

PRESENTATION FAMILY CENTRE NEWSLETTER

The latest news and updates



Autumn School Holiday Program Families Enjoying Balnarring Beach

WELCOME

Welcome to the newsletter, where we share with you some of the exciting things happening at Presentation Family Centre.

GUEST FEEDBACK

In April, PFC delivered the Autumn School Holiday Program and welcomed families from around Victoria to participate in beach, bush and cooking activities. See the report on pages 3 & 4.

HOLIDAY PROGRAM

Each month we seek feedback from guests to help improve our service. I encourage you to read what guests have to say on page 2.

THANK YOU

PFC often benefits from the expertise and talents of volunteers, and generous donors - page 5 showcases some recent contributions and developments.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

This month, I would like to make special mention of our staff - Mel, Cassie and Jade, who work hard to welcome guests and support them to enjoy their stay. Our guest feedback shows they are doing a wonderful job.

If you would like to support the work of the Presentation Family Centre by donating or volunteering, please get in touch:

E: manager@pfc.org.au
P: 5983 1819

Warm regards,
Rachel Connor
manager@pfc.org.au



96% of survey respondents are VERY LIKELY to recommend PFC to family and friends*.

**based on data collected between Jan-June 2021*

The feedback below was collected in May 2021

Here's what guests told us a break at PFC means to them:

Because I've been a carer for so long, it was great to have a quiet space to indulge in some self care. I felt so much better for having that time out. I also enjoyed seeing my family have much needed time away as well.

My kids and I have never been on a family holiday. Even though it wasn't too far away it was a holiday nonetheless and I loved every moment of it. I wish it was something we could do more often.

I had a brain hemorrhage some years back, and have ongoing symptoms... I find the restful atmosphere and the opportunity to get close to nature especially the sea (at an affordable rate) very healing and refreshing and a real treat.

Much needed space, quiet, rest, time in nature - a very nurturing time with women at a cost I could manage.

I was a carer for 15 years for a family member with mental health & drug dependence issues...I think I just got used to operating exhausted. These days post-carer role, I am slowly recovering and with the support of the women in my community I am being able to create new opportunities to make a difference to others now too.

Here's what guests told us they enjoyed about their stay at PFC:

I love the area and the feeling of peace and safety in the centre. The staff are always very friendly and helpful and make us feel very welcome.

The closeness to beach, walking the labyrinth, the peaceful atmosphere, the light filled and very comfortable accommodation.

It was beautifully relaxing and peaceful. I enjoyed the space in and around the home and the opportunity for young children to have fun.

The well presented Grevillea Cottage, it's lovely bathrooms and kitchen and bedrooms. The comfy bed and bedside table lamp. Quality blinds. Lovely window outlook. LOVED IT. As well I so appreciated the genuine help I got in the emails I sent back and forth - always received with such care and prompt attention.

Cottage was beautiful, well kept, clean and has all the amenities we needed. Close to beach and shops.

Connecting Guests to Nature on the School Holiday Program

Living on the Mornington Peninsula, we are afforded daily access to some of the most beautiful natural environments in the world. We have National parks, state parks, glorious beaches, and divine hinterlands on our doorstep. But as the last couple of years have taught us, even when living in a place many consider a paradise, we still long to travel, to refresh ourselves, and to get away and explore somewhere new. There is something undeniably special about going on a holiday either solo, or with loved ones. Yet not everyone is so lucky to visit our beautiful peninsula, let alone call it home.

Presentation Family Centre exists to help bridge this gap. It is our aim to extend the privilege of holidaying to those who need it most. We recognize that challenging life circumstances (including caring responsibilities, financial stresses, loss, illness and/or disability) can greatly hinder people's ability to access relaxing getaway. As a not-for-profit charitable organisation, we endeavor to provide beautiful, inclusive and supported holidays, retreats, and programs to guests at an affordable cost. Guests may include families and carers who may be self-funded or be referred to us by other not-for-profit organisations, hospitals, government agencies, schools, community groups or organisations.

Guests often comment on the restful and peaceful ambiance that time spent in or near this bushland provides, and many have noted the restorative power of Presentation Family Centre's natural surrounds, being bordered by Merricks creek, and only a 7 minute walk from the shores of the ever-changing natural seascape of Balnarring Beach.

continued over...



Participants Enjoying the Autumn School Holiday Program

Connecting Guests to Nature on the School Holiday Program (continued..)

The April school holiday program in Autumn was wonderful fun! We had a wide variety of participants, including large, combined families, grandparent carers with their grandchildren, and single-parent families with their children. Participant needs were complex and diverse, and we had a variety of beautiful personalities with an array of interests. At times, we also included family's support workers.



The young participants ages ranged from 18 months right up to 18 years, and along with each young person, at least one 'grown up' (responsible adult) attended each session with them. The program was designed after deep consultation with each family group, and catered for all people involved, including the 'grown ups!'.



Participants enjoyed welcome afternoon teas, sessions at Balnarring Beach, adventures into the Wilderness, cooking workshops at the Nanospace, where groups made delicious and nutritious feasts, which were shared and celebrated together over long-tabled lunches. Highlights for families included getting to know one and other, forming bonds with staff, and volunteers, and withing their own family units.



Through the April Autumn school holiday programs this year, guests were given ample opportunities to deepen their connections to the spaces and people around PFC.

We thank all the volunteers, staff and of course, the willing and open participants for making the program what it was, fun, relaxing, and enjoyable! We look forward to seeing the families' friendships continue to blossom in the years to come.

Participants Enjoying the Autumn School Holiday Program

Jade Warner-Benedetti
Programs Coordinator
programs@pfc.org.au

Videos

We are grateful to **Tasma Pittock** who has created videos of the interior of the houses to show to prospective guests.

Many guests find it helpful to see the properties before they arrive, particularly adults and children who might feel anxious about being away from home. The videos are available on the website.

Tasma is working on a video about PFC, which will utilise footage taken with her drone.



New Flooring

Worn carpet and vinyl flooring in House 5 has been replaced with new timber look flooring throughout the house. The new floor is easier to clean, consistent throughout the house, reduces odour and looks more inviting. We couldn't have done it without the support of the the **Balnarring and District Community Bank Branch of Bendigo Bank**.



WiFi is now installed in all houses and the Nanospace Activity Centre.

Improved Car Park

We were lucky to receive the assistance of **Rocket Building Group** to improve access and resurface the car park in front of the office. Their hard work resulted in safer egress and more car parking space. Thank you!



JUNE 2021

From Phillip Steele
Board Chairperson

The Board is very pleased that our guests continue to find PFC a friendly and welcoming place where they may experience a sense of safety, peace and connection to nature. We hope that they are nourished in body, mind and spirit.

I would like to acknowledge the efforts and commitment of our outstanding staff team, Rachel, Jade, Mel and Cassie who ensure that our guests are always warmly welcomed and encouraged to enjoy the safe and peaceful environment during their stay at PFC.

I would also like to acknowledge the generous support of our donors and volunteers who enable PFC to continue its mission.

Much has been achieved during the last six months, even though we have had to deal with occasional challenges due to COVID-19 outbreaks. As mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, the newly developed Autumn School Holiday program was a great success. We have continued to upgrade our cottages, enlarged the Office Car Park, and completed installation of WiFi in the cottages. We have developed and launched an Environmental Charter which sets the future direction for PFC to tread more lightly on its precious environment. We are installing solar panels in our cottages and the Nanospace Activity Centre. We are working to provide guests with increased opportunities to experience the peace and tranquility of the Wilderness (the property at the rear of PFC, which has been re-vegetated with Indigenous trees and shrubs.)

I am delighted to advise that we have met with representatives from the Willum Warrain Aboriginal Association that seeks to provide a safe, cultural space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to gather on the Mornington Peninsula. I am hopeful that this valuable relationship will develop and deepen over time.

Under the leadership of Rachel Connor, our Interim General Manager we are developing a site Master Plan that will guide the future development of the natural and built environment of our site at Balnarring Beach. This is being done in an open and collaborative way that aims to involve all key stakeholders.

The Board has continued to improve PFC's governance arrangements and is currently developing financial plans that we hope will ensure that PFC will be able to continue its valuable work long into the future.

Please stay warm, safe and well.

Phil

A walk in the "Wilderness"

Philip Steele, PFC Board Chairperson,

Jade Warner-Benedetti, PFC Programs Coordinator and **Presentation**

Sister Joan Power meeting with Willum Warrain Executive Officer Men's

Business **Peter Aldenhoven** and Gathering Place Coordinator, **Karsten Poll**.

