

Kirstie Edwards

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Objective

To sustain and grow A Path To Follow Inc. with the purpose of supporting and advocating for families via a lived experience mental health peer model and contributing to systemic mental health change.

Education

2005-2006	Postgraduate Diploma In Psychology Deakin University
2002-2004	Postgraduate Diploma in Psychological Studies Deakin University
1992 – 1996	Bachelor of Education (Secondary) Deakin: Rusden Teaching Methods: English, ESL & Psychology Majors: Sociology & Teaching Experience

December 2022 – Current

Secretary and Founding Director of A Path To Follow Inc.

Achieve a long-term goal of registering our service as a Not For Profit was realised with a small Board of Directors, all aligned to achieve the vision and supporting missions of A Path To Follow Inc.

March 2021 – August 2021

Lived Experience Australia Communities of Practice – Advocacy – Committee Member/
Volunteer Role

1 of 24 members chosen, Australia wide, to participate in Advocacy CoP in preparation for more effective and efficient advocacy at local, state and national levels within mental health.

July 2019 – Current

Mental Health Lived Experience Consumer and Carer Advocacy and Consultancy

Participation in varied paid and volunteer opportunities to contribute feedback to governmental service policies, procedures, and reform actions.

- RMIT and Tandem – Collaborative Centre Training Modules development
- Consumers Health Australia (Mental Health Special Interest Group member – monthly meetings as a volunteer)
- Tandem Carers Participant Register member (paid and volunteer opportunities)
- VMIAC member
- Lived Experience Australia – Vic Member.

July 2019- Current

Founder- A Path To Follow | Mental Health Peer Support Service for Young People & families.

- Launch of a small business to support the mental wellbeing of the community via programs based in prevention, early intervention and customised response.

Youth Peer Support Program

Support for young people by peers with lived experience in managing and/or supporting loved ones with mental health challenges.

Family Peer Support and Advocacy Program

Support for families with a young person experiencing complex life challenges by a peer with both lived carer and professional experience with mental health.

Sporting Peer Program

Our Sporting Peer Program supports sport and recreational groups to establish and sustain a peer program that enhances coaching and life skills of its participants.

<https://apaththofollow.com.au>

February 2019 – Current

South East Suicide Prevention Network Co-Founder & Secretary | Volunteer Role

- Planning, launch and maintenance of new network in the south east area
- Partnership liaisons to support the network and co-host prevention activities
- Secretariat of network meetings and management of related documentation, meeting administration and communications to network members
- Social Media set up and maintenance
- Branding development
- Writing and submission of grants related to the prevention of suicide

December 2018 – January 2021

Child Safety Officer/Committee Member at Ormond Junior Football Club | Volunteer Role

- Lead of pilot Mentor Program over a two year period.
- Development of essential Child Safety Polices and procedures in accordance with legislation
- Investigations around child safety related complaints and incidents

March 2013 – July 2019

Program Manager-Child, Youth & Family | Connect Health & Community | Bentleigh East

- Operational Management and Clinical Guidance of 20 Allied Health Staff, Mental Health team, Allied Health Assistants and to a Counselling student program; including guidance on complex cases, often shared with other services including Child Protection, housing, family violence and other community/health services.
- Management of program budget; including salary and wages and operational expenses
- Full responsibility for recruitment of program members, inclusive of developing position descriptions, advertisements and completion of referee checks and onboarding program

- Managing the interface for Allied Health services between different funding streams; particularly community health and NDIS.
- Chair roles in varied working committees
- Representation in wide-ranging internal and external partnerships, including but not limited to: Gamblers Help, Department of Health and Human Services, Primary Care Partnerships, Family Violence and ChildFIRST alliances, tertiary institutions, Moira, Taskforce and local Councils.
- Governance representative on the Bayside Peninsula Orange Door & Integrated Family Services Partnership
- Significant contributions to strategic planning, fiscal management of primary health, writing of policies and procedures, evaluation & prototyping of new services
- Responsible for the development and submission of several tenders and award category submissions; South East Primary Health Network, NDIS, Bendigo Bank Pitches and various DHHS category submissions.
- Child and Young People's Safety Officer: Planned a thorough implementation plan for the roll out of the Children's Safety Standards, chaired the working group and led the application of the Children's Safety Standards throughout the organisation
- Held the Family Violence Portfolio for the organisation; writing an organisational protocol, training staff, liaising with various stakeholders, planning involvement in safety hub development for Bayside Peninsula and consulted on many Family Violence client cases
- Part of a team for whole organisation accreditation and sole leader in the DHHS Community Services accreditation
- Integral in setting up and participating in the committee that led a revised Planning and Evaluation process across the organisation
- Secondment to General Manager -Primary Health for a 6 week period.

August 2009 – Dec 2012

Family Support Services Coordinator | City of Kingston | Chelsea

- Audit preparation
- Service delivery design and implementation into new geographical area
- Experience acting in higher roles on secondment projects
- Leading and organising meeting schedules, chairing, taking minutes
- Active involvement in various professional networks
- Exceptional abilities in policy development and evaluation
- Experience in utilising child focused interventions, adhering to legislation and regulations
- Varied experience in writing reports and media releases for local government
- Educator to staff and community members
- Grant application writing and grant assessment experience

January 2012 – Aug 2012

Children's Services Quality and Development | City of Kingston | Mentone

June 2008 – Aug 2009

Family Advisor/Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner/Community Liaison Officer | Chadstone Family Relationship Centre | Chadstone

Aug 2007-June 2008

Family Mediator and Outreach Worker | Uniting Care Harrison Community Services | Knox

January 2005 - January 2007

Casual Research Assistant | Monash University | Bentleigh East

June 2004 - June 2006

Sessional Educator/ Planning & Research Assistant | Family Planning Victoria | Box Hill

Jan 1997 – 2003

Secondary Teacher | Whitefriars College | Donvale

Jul 1996 – Dec 1996

Secondary Teacher | Cranbourne Secondary College | Cranbourne

Training and Further Education

- Dispute Resolution Practitioner-certified
- Intentional Peer Support Accredited Training
- Family Violence CRAF and Specialist Response
- First Aide
- Running of Community Organisation committees
- Family Stars Outcomes Training
- Participation in many lived experience forums to contribute to Royal Commission into Mental Health

Awards

- Community Service Award for volunteer contribution to Ormond JFC community
- Nominated for Volunteer of the Year Award with Southern Metropolitan Junior Football League

Referees

Available on request