



National counselling framework launched

The National Missing Persons Coordination Centre (NMPCC) launched its national support framework and training package *Supporting those who are left behind* in Sydney on 31 October.

The aim of the framework is to provide a practical guide to educate and assist health practitioners and professionals to better understand the trauma experienced by families of missing persons. Until now, there has been no model in Australia that allowed professionals to explore the specific needs of such families.

As well as providing an understanding of the trauma experienced by those who are left behind, providing such a framework to health practitioners and professionals will allow law enforcement agencies to focus on and respond to their main objective of locating missing persons.



The framework was launched in conjunction with the Daniel Morcombe Foundation's Day for Daniel. Daniel Morcombe went missing as a teenager from Queensland in December 2003, feared abducted. Bruce and Denise Morcombe, Daniel's parents, spoke at the launch and were among other families involved in developing the framework.

The framework was developed by NMPCC Project Officer Sarah Wayland who has been working as a social worker for more than ten years in the fields of trauma and unresolved loss. It was prepared with the assistance of families of missing persons as well as national and international colleagues.

Supporting those who are left behind consists of a booklet, DVD and brochure which details the therapeutic prompts that might be useful in engaging with families.

For more information or to order the framework, contact the NMPCC on 1800 000 634 or email missing@afp.gov.au.



L-R: AFP Assistant Commissioner and National Manager Economics and Special Operations, Peter Drennan; Denise and Bruce Morecombe; and Sarah Wayland (NMPCC).

Day for Daniel

Bruce and Denise Morcombe, parents of Daniel Morcombe held their annual 'Day for Daniel' on 31 October. It was a day designed to remind the local and national community that the search for Daniel is still alive and to highlight issues of child safety awareness.

The day started with a 4 kilometre walk in which more than 600 people participated. The walk symbolised the journey home for Daniel from the bus stop that he was last seen at almost four years ago. The journey also proved that the streets can be a safe place if we observe, and are aware of, our own personal safety and that of our loved ones.



On a larger scale, the Morcombes also raised awareness by imploring schools and the community to wear red or to purchase a red wristband highlighting the work of the Daniel Morcombe Foundation. The honourable Anna Bligh, Queensland Premier, proudly wore a red t-shirt in State Parliament on the Day for Daniel.

For more information about the Daniel Morcombe Foundation visit www.danielmorcombe.com.au

Make Contact Christmas **campaign**

Christmas is traditionally a time for family and reconnection. However for many families of missing persons, it triggers painful memories of unresolved loss while they continue to wait for their loved ones return.

As part of a three year communications strategy, the National Missing Persons Coordination Centre (NMPCC) has developed two television commercials which will appear on Network Nine, Seven and Ten as well as Foxtel from 9 to 30 December 2007.

The television commercials target two key groups at risk of going missing: youth (aged between 14 to 18 years) and the elderly (aged 60 years and over). A high percentage of people aged over 60 years go missing due to Alzheimer's and dementia related illnesses, a secondary target audience will be targeted through the later commercial i.e. family/friends of elderly people.

Along with television advertising, the *Woman's Day* has developed its own 'Make Contact' feature in the 25 November issue. The feature provides a brief summary of the Australian missing persons' scenario and profiles some family members who are experiencing Christmas without their loved ones.

The campaign asks missing persons to ***please make contact this Christmas*** with someone they trust to let them know that they are ok. That 'someone' may be a family member, friend or police.



AFP facilitating global network

Leonie Jacques, the Coordinator of the NMPCC, recently travelled to the United Kingdom to attend a conference for police services convened by Missing People (formerly the National Missing Persons Helpline) as well as meet with senior representatives of both police and the non-government sector.

The meetings were organised primarily to start discussions regarding the establishment of a global network of agencies working in the delivery of services to missing persons and their families and friends. Also to share information across global borders and to discuss a range of initiatives of relevance to the missing persons sector.

The conference covered a range of relevant issues including missing children, asylum seekers, people missing from Health agencies and relationships with other organisations. One session that was very well received was an onstage discussion between family members of a person previously listed as missing, police family liaison officers and a case manager from Missing People.

Geoff Newiss, the Head of Policy and Research at Missing People, launched the research program for that agency and highlighted research priorities to be progressed within the UK. The meetings held post the conference were very beneficial in discussing similarities between the UK and Australian experience particularly in relation to the demographic profile of missing persons in both countries and some of the challenges that both countries face in responding to this complex issue.

The meetings provided a launchpad for the establishment of a global network of agencies working in the missing person's service delivery arena. The AFP envisages that this network will share information, resources and strategies to further enhance the law enforcement, government and non-government response to missing persons and their families and friends. The establishment and progress of this network will form part of the core work of the NMPCC.

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Police Consultative Group on Missing Persons

The NMPCC convened the Police Consultative Group on Missing Persons (PCGMP) on 5 - 6 December in Canberra. Representatives from all police jurisdictions were present with AFP Assistant Commissioner Peter Drennan and Manager-Special Operations Ray Johnson opening and closing the conference.

The two day meeting enabled discussion across a range of issues and initiatives relevant to the missing persons sector. These included policy and procedures regarding interstate missing, investigative guidelines and the impact of privacy legislation on missing person's investigations.

NMPCC staff provided presentations related to their respective responsibilities. These included the 1. Establishment of a global network to share information, strategies and resources across developed countries, 2. National approach to supporting families, 3. Marketing campaigns being progressed including planning for National Missing Persons Week 2008, 4. Sharing of information regarding media authority for missing persons profiles and 5. Training and education initiatives being developed through the NMPCC.

A presentation was also provided by staff of CrimTrac regarding the Kinship Matching Project.

Rigorous participation ensured agreement across a range of issues as well as future planning around a visionary agenda to further enhance the law enforcement response to the critical issues of missing persons and the impact on their families and friends.



Training and Education at the NMPCC

Margaret (Margi) Cunningham has joined the NMPCC in a newly created position related to education, training and research.

The main aim of the position is to develop broad-based community education strategies that meet the needs of the missing persons sectors and will include:

- providing high-level advice to national and functional managers and key stakeholders on training and education development
- facilitating education, training and research on missing persons issues with key human service organisations
- developing and reviewing learning delivery strategies in the NMPCC with a view to continuous improvement
- developing strategically targeted projects with specific organisations and sectors such as culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Projects are already in development with law enforcement and other government agencies, non-government organisations as well as key agencies from academia. One of these projects being produced is a monograph, collaborating with national and state-based organisations.

Margi has a background in social work and has established treatment and rehabilitation services for torture survivors in Australia and overseas. She has also been a Health services director and held academic roles including her current position as conjoint lecturer in the Faculty of Medicine - University of NSW. To add to this extensive list, Margi has also conducted reviews of multicultural health services in Australia, evaluated trauma services in Aceh, West Papua and East Timor, and developed training and education for trauma service providers in Nepal, Indonesia, and the UK.

Margi has co-authored the academic publication *Recipes for Healing: Gender-sensitive care for women survivors of torture* (1998) and is currently completing her PhD on the subject of 'Dignity'.

AFP Operations Coordination Centre

The NMPCC has a freecall 1800 000 634 telephone line dedicated to assist the general public with enquiries regarding missing persons issues. NMPCC reporting over the last three years has indicated that peak periods across the years include National Missing Persons Week in August and Christmas. December will be particularly busy this year due to the 'Make Contact' Christmas campaign.

With staff absences over the Christmas period, the NMPCC has arranged a response capability that will ensure the 1800 line is responded to in a timely manner. As such, the AFP Operations Coordination Centre (AOCC) will be providing support to NMPCC during these peak periods. The AOCC will be provided with guidelines and resources to respond to the different types of calls relating to missing persons issues received on the 1800 line.

Merry Christmas from the staff at the NMPCC