

Quakers Australia Children and JYFs Committee

Name of committee/concern/group

Children and JYFs Committee

Membership of the Committee/Working Group:

Doug Amarfio, Craig Applegate, Diane Bretherton, Clare O'Leary, Justine Shelton, Jenny Turton.

Part A – Report

Progress

Report by Fiona Gardner completed. Fiona and a research colleague, Jill Hanlon, met with four groups of Friends including visiting Hobart, Victoria and South Australian Regional Meetings and individuals across all states, interviewing a total of 50 people overall including some children and JYFs, to explore current and past experiences of how Meetings have sought to include all ages, what is being done well and what we could do better.

The Jackbox Games online were supported by the C&JYFs Committee.

The Children & JYFs Committee partnered with Silver Wattle to offer the Easter Family Gathering.

Issues (if any)

The Children and JYFs Committee continues to work closely with the Child Protection Committee and is very happy with the accessibility of the revised policy but finds that putting the Child Protection Policy into practice continues to be an issue. There is not always understanding of, or agreement with, the policy when we work with children, JYFs and their families. The Children and JYFs Committee supports a shift in terminology to child safety (rather than protection) and notes that it would be more consistent with our aim of bringing children and their families into the heart of the Quaker community to merge policies for Safe Quaker Communities and Child Protection/Safety into a unified policy framework.

Part B Items for consideration by

Standing Committee or Yearly Meeting Business Meeting

The [report by Fiona Gardner](#) has many suggestions for bringing children, JYFs and their families into the heart of the Quaker Community. Individual Friends, local and regional meetings are already putting some of the suggestions into practice. Other recommendations provide a roadmap for meetings and committees, including the Children and JYFs Committee, to follow in the coming year. The key recommendations that need to be considered at this Yearly Meeting are those involving funding and policy.

1. AYM provide funding for the Children and Junior Young Friends Coordinator to be appointed by the Children and JYFs Committee (a Yearly Meeting Committee) for a three-year term. The coordinator would work across Yearly Meeting to foster inclusion of children, JYFs and families. This would include resourcing Local and Regional Meetings to provide activities as well as to encourage communication and mutual support between them. The Coordinator would be responsible to the Children and JYFs Committee and is expected to attend and report to monthly Committee Meetings. The hours of work will average out to one day a week over a year, with four weeks annual leave. Suggested salary for 1 day per week \$20,000 per year.
2. Fund visits to Regional Meetings by Coordinator. \$2,000.
3. Provide funds to employ registered child carers for activities such as the Easter Family Gathering and Yearly Meeting or Meetings for Worship. 2 carers x \$40 x 20 hours= \$2,000 per year.
4. Increase the proportion of all age activities at Yearly Meeting. Subsidize children/JYFs to go to YM. 20 children x \$50 per night x 8 nights = \$8,000 per year.
5. Merge policies for Safe Quaker Communities and Child Protection/Safety into a unified policy framework.