

SACOSS

NEWS

Justice, opportunity and shared wealth for all South Australians

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Summer 2016-17



SACOSS

South Australian Council
of Social Service

As the peak non-government representative body for the health and community services sector in South Australia, the South Australian Council of Social Service (SACOSS) believes in justice, opportunity and shared wealth for all South Australians.

For information on membership, we invite you to visit our website or phone us.

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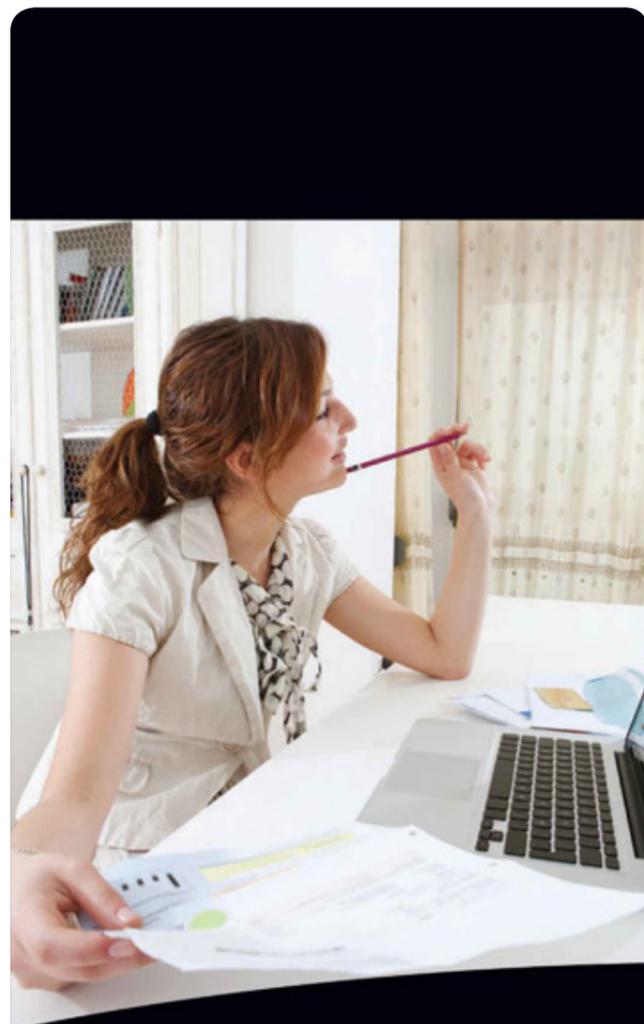
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SACOSS News

is published four times per year.
We welcome contributions and letters:
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SACOSS News © 2016 ISSN: 1342 – 465

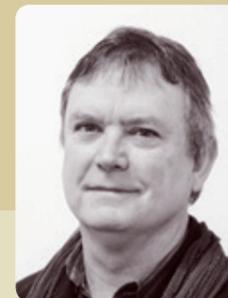
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EnergyAssist Program



EnergyAustralia



Editorial

Ross Womersley, Chief Executive Officer, SACOSS

As this edition of SACOSS News hits your hands many of you will be frantically readying yourselves for Christmas – maybe you have a break planned or maybe this is the very time of the year when you are most in demand or indeed maybe Christmas is not a time of celebration for you and your family and thus you might be a bit non-plussed about the fuss.

What I have noticed is that we do all seem to be a bit more harried and tense and testy with each other. Maybe it's not surprising. For those for whom Christmas is a production there can sometimes be enormous pressures to get everything just right! Add to this the idea that we are reaching the end of the year and there are lots of jobs that we all want to get off our plates before we start the new one.

For others Christmas can be a very painful time of year. This might come from losses they re-visit, the absence of people they love or a deep sense of their own isolation.

My wish for you is that you might stay safe, that you get to enjoy some time with others who are important in your lives and that you go gently but passionately in the world over the year ahead.

We still have so much work to do as this edition illustrates. We have used this issue of SACOSS News to focus in on one of the most important issues of our time – the issue of climate change. Our friends at Red Cross, who do such fine work on disaster support and recovery, used their *World Disasters Report 2016* to argue for a radical change in the way we manage natural disasters. They noted that natural disasters are becoming bigger and happening more often as climate change takes its toll.

They noted that the economic and social costs of disasters are growing beyond our ability to cope and called for big investments in disaster risk reduction and community resilience in order to save lives and money. Of course what we know is that the impacts of these disasters are always more profound for those people who already live lives where they struggle to overcome poverty, inequality and discrimination.

Some of you have possibly already been thinking about this but it's probably fair to say that many of us aren't yet thinking carefully enough about the issues that might flow and then working to adapt our current practices. We hope that here you find things that spur and extend your thinking, examples of good practice and great ideas about how you could work to embed climate change into your everyday life and work.

Now there are lots of other things that still need changing in our social services sector world of course. One of those is the way we organise our support to families to try and ensure we never need to call on our system of child protection. As you'll all undoubtedly know over the last few months the government has been considering its response to Justice Nyland's Royal Commission report *The life they deserve*, which was delivered to the Governor in August.

In the report, Royal Commissioner Nyland made 260 recommendations for improvements to the child protection system having concluded that it was a system in urgent need of reform, pushed beyond capacity and with many critical matters slipping through the cracks.

The government delivered an immediate response within days, but in line with calls from our sector, they sought time to more fully consider most of the recommendations. Subsequently *A fresh start* was released in November detailing how the government was planning to initially respond to 256 of Commissioner Nyland's recommendations while rejecting just four.

At the time we generally commended the government for its openness in approach in tabling its proposed responses as well as the new *Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016* legislation. But (and it's a big but) the real trick with this reform will be ensuring not only that we guarantee all children who need an alternative home actually get access to safe, stable nurturing homes as quickly as possible, we must stop the flow of children into the system from the outset.

The only way this will happen – and the government recognises this in its own analysis – is to ensure we work to address the things that result in kids needing an alternative to their family home.

Now we know that the things that drive kids into our child protection system include the presence of family violence, domestic abuse, mental health issues, alcohol and drug addiction, poor parenting skills, entrenched poverty, and so the list goes on. The only way we stop kids needing an alternative is to ensure their parents have the support and resources to address these more fundamental and underlying issues. This means we not only have to direct resources to fixing the system but we must also direct resources to all these other areas as well.

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A real worry for us as we support the government to implement *A fresh start* is that the great majority of new resources simply get absorbed doing the former and there are only titbits left over for the real hard work. An example lies in the government's commitment to abolish single-handed carer shifts for children in residential care. This decision alone will chew up huge amounts of any new funding and thus make it even less likely there are resources to do other even more important early intervention work.

We will be urging the government to urgently ring fence a substantial proportion of all new funds so that they can be invested in making a real long term difference to the trajectory of the group of kids at risk right now of entering the child protection system. We all need to raise our voices to encourage and support the government to do this. Please don't hesitate for a moment longer.

I hope peace finds its way to your homes and joy finds a place in your hearts,



PS

If you have some time free and love a good movie you should get along and see *I, Daniel Blake*. It's a telling, confronting and yet still in many ways gentle exploration of what it is to be someone relying on access to welfare. Yes, it is set in the UK but I know many who would argue it could be set in Australia today. BTW take a tissue.

PPS

The wonderful Helen Connolly retires as our Chair this month and we look forward to her reflections on her role in the next edition of SACOSS News together with an introduction to the new Chair. We all thank Helen from the bottom of our hearts for her wonderful work and support and are truly delighted we get to keep accessing some of her wisdom through her continuing presence on Policy Council.

Stomping feet, clapping hands, hooray and tons of thanks, Helen.

Shelter SA has launched a new mobile phone app, Pickle, aimed at helping young people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness to gain access to services and support.



Pickle is a good first step in finding help. To use it you enter your age range, and your location postcode, and then a list of nearby services will come up. There is also a 1800 number for additional help and advice.

Pickle is easy to use, free, quick and private. To view, use and download the app for both iPhone or Android devices, please visit www.pickle.org.au

If you would like to order free Pickle app posters and postcards to display and handout at your organisation, please contact Amanda at sheltersa@sheltersa.asn.au or phone 8223 4077.

Pickle was funded through a Department for Communities and Social Inclusion Community Benefit SA Grant.



Embedding climate change into our everyday work

Jai O'Toole, Emergency Services Manager, South Australian Red Cross

Climate Change is impacting on just about every aspect of our world, from altering the weather systems that support food production to changing the geography of natural disasters, all of which deepens existing vulnerabilities.

The International Federation of the Red Cross Red Crescent Societies is committed to tackling climate change both by adaptation - reducing the vulnerabilities of communities to modified environments; and by mitigation - action and behaviours that reduce the extent and progression of climate change.

This means that Red Cross and Red Crescent societies around the world are scaling up disaster risk reduction measures and strengthening traditional methods of preparing for and coping with disasters. We are also contributing to mitigating the progression of climate change through advocacy and social mobilisation.

Here in South Australia, we know that climate change will affect the sorts of emergencies that we help people prepare for and recover from. These include bushfire and floods as well as the increased frequency and intensity of heatwaves, storms and other events such as utility disruptions and power outages.

Red Cross in South Australia is currently reviewing our programs to identify opportunities to incorporate climate change adaptation messaging into our existing activities. This includes our support programs for migrants, isolated older people, food security activities and more.

Our emergency services REDiPlan program already takes an 'all emergencies' approach to building capacity to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies. Another program called Pillowcase designed for primary school children gets students thinking about the types of emergencies they might experience and what is important to them to protect during an event.

Both of these programs encourage people to think about how to prepare for likely or possible emergencies, which for most people is based on what they have experienced historically, or have observed in similar places.

Climate change adaptation, however, requires us to adjust our process to think about emergencies in the future that may be different from current or historical experiences because of the impacts of climate change.



Over the next few months, we are piloting updated programs that include content about readiness for the impacts of climate change, that is, so they are 'climate ready'. This will see REDiPlan introduce a conversation about the likely impacts of climate change on emergencies and how people can plan for this. For some communities in South Australia, we expect there to be discussion about preparing for more extreme heat events and intense rainfall events, as well bushfires, and being ready all year round for a wider range for possible emergencies.

Similarly, we plan to educate and train all of our people about how to support people and communities to plan for emergencies and changes we will see in the future, so that everything we do is 'climate ready'.

Embedding climate change adaptation into our emergency services programs is one of the first steps for Australian Red Cross in becoming a 'Climate Smart' organisation. In time, we expect that climate change adaptation will be embedded into everything we do.

For more information about our all emergencies approach to preparedness, please visit www.redcross.org.au/prepare To discuss our approach to embedding climate change, please contact the author.

Red Cross supporting communities to be 'climate ready'

Red Cross has a long history of working to reduce the impacts of disasters on people, working before, during and after emergencies to reduce vulnerability, ensure immediate needs are met and provide humanitarian support.

Increasingly, the focus of our work has been on developing individual and community resilience through supporting people to exercise choice, take responsibility and strengthen their connections. A shift towards resilience thinking also recognises that the community as a whole has a role to play in supporting the resilience of its members – that we're all in it together.

This focus on resilience in our emergency management work has led us to consider climate change. This is because changes in our climate will have a major impact on the sorts of emergencies that we will prepare for, live through and respond to. And we know that for much of South Australia, the future is looking warmer, drier, with more heat waves, intense storm events and severe fire danger days.

There is a natural connection between preparing for climate change and developing community resilience for emergencies. This is because the things that make us resilient for emergencies, such as our physical and mental wellbeing, connection with those around us, knowledge about emergencies and personal and financial security, are the same strengths that will help us to adapt to climate change.

We have recently launched Climate Ready Communities: A Guide for Getting Started. The guide outlines a process for individuals, households, organisations and

communities who are looking to understand what climate change means for them, and begin a conversation with others about what can be done.

Given Red Cross' focus on harnessing the power of humanity, the guide is focused on the impacts of climate change on people, and working with people to help them understand and respond to climate change. When engaging a community about climate change, the guide promotes a values-based approach, which uses things that are most important to people as the starting point for talking about changes to the climate. As with all things, people are more likely to engage with a topic and take action when there's a logical link with what's most important to them.

The guide also contains a number of communication tools, key messages and practical tips for having conversations with people about climate change. These are important to help break down the overwhelming sense that it's all too hard and we can't do anything, or that climate change is about complex science that average people can't relate to.

There are also practical checklists and information sheets targeted at different audiences, such as local government, community service providers and community members.

If you are interested in receiving a copy of the guide upon its launch, or discuss the best ways to work with your community around climate change, please contact Jai O'Toole – State Manager Emergency Services SA at Australian Red Cross.



Uniting Communities becomes first SA organisation certified as carbon neutral

Suzanne Ridding, Beyond Carbon Neutral Program Manager, Uniting Communities, and Sustainability and Carbon Consultant, Sustainable Business Consultants.



Uniting Communities is the first South Australian organisation and the first registered charity in Australia to become certified under the National Carbon Offset Standard as carbon neutral.

The desire to become carbon neutral originated from Uniting Communities' strong moral compass. Research shows it will be the elderly, socially disadvantaged and low-income people who will be most affected by climate change – and these same people are Uniting Communities' clients.

Carbon neutrality also made sense from a number of other perspectives including the potential for cost savings, meeting funding commitments, enhancement to reputation, staff engagement and the ability to report on the organisation's environmental impact.

In 2010 the Uniting Communities Board committed to becoming carbon neutral and agreed to allocate resources to this goal. Towards Carbon Neutral, as the program was named then, quickly became a popular initiative appealing to all areas of the organisation. Uniting Communities achieved its goal late last year and received Carbon Neutral status from the Federal Government through its Carbon Neutral Program. This is a minimum five year commitment during which the organisation will continue to measure, manage and offsets its carbon emissions.

Tips for Success

- Leadership commitment is crucial as is allocating adequate financial and human resources. Programs like this cannot be undertaken successfully with volunteers alone.
- Make low carbon an organisation objective and where possible integrate it into policy, job roles as well as daily activities such as procurement.
- Seek advice from a carbon specialist to get you on the right track. Consultant Suzanne Ridding was engaged early on to lead and manage the Uniting Communities program.
- Educate staff on climate change and carbon and help them to understand how they can be involved. Carbon reduction activities often spill-over into taking action at home and reducing the household budget.



In November Uniting Communities won the SA Premier's Climate Leaders Award for Communities and Regions.

The awards recognise the achievements of South Australians who lead the way in adapting to the effects of climate change, reducing greenhouse emissions, supporting South Australia's transition to a low carbon economy or raising awareness of climate change.

More than 40 award entries were received and the winners were chosen from 11 finalists, who represented a wide cross-section of the community.

The awards are an initiative of the Premier's Climate Change Council, the State Government's advisory body on climate change.

SA Climate Change Minister Ian Hunter said, "Uniting Communities are the first charity to achieve carbon neutral status, and their influence will encourage the broader community to reduce emissions and help South Australia move to a low carbon economy."

Uniting Communities Chief Executive Simon Schrapel receiving the Community and Regions category award from the Chair of the Premier's Climate Change Council, Bruce Carter



- Measure your carbon emissions upfront and commit to a carbon reduction plan that is achievable and measurable.

Main challenges

- Taking on the goal of becoming Carbon Neutral should not be taken lightly. The main challenges for Uniting Communities have been to keep the program moving with limited resourcing and to embed it into the organisation's culture – and this requires ongoing effort.
- Doing things properly requires quality data collection, measurement and reporting.

Benefits

- The benefits however have been worth the effort and Uniting Communities continues to go from strength to strength in lowering its carbon footprint and creating a name for itself as a leader in low carbon. Embedding this into future planning is crucial to the ongoing success of the program - Uniting Communities new mixed use building development in Adelaide will meet high standards of environmental design and will aim to reduce operating costs for occupants.

- In summary, not only has Uniting Communities benefitted in many ways from its Carbon Neutral commitment but it is also contributing to State and Australian carbon reduction targets.



Uniting Communities Carbon Neutral Committee

Outcomes over the four years to 30 June 2015:

- **34 per cent** reduction in overall CO2 emissions
- **29 per cent** reduction in electricity usage
- **14 per cent** reduction in fuel used by company fleet
- **76 per cent** reduction in waste to landfill

Approximate annual savings of \$330,000 amounting to around **\$1,000,000** saved to date.

Emissions reduction activities have included:

- Building Upgrades: two aged care facilities and the head office received a mix of lighting upgrades, air-conditioning temperature controls and enhanced roof insulation.
- Policies, procedures and procurement: Uniting Communities worked with suppliers to source lower carbon or carbon neutral products. Stationery, copy paper and fleet vehicles are fully carbon offset at the point of purchase. A gradual conversion of the vehicle fleet to hybrid-electric vehicles is 75% complete and saves around \$650 per year per vehicle in fuel and maintenance costs.

- Behaviour change: education of all staff has been key as has introducing carbon reduction themes including switching off, driving green and reducing waste, paper and printing. Regular communication has been necessary to keep the program front of mind.

Measurement

Measurement and monitoring has been an important aspect and provides management and the Uniting Communities Board with the information it needs to understand the impact of this initiative. Uniting Communities has invested in the Envizi Insight platform which enables data capture and regular reporting to managers on their area's carbon emissions thereby providing information and creating accountability.

Offsetting

In 2015 the carbon offsets purchased were from the Yarra Yarra Biodiverse Reforestation Project in WA. This project has multiple environmental, social and economic benefits to the region. It was important to Uniting Communities to invest in a project that was in keeping with its own mission and values.

Uniting Communities is a SACOSS member organisation and works across South Australia through more than 90 community service programs. Over 1500 staff and volunteers support and engage with more than 20,000 people via a diverse range of services assisting the elderly, people with disabilities, youth and many others.

Climate change and extreme heat in an inequitable society



Dr Scott Hanson-Easey, National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF)

Vulnerable Communities Network

Dr Alana Hansen, School of Public Health, University of Adelaide



All sections of the community are vulnerable to the effects of climate change. However, although the rich and poor will experience direct and indirect climate change impacts, how people adapt to, cope with, and recover from these impacts will not be equitable, especially for people living with poverty and entrenched social disadvantage.

Extreme weather events such as heatwaves are projected to increase with climate change. In terms of the adverse impacts of weather hazards on human mortality, extreme heat can be the most harmful, claiming more Australian

lives than all other natural hazards combined. Heat-related illnesses such as dehydration, heat exhaustion and (at worst) heat stroke, may occur when high environmental temperatures overwhelm the body's capacity to lose heat.

What we know about how the poor will be affected by climate change and, in particular, extreme heat, derives from what is already being experienced. Here are just a few impacts that are, and will be felt more seriously by people living with poverty:

- Electricity bills will rise as people attempt to keep cool during heat events that are becoming longer, more frequent, and more intense. To reduce these costs, people may 'choose' to go without cooling their house.

People on low incomes often live in housing without adequate air-conditioning or insulation.



- Increases in extreme heat events bring serious health risks and exacerbate pre-existing health problems like renal disease. Researchers have shown that hospital admissions for kidney related effects rose markedly during heatwaves compared to non-heatwave periods. People experiencing mental health problems are also at greater risk during heatwaves.
- The elderly are particularly vulnerable to extreme heat, especially if they are living in poverty, are ill and socially isolated.
- Renters living in old rental stock with poor insulation and antiquated air-conditioning, or no air-cond at all, are very vulnerable, and have very little power in the current tenancy system to demand installation of air-conditioning and insulation. There are just about no minimum thermal standards for old rental properties in Australia.
- Research has also shown us that people with low income are more likely to live in suburbs that are hotter and further from public transport, exacerbating their risks from extreme heat.

Communities, households, and individuals with multiple and interdependent disadvantages face greater challenges. Newly arrived residents with low English and literacy skills for example, may live in poor standard rental housing and may be unable to access information on affordable ways of reducing heat exposure and maintaining good health in the heat.

Other disadvantaged groups vulnerable to extreme heat and climate change include rural communities, caravan park residents and the homeless. Rural communities are considered to be vulnerable to the wide-ranging effects of climate change because of the potential impact on livelihoods and existing rural disadvantage, and the high proportion of elderly in rural areas. Furthermore, the generally poorer health in rural populations may increase

vulnerability. Rural locations are characterised by lower standards of housing and higher maintenance costs, all presenting potential barriers for heat-adaptation. Smaller communities have few places to seek relief from the heat, for example, not all communities have a public pool, or one that is open for extended hours. Furthermore, relocation to a cool place may not be convenient in the absence of public transport, or if long travel distances are involved. Travelling on high fire risk days, or in the event of a fire, is an additional concern for rural residents.

Long term caravan parks residents can be vulnerable due to factors including unemployment, social isolation, disability, age, family breakdown, homelessness and poverty. While caravan park accommodation provides a low-cost housing option, it can also be associated with a range of social problems, including discrimination, social isolation, poor conditions in some parks and a risk of homelessness for residents. The location of many caravan parks, the susceptibility of dwellings, and the socio-economic disadvantage of many of the residents, mean that this group can be highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, with limited resources and capacity to adapt.

Poverty and social disadvantage will be amplified by climate change unless we act now - not only to radically reduce carbon emissions, but also address the underlying social and economic circumstances that have created these conditions in the first instance.

Indeed, to quote Kirk Smith (2008): "The rich will find their world to be more expensive, inconvenient, uncomfortable, disrupted and colorless — in general, more unpleasant and unpredictable, perhaps greatly so. The poor will die."

For more information about NCCARF Vulnerable Communities Network, and membership, please go to: www.nccarf.edu.au/vulnerable-communities/



Learning from Leeds

Sandra Robinson, CEO, Together SA



Child Friendly Leeds: The Story

A compassionate, economically strong and successful city has children and young people at its heart.

From the influential first years of life through a child's education to the care and love they receive growing up – these are the things that shape communities.

The ambition is for Leeds to be the best city for all children and young people to grow up in. Child Friendly Leeds is the initiative for everyone who shares this ambition, from enthusiastic individuals to large organisations, every contribution counts and they can all play a part in making a difference.

More information: www.leeds.gov.uk/childfriendlyleeds/

In October Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services in Leeds, visited Adelaide to share the story of Child Friendly Leeds. Over the past six years the City of Leeds has used a collective impact approach to improve the lives of children in the third largest city in the UK.

It is one of the most successful examples of collaborating for evidenced results in the world. Nigel presented to over 600 people from government and non-government sectors, and met with policy makers too.

How did they do it?

- They made child protection everybody's business.
- The city's key policy and decision makers agreed to one partnership with a whole system approach, and one vision – Leeds is a child friendly city.
- They created one plan on a page, reflecting five agreed outcomes, 14 priorities and three obsessions: to reduce the number of children in out-of-home care, to increase school attendance and increase the number of young people in employment or education.
- Their foundation principle is that children live in families, families create communities, and communities create cities, so they intentionally linked outcomes for children to the city's economic prosperity.
- They adopted restorative practices and mobilised collective effort to strengthen their impact across the city.

With the release of the Nyland Royal Commission into Child Protection in SA, what can we learn from the positive outcomes of Child Friendly Leeds? What worked in Leeds may not necessarily work here – social regeneration solutions aren't cut and paste. Change is contextual. So, the question is: what would it take to improve the lives of children in SA?



Left to right: Sandra Robinson, Minister Susan Close, Nigel Richardson, and Graham Brown, CEO of Junction Australia

In August this year, the Economist Intelligence Unit's liveability index announced that Adelaide is the 5th most liveable city in the world. Let's consider some other facts: 200,000 people across the state live below the poverty line; we have an unemployment rate of 6.4%, representing almost 58,000 people, and one in four South Australian children are the subject of a notification of abuse or neglect, and for Aboriginal children this figure rises to almost nine in ten.

We absolutely need to maintain a sense of urgency here but combine this with considered and collaborative solutions to improving children's wellbeing in SA today. If children are to have the life they deserve in South Australia, we need to work differently together to create the scaffolding for change. We need to have a cross-sector 'top table' to collaborate for sustainable, social and systemic change across SA. We need our own 'child friendly' state.



ACOSS online resilience toolkit to help community organisations

Emily Hamilton, Policy and Projects, ACOSS
Emma Watson, ACOSS Social Work Intern

Did you know that up to a quarter of community organisations say they would close for good after an extreme weather event?

It is now increasingly recognised that people experiencing poverty and other forms of disadvantage are amongst those most vulnerable to direct climate change impacts, such as increasingly frequent and intense extreme weather events, reduced air and water quality, vector, food and water-borne diseases, and increasing costs for essential goods and services caused by impacts to food supplies, utilities and infrastructure.

Those most vulnerable include:

- People out of paid work and living on low incomes
- People living in poor quality housing or in the private rental market
- Frail older people and people with chronic health conditions
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Single parents
- Newly arrived migrants and refugees, and
- People with a disability and the people who care for them

The heightened vulnerability of these groups arises from a number of factors including that they:

- Tend to live in areas more likely to be adversely affected by climate change (eg areas exposed to heatwaves, floods, storms or bushfires) and have far less ability to move or make other necessary adjustments to their living circumstances;
- Are less likely to have the financial capacity to implement energy efficiency measures, or to purchase disaster-related adaptations such as insurance and preparedness kits; and
- Are more likely to live in public housing or the private rental market and therefore lack the power or adequate incentives to implement adaptation or resilience-building strategies.

Community organisations support people experiencing both short- and long-term disadvantage to manage everyday adversity, to respond in times of crisis and to develop both individual and structural solutions to entrenched disadvantage. Indeed, the critical and increasingly recognised role community organisations play in helping communities respond to and recover from extreme weather events suggests they are an important part of the social infrastructure that communities will turn to for assistance to adapt to climate change.



However, research undertaken by the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) shows that community organisations have very little resilience to the impacts of climate change, particularly extreme weather events. After a severe event such as a flood, cyclone or bushfire, up to 50 per cent of organisations would still be out of operation after a fortnight, and up to 25 per cent might never provide services again.

The research reveals a similar lack of capacity amongst organisations to manage disruptions to essential services such as power, water supplies and telecommunications networks. Participants also reported high levels of under-insurance for climate-related disruptions, including for business continuity.

Unsurprisingly, the consequences of major disruptions to service delivery for people who access community organisations for support, which can include the exacerbation of poverty and increased risk of homelessness, hunger and even death, can be devastating.

With climate change set to increase the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events across Australia, it's critical that community organisations take action to build resilience and ensure their ability to provide essential services before, during and in the aftermath of such events. However, ACOSS' research also identified a lack of sector-specific information and support as a key barrier to an organisation's capacity to undertake resilience building activities.

Free resilience resource for community organisations

To fill this information gap, ACOSS has developed Resilient Community Organisations, an online toolkit developed by and for the community sector to help organisations measure and improve their resilience to climate change and disaster impacts. It includes:

- A Disaster Resilience Benchmarking Tool so organisations can assess their current state of disaster preparedness and identify areas of improvement.
- Six Steps to Disaster Resilience, which include information and resources organisations need to take action.

The toolkit is informed by an international review of existing disaster resilience and climate adaptation tools for community organisations and has been created in consultation with subject matter experts. It adopts a risk management approach in line with the Australian/New Zealand Standard ISO 31000.

Resilient Community Organisations is easy to use – you can start and stop as often or as little as you like – you can choose the areas that suit your organisation and circumstances best – and best of all it is free.

Check it out at <http://resilience.acoss.org.au/> and make sure your organisation is prepared.



SACOSS work on climate change

SACOSS has maintained a presence on climate change issues throughout 2015-16.

Strengthening disaster resilience for people with vulnerabilities

SACOSS has been on the project control group for this SA Department for Communities and Social Inclusion project. The project is developing a framework to strengthen resilience of people at greater risk in the event of an emergency.

The “South Australian framework to strengthen resilience of people at greater risk in the event of an emergency” will form part of the State Emergency Management Plan. It will provide guidance for state and local government, business, non-government organisations, volunteers, communities and individuals across South Australia on strategies to assist people with vulnerabilities and those supporting them, to prepare for and manage their safety and wellbeing in emergencies.

The framework will support consideration of ways to enhance the capacities of people at greater risk in the event of an emergency. When completed, it will represent a commitment by state agencies to integrate the needs of persons at greater risk into relevant state government policy development, service planning and delivery.

Zero Carbon Economy

SACOSS presented at the ACOSS and Brotherhood of St Laurence Forum Towards a Zero Carbon Economy earlier this year. SACOSS talked about the challenges arising in South Australia in the energy market from increased penetration of renewables. SACOSS proposed that any transition to a zero carbon economy needs to carefully balance the environmental objectives with the economic and social objectives.

Resilient Community Organisations

SACOSS was an advisory group member for the ACOSS project Resilient Community Organisations, which is an online toolkit to support community organisations to assess their preparedness and build resilience to disasters and emergencies. ACOSS has written about this toolkit on these pages.

Vulnerable Communities Network

SACOSS is a member of the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility's Vulnerable Communities Network.

Dr Scott Hanson-Easey, also a member of the Vulnerable Communities Network, is the co-author of the article “Climate change and extreme heat in an inequitable society”, which is on page 9.



Power to the Poor – Silent no more

Pas Forgione, Anti-Poverty Network SA

Low-income people, community workers, and members of the public gathered at Clayton Wesley Uniting Church, Beulah Park, on Friday October 21 and Saturday October 22, for *Power to the Poor – Silent No More*.

This conference, part of this year's Anti-Poverty Week, highlighted the experiences of welfare recipients dealing with unemployment, poverty and punitive government policy – and explored opportunities for pushing back.

The event, which attracted 100 attendees on day one, and 70 on day two, was organised by Anti-Poverty Network SA, a grass-roots group of low-income people receiving government payments, including job-seekers, sole parents, carers, students, and Age and Disability Pensioners.

The focus on low-income people speaking for themselves and shaping the debate sharply contrasts with much of the political and media conversation around welfare.

Whether it is Andrew Forrest's recent attempt to advocate for his brainchild, the cashless debit card; the government's commitment to having young job-seekers go one month without any income support, while also refusing to raise Newstart Allowance; its announcement in this year's Budget that another 30,000 Disability Support Pensioners will be shifted to Newstart; or Social Services Minister Christian Porter's recent comments at the Press Club on "welfare dependency" and unsustainable levels of spending on payments; the conversation happens as if the opinions of welfare recipients themselves do not matter.

And, in fact, this seems to be what many of our political and media leaders think: that those receiving government payments should be grateful for whatever assistance they receive – regardless of what harsh requirements accompany such assistance. And be silent.

An illustration of this mentality – that Centrelink clients should be seen, but not heard – was the ferocious reaction to Disability Pensioner Duncan Storrar (a keynote speaker at the conference), who was subject to an intense, sustained media onslaught from the Murdoch media after daring to ask one simple question about the government's proposed tax cuts for well-off people in a May episode of ABC's Q&A.

Workshops at the conference – on a diversity of topics: the rights of Disability Pensioners; mental health;

unemployment; Work For The Dole; homelessness; job agencies; sole parents; climate change and poverty; dealing with Centrelink when suffering from chronic/episodic health issues – reflected an alternative mentality: *with us, not to us*.

Welfare recipients have every right to be part of debates about the policies that impact their lives – and their first-hand knowledge and insights should not only be listened to, but should guide the public discourse.

The opening session, "Stories From Below The Poverty-Line", featured first-time speakers from Anti-Poverty Network SA speaking movingly about their struggles. Tracey, an older unemployed person, spoke about the judgemental, unhelpful remarks she has received from time to time from family and friends ("you're intelligent, why can't you get a job?") and community workers ("how is it you can afford to feed your cats, and not pay your power bill?"; "you must spend plenty of time sleeping in front of the TV"). She spoke about having to skip breakfast every day.

Wendy, another older unemployed person, spoke about how quickly her situation unraveled. When the company she worked for shut down and she was made redundant, she went from being in a relatively well-paid, high-skilled, technical job to being unemployed, to being evicted, to a long bout of homelessness – one of a growing class of older homeless woman – to a long bout (several months) where, to make ends meet, she had to go without power (including for much of summer and winter).

Others spoke about the isolation of being on income support – the limited mobility, being unable to spend as much time with family and friends, and engaged in community activities, as they would like – and the health issues they neglect due to lack of funds, like dental work. But there were also tales of resilience, and of the comfort that comes from being part of a supportive, non-judgmental community of low-income people – like that offered by Anti-Poverty Network SA.

One of the recurring themes of the conference was the desperate need to redefine poverty and unemployment as the product of structural and policy factors, rather than individual flaws and weaknesses – as governments and the media routinely imply.

Owen Bennett, president of the Australian Unemployed Workers' Union, an organisation run by and for job-seekers, noted at the conference that the ratio of job vacancies to job-seekers has stretched out to an abysmal 1:19.

But it is a rare thing for a government to flatly admit that this – a sheer lack of jobs, not lazy, incompetent job-seekers – is the essence of the problem, let alone to admit the scale of the problem.

The massive under-supply of jobs is changing the nature of unemployment into an increasingly long-term phenomenon. Newstart, designed as a short-term payment, often cannot emotionally, physically, and socially sustain those forced to rely on it for many, many months, if not longer.

In the ACOSS Poverty Report, released at the start of Anti-Poverty Week, a grim picture was painted: 1 in 7 adults and 1 in 6 children live in poverty, and among welfare recipients, 36 percent live in poverty, including 55 percent of Newstart recipients.

But there is some hope. As Dr Cassandra Goldie from ACOSS noted in her conference speech, public attitudes have started to shift, sympathy for those receiving Centrelink payments is starting to rise, as more and more people experience directly the realities of a tight labour market, and an inadequate, onerous safety-net.

It is time to stop blaming and demeaning the victims of poverty and unemployment, to recognise that we must not only hear but respond justly to those experiencing hardship, and that all of us have a role to play in supporting those low-income people who seek to organise themselves to have collective agency and a clear voice in the political sphere.

Below left: Pas Forgione, with ACOSS chief executive Cassandra Goldie
Below right: Disability Support Pensioners David and Ellen, and Kelly Vincent MLC, Dignity for Disability.



According to figures from the Department of Employment:

- There are 167,000 job vacancies

For a total of roughly three million job-seekers including:

- 713,300 unemployed people,
- 1,100,100 underemployed people, and
- a further of 1,340,000 'hidden unemployed', those not considered part of the workforce, but who are still looking for work



Connectivity Costs Report Launched

Dr Greg Ogle, SACOSS Senior Policy Officer

At our AGM in November SACOSS launched a major research report on the cost of telecommunications for low income Australians. The research, which grew out of our cost of living work, was funded by the Australian Communications Consumers Action Network (ACCAN) and was based on a survey of over 500 low income households and on a series of focus groups discussing telecommunications affordability.

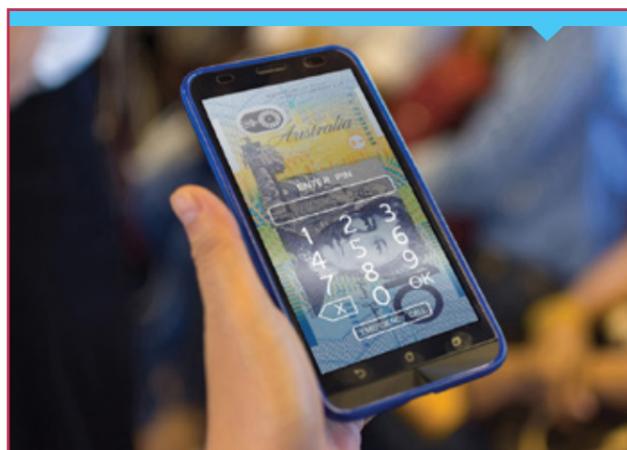
While telecommunications are increasingly seen as essential, there are barriers to participating fully in the digital age.

Some people have poor access to the necessary telecommunications where they live, others have low digital literacy, while for people on low incomes, affordability is a key issue. It was this affordability issue that was the focus of the SACOSS report.

The extent of the problem of telecommunications affordability was evident from the results of the survey (which was conducted by Mint Research):

- 66% of low income consumers rated telecommunication costs in the top five most important factors in their day to day household budgets;
- 62% reported experiencing either difficulty paying, having to cut back, or having to stop using one or more telecommunications services for financial reasons in the last 12 months;
- those on Newstart, Youth Allowance and Parenting Payment were most likely to have difficulty paying, be cutting back or stopping their telecommunications services, while those on the Age Pension had the fewest problems; and
- low income families with dependent children were experiencing higher rates of financial difficulty with telecommunications than those without children.

If telecommunications are indeed essential, and the expenditure is significant and regressive (that is, impacting disproportionately more on low income households) and causing financial stress on households, then there is a clear role for government in assisting people to maintain access to this essential service. The main government income support to achieve this end is the Centrelink Telephone Allowance (CTA), which is a supplement to selected social security payments.



Connectivity Costs

Telecommunications Affordability for Low Income Australians



Una Lawrence from ACCAN launching our joint report at the SACOSS AGM

SA wagering tax passes Parliament –a national first

SACOSS has welcomed the passing of legislation to establish the SA Wagering Tax. The tax, which was announced as part of the State Budget, will ensure that online bookmakers pay gambling tax in South Australia on revenue made from South Australian gamblers.

We have been concerned for a long time that international bookmakers were licensing their Australian operations in places like the Northern Territory where they paid little or no gambling tax. In effect, South Australia was paying for the consequences of problem gambling and community losses associated with gambling, without getting a fair share of the revenue from gambling.

The new “point of consumption” wagering tax – a first in Australia – will ensure that gambling taxes on SA bets are paid to the South Australian Government. That makes it fairer for local bookies, and for the community who will now have some \$10m a year more to spend on services.

SACOSS congratulates the state government on this ground-breaking initiative, and thanks all parties in the Legislative Council who supported this important tax reform.

A point of consumption wagering tax was proposed in SACOSS’ major report Losing the Jackpot: South Australia’s Gambling Taxes published earlier this year, and could provide a model for other Australian states and territories.

Losing the Jackpot is available on the SACOSS website at: www.sacoss.org.au/losing-jackpot-south-australias-gambling-taxes



However, the eligibility criteria for the CTA are complex and opaque, and it seems odd that the groups of income support recipients that tend to struggle least with telecommunications costs are eligible for the highest rate of CTA (on top of already higher base payments), while those on lower base rates are less likely to be eligible for CTA, or only eligible at a lower rate.

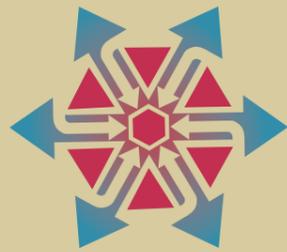
Based on the data from the survey, the report makes a number of recommendations for upgrading the CTA to have a broader scope, wider eligibility, higher rates and more regular payments. However, the survey data also clearly showed the inadequacy of base level of income support payments like Newstart and Youth Allowance for ensuring access to essential services like telecommunications. These allowances need to be increased, and telecommunications affordability needs to be factored into the sort of regular, independent assessment of the adequacy of income support payments which has been recommended by ACOSS.

While government action is needed to support low income families with telecommunications affordability, there are also a range of market products and practices which themselves create barriers to affordability.

These were highlighted by the focus groups, with the most important being the lack of mobile data on affordable plans. Given that data is driving much telecommunications expenditure, this lack is creating stress and excess costs. There are also a number of products and practices which make managing telecommunications usage and payments difficult, including lock-in contracts, disadvantageous payment methods and billing cycles forced on consumers (eg. direct debiting on a 28-day cycle), and a lack of transparency around costs. The focus groups also identified problems in the hardship programs offered by some telecommunications suppliers.

The report concluded that unless both the CTA and these market barriers to affordability are addressed, we will continue to see a digital divide where low income consumers are missing out on telecommunications services, and subsequently, on life opportunities – at a cost to both them and the wider society.

The report, Connectivity Costs: Telecommunications Affordability for Low Income Australians, is available on the SACOSS website at: www.sacoss.org.au/reports/general



SACOSS VULNERABILITY & AFFORDABILITY CONFERENCE 2016

ENERGY, WATER AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

The **SACOSS Vulnerability & Affordability Conference 2016: Energy, Water & Telecommunications** was held in November against the backdrop of the iconic Adelaide Oval, and proved to be another successful and engaging major conference event.

Throughout the day delegates enjoyed multiple plenary sessions including speakers from the energy, water and telecommunications industries, as well as the community services sector. Coming at a time of significant regulatory and policy reforms designed to assist vulnerable customers, the conference provided opportunities for open dialogue between these relevant sectors.

Our expert panel session featured speakers from Yarra Valley Water, the University of South Australia and Kildonan UnitingCare. All three delivered fascinating presentations on the concept of vulnerability, setting the scene for the rest of the day.

The showcase session brought together the water, energy and telecommunications sectors. Representatives from SA Water, EnergyAustralia and Telstra shared their experiences in dealing with customers in financial difficulty, and showcasing examples of better practice in dealing with these vulnerable customers.

The concurrent sessions gave delegates the opportunity to engage on a range of topics, focusing on 'the poverty premium' and telecommunications, consumer complaints, and better practice customer relationships.

Finally, speakers from the St Vincent de Paul Society, Telstra, Essential Services Commission of South Australia and the Australian Energy Regulator joined our CEO Ross Womersley for a Q&A session including debate and conversation from the floor. This valuable session was chaired by Bob Weymouth, an independent consultant with 12 years of experience as a senior executive with the ACCC.

This conference brought together leaders from the energy, water and telecommunications industries, with over 120 delegates representing industry, government, and the community services sector.

Participants were encouraged to engage in critical reflection, network, and discuss better practice ideas and initiatives with experienced industry professionals. As the fourth year of this conference series,

it is evident that much has been achieved by industry, government and community stakeholders. However, the fact that we are yet to achieve important reforms like the introduction of a percentage based energy concession and improved targeting of energy efficiency schemes indicates that there is still some way to go to provide adequately for vulnerable customers.

SACOSS appreciates the support of the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion, EnergyAustralia and SA Power Networks as our Major Sponsors, and AGL as our event partner, for the Vulnerability & Affordability Conference 2016: Energy, Water & Telecommunications.



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EnergyAustralia





Common threads between public health and community services

Victoria Morton, SACOSS Senior Project Officer

SACOSS recognises that the health and wellbeing of South Australians is shaped by their socio-economic position and related factors such as income, education and access to resources. As the peak body for the health and community services sector and advocate for the interests of disadvantaged South Australians SACOSS has a clear interest in public policy that impacts the health and wellbeing of South Australians.

It is evident that the community services sector engages effectively with clients and within relevant communities. While we know that the sector plays an important role in public health outcomes it is unclear the extent to which NGOs are engaging with local government around community health and wellbeing. To explore and address this issue SACOSS has embarked on a new project designed to investigate and boost sector understanding and ultimately to contribute towards better public health outcomes.

Background

In 2013 the South Australian Government released its first Public Health Plan *South Australia: A better place to live*. The purpose was and is to implement the aims of the *South Australian Public Health Act 2011* which are to promote public health by reducing the incidence of preventable diseases, injuries and disabilities in South Australia.

The Public Health Plan has a strong focus on partnerships and collaboration in a variety of areas and ways. The state plan also requires local governments to develop their own plans that address the needs of their particular regions.

In 2014 SACOSS became a Public Health Partner Authority and entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the South Australian Department for Health and Ageing. To date the partnership between SACOSS and the Department for Health and Ageing has delivered a seminar and workshop for health and community sector NGOs, and several case studies have been collected demonstrating effective collaboration and partnerships that better meet the health and wellbeing needs of client groups and communities.



The MOU also details work related to NGO involvement in regional public health planning and implementation. Given that all local councils have now finalised their first iterations of their Regional Public Health Plans it is timely, under the MOU, to explore how the health and community services sector can participate in the implementation process, including opportunities for co-delivery to enhance community health and wellbeing.

The outcomes of the project will see increased understanding among community services organisations of the role they play in public health, and raise awareness of opportunities to engage in public health planning. We would also like to see increased opportunities for community services to work in cooperation with local and state government to meet the goals outlined in the public health plans

The final report will help shape SACOSS' policy position and will include recommendations for future planning and implementation of public health plans.

Development of SACOSS strategic plan for 2017-2020 underway

SACOSS is currently developing our strategic plan for 2017-2020. With the view that the plan should help chart a clear direction through what may be an uncertain period both for low income South Australians and the non-government health and community services sector, SACOSS is engaging with a broad and diverse range of our stakeholders - members, the sector, communities, funders and supporters - through a series of events and activities.

Stakeholders are being asked to contribute to discussion in areas including what SACOSS needs to do well to achieve its mission, where we must improve, and whether new areas of focus or strategy might be appropriate. Contextual factors, both barriers and enablers, will also be considered including possible future social, economic and political environments, as well as the future of peak bodies in that context.

Trends impacting on the for-purpose, not-for-profit, non-government, and charitable sectors may well include the changing role of government, the sector's increasing diversity, and the ability to be independent and/or cooperative in an increasingly competitive environment.

A few examples of contextual global trends likely to impact on Australia include climate change, the ageing population, and limited supplies of energy, water and food resources.

Some of the topics for consideration include:

- Whether distributing funding to individuals themselves will lead to increased equity, accountability and enhanced personalisation in human services
- Whether there a limit to charity and its continuing special status in the eyes of our community, and
- What roles might there be for both peak bodies like SACOSS and for collective organising into the future?

The learning from each of these discussions will inform our planning processes. If this is of interest to you or your organisation, keep an eye out for opportunities to be a part of developing our strategic plan.



Connecting to nature



The Conservation Council of SA is developing a nature broker service to link social services and environmental organisations to create opportunities for disadvantaged South Australians to engage in nature-based activities. In this article, Alex Gaut, Program Manager at CCSA, runs through some of the research demonstrating the important links between spending time in nature and our mental, physical and social health.

Nature benefits

The physical health benefits of being outside in nature are well-documented and are linked to numerous 'active' ingredients including: high air quality (reduced air pollution); specific microorganisms that appear to boost immune function; negative air ions, which reduce depression; and natural sights and sounds, which have important physiological impacts on the nervous system, help to restore attention and promote healing after surgery.

Forested areas are also high in phytoncides, chemicals produced by plants that reduce blood pressure, increase immune function and relieve depression.

Even emotional experiences such as regular experiences of awe and a sense of vitality can predict healthier levels of inflammatory substances (Stellar et al., 2015) and greater resistance to infection and lower risk of mortality (Kuo, 2015).

Exposure to natural settings also affects people's perception of their health. One study (Kardan et al., 2015) showed that people who live in neighbourhoods with more street trees reported significantly higher health perception: "having 10 more trees in a city block, on average, improves health perception in ways comparable to an increase in annual personal income of \$10,000 and moving to a neighbourhood with \$10,000 higher median income or being 7 years younger" (Kardan et al., 2015).

The mental health benefits of nature contact are particularly significant given the poor state of mental health funding and support systems in Australia. This table summarises the benefits to psychological and cognitive mental health (Keniger et al., 2013; Kuo, 2015). What is so remarkable about spending time in nature is that it can simultaneously reduce negative mental health and promote positive mental health.

Improved or increased	Reduced
Self-esteem	Anger/frustration
Mood	Mental fatigue
Psychological well-being	ADHD
Attentional restoration	Depression
Academic performance	Anxiety
Cognitive function in children	Violence
Productivity	



Some of the positive impacts of nature on health

Reduced prevalence of:

- Respiratory disease
- Diabetes mellitus
- Various infectious diseases
- Cardiovascular disease and mortality
- Musculoskeletal complaints
- Infectious intestinal diseases
- Urinary tract infections
- Vertigo

Faster recovery from surgery

Addiction recovery

Reduced headaches, including migraines

Reduced mortality rates for some cancers

Reduced health risk factors

Reduced occurrence of illness

Reduced blood pressure

Reduced cortisol (indicator of stress)

Relaxation/stress reduction helps to improve sleep, boosts immune function and counters adverse effects of stress on energy metabolism, immune function and inflammation.

(Reference: Keniger, Gaston, Irvine, & Fuller, 2013; Kuo, 2015)



Do you work with low-income or disadvantaged people who might benefit from nature-based activity?

Perhaps your organisation would like to link-in with CCSA's nature broker service?

Being in nature does amazing things for our health and our state of mind but it can take time to find out who is doing what and how to access nature-based activities for the people you support.

Through the CCSA there is an opportunity to connect with local environment and conservation organisations including Conservation Volunteers, Greening Australia, Trees For Life and more, to find out about the nature-based activities they have to offer.

For further info on CCSA's nature broker service and activities in nature for disadvantaged groups, please contact Alex Gaut or Kathy Whitta on 8223 5155, alex.gaut@conservationsa.org.au, kathy.whitta@conservationsa.org.au

Neuroscience is also starting to uncover parts of the story about what happens to our brains in nature. A behaviour associated with heightened risk of depression is rumination, "a maladaptive pattern of self-referential thought" (Bratman, Hamilton, Hahn, Daily, & Gross, 2015, p. 1), which is associated with a part of the brain called the sgPFC. An American study (Bratman et al., 2015) showed that a 90-minute nature walk decreased both self-reported rumination and neural activity in the sgPFC, compared with a 90-minute urban walk, which had no effect.

A brain imaging study found that only when viewing images of urban areas, as compared to viewing natural scenes, parts of the brain were activated that are associated with negative emotions including anxiety, fear, aversion, anger and unpleasantness (Kim et al., 2010).

This year an Australian study showed that up to "7% of depression cases and 9% of blood pressure cases could be prevented if all city residents were to visit green spaces at least once a week for an average duration of 30 minutes or more" (Shanahan et al., 2016, p. 3).

The social benefits of being in nature with other people are well-documented (Keniger et al., 2013), and the social factors of wellbeing are arguably some of the strongest elements of wellbeing. Being in nature with others can:

- Facilitate social interaction
- Enable social empowerment
- Reduce crime rates
- Reduce violence
- Enable interracial interaction
- Improve social cohesion
- Provide social support

A study with social and mental health implications for immigrants (Hordyk, Hanley, & Richard, 2015) suggests that activities in natural spaces can help to reduce the effects of migration stress on three social determinants of health for migrants: poor or inadequate housing, lack of social cohesion and psychosocial stress. Families in this study were particularly clear about the importance of a third party in helping them to access nature, including practical help in preparing for unfamiliar seasonal conditions, and active assistance organising daytrips, or providing information.

There are a number of environmental organisations that are now partnering with social services organisations dealing with issues such as mental health, homelessness, poverty, new arrivals and the deaf community, to break down the barriers to getting into nature so that everyone can access these amazing benefits.

The interaction of nature and wellbeing is far more complex than I have been able to summarise here but "Nature is always there; it's free" (Hordyk et al., 2015).

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We're listening...

We know that while our role as electricity distributor accounts for less than 30% of the retail bill, and has reduced significantly as a proportion of the total bill over the last 15 years, South Australians are vitally interested in ensuring we maintain reliability of supply and keep a lid on our prices.

We are committed to continuing to improve the way we work with our stakeholders, including those who represent the most vulnerable in our community. That's why we have supported the SACOSS Vulnerability and Affordability Conference.

We look forward to hearing what you have to say.

If you'd like to find out a bit more about how we are engaging with stakeholders, check out the information in your delegate pack.



Small Change is SACOSS' weekly radio program that shares stories of achievement, innovation and social justice. Broadcast Tuesdays at 6pm on Radio Adelaide, you can also listen to and download the podcasts at radio.adelaide.edu.au/program/small-change/

Here are some podcast highlights from the past few months:

Suzie's story: life on the single-parent payment

One of the best ways to understand hardship is to hear the voices of those who know the struggle and stigma of living in poverty. Suzie lives in the northern suburbs and is a single mother to two children. She joined Small Change for a chat and described her experiences of living on a low-income.

<https://radio.adelaide.edu.au/suzies-story-life-on-the-single-parent-payment/>

LGBTIQ+ inclusive services program to be delivered in SA for first time

A program which guides organisations through a range of practical steps and activities to increase their knowledge, capacity and understanding of LGBTIQ+ inclusive services will be delivered for the first time in South Australia. The HOW2 program is delivered by SHine SA, and also supports organisations who are looking to achieve Rainbow Tick Accreditation.

SHine SA Director of Population and Public Health, Holley Skene, and Natalya Giffney, who manages the Safe Schools Coalition SA and works on a range of LGBTIQ+ inclusive strategies at SHine SA, joined Small Change to talk about the program.

<https://radio.adelaide.edu.au/lgbtiq-inclusive-services-program-to-be-delivered-in-sa-for-first-time/>

Report profiles changes in not-for-profit sector over 20 years

A new report which profiles changes in the not-for-profit sector over the last two decades has been released.

It's called The Cause Report: 20 years of revolution in the not for profit sector – and it's the first time this time period has been so extensively researched. John McLeod, is Research Consultant and co-Founder of JBWere Philanthropic Services, and the author of the report, and he joined Small Change for a chat about the report's findings.

<https://radio.adelaide.edu.au/new-report-profiles-changes-in-not-for-profit-sector-over-20-years/>

Community services powered by volunteers at MarionLIFE

MarionLIFE Community Services is a community organisation which aims to provide meaningful, flexible and responsive care and support to individuals and families in need. As with many community organisations, it's the tireless work of MarionLIFE's 91 volunteers that make it possible for these vital services to be accessible to those who need them. Among the volunteers are John, an emergency relief volunteer of 16 years, and Chelsea, who is studying community development at university and has been undertaking an internship with MarionLIFE.

Leighton Boyd is Director at MarionLIFE and he joined Small Change to discuss the services his organisation provides, the people who walk through its doors and how the organisation meets the specific needs of the local community.

<https://radio.adelaide.edu.au/community-services-powered-by-volunteers-at-marionlife/>

Recent SACOSS activities and reports:

- SACOSS Vulnerability & Affordability Conference 2016: Energy, Water & Telecommunications
- National Consumer Roundtable on Energy
- Cost of Living Update
- Anti-Poverty Week
- The "Connectivity Costs" Report into telecommunications affordability
- SACOSS 69th AGM

Also in the pipeline:

- Report on better targeting of the Energy Concession
- Telephone survey of 600 water consumers
- State Budget Submission 2017-19
- A project linking public health and community services
- Cost of Living Update
- Consultation on Cultural Principles and Protocols Guide, as well as calls for further endorsements
- Event featuring speaker David Chesterton from the UK on youth justice and education initiatives
- 70 years of SACOSS - Join us for birthday celebrations in 2017!

Get involved with SACOSS

Help us enhance the voice of the community on behalf of vulnerable and disadvantaged South Australians. If you aren't already, become a SACOSS member today sacoss.org.au/membership

SACOSS sends out a fortnightly eBulletin to our members listing brief descriptions of upcoming events, job vacancies, and other items relevant to the community services sector. You can subscribe to the eBulletin and submit entries via our website. Visit sacoss.org.au/ebulletin for all the details.

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If you'd like to contribute to the next edition of SACOSS News, please contact SACOSS Communications Officer Tania Baxter via email Tania@sacoss.org.au

SACOSS 2016 Election Results

The results of the 2016 election for SACOSS Board and Policy Council vacancies were announced at our recent Annual General Meeting.

SACOSS Board

SACOSS Board: three vacancies

Elected to the Board:

- Mel Ottaway
- Rosemary Warmington
- Matthew Woodward.

Policy Council

Nominee of peak organisations: three vacancies

Elected in the peak category:

- Alison Harker (Community Centres SA)
- Geoff Harris (Mental Health Coalition SA)
- Rob Martin (Child and Family Welfare Association SA)

Nominee of small non-government community service: two vacancies

Elected in the small NGO category:

- Michelle Adams (Australian Association of Social Workers)
- Nicole Chaplin (St John's Youth Service)

Nominee of large non-government community service: two vacancies

Elected in the Large NGO category:

- Kathy Binks (Uniting Communities)
- Jane Longbottom (Life Without Barriers)

Nominee of Aboriginal service organisations: one vacancy

A casual vacancy remains in the Aboriginal service organisations category.

Nominee of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse service organisations: one vacancy

A casual vacancy remains in the CALD service organisations category.

Nominee of non-metropolitan, regional or remote service organisations: one vacancy

Elected in the non-metro category:

- Anthea Pavy

Individual member: two vacancies

Elected as individual members:

- Phillip Beddall
- Helen Connolly



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