaster response and recovery. In her spare time, she enjoys going for long, meandering walks and collecting more books than she could ever possibly read.