



Top tips for a great year

We've managed to distil our key advice for Parent Associations to just six key points.

Be clear about your goals

Is your P&C a social, educational, advisory or fundraising body? Is it a means for involving parents and carers in the school or a service provider for the school community? What roles are most important to you and to parents at the school? You may find surveying parents and carers useful. What is important, is to agree on clear, shared goals. This will help you direct your time and resources, get more parents on board and head-off conflict.

Know your constitution

Yes, we know that sounds boring, but the answers to most association questions are found within its folds, from how often to meet and how much notice to give, to the association's stated aims (or 'objects' as they are known in the constitution). If your constitution is out of date and no longer reflects your practices, we can help you amend it in our Constitution Workshop in June.

Seek help

Don't do it all yourself! Break tasks into smaller jobs and call for volunteers. Start early and be specific about the jobs. Repeat if necessary, and don't be afraid to cancel if there's not enough help. Remember that Council is also here to help. Enrol for our free workshops (see back page for details), contact our email or phone help line, or check out our extensive collection of online resources.

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From the President



Kirsty McGovern-Hooley

I am sure I am not the only one who feels like we did not have a break this summer.

As we have returned this term, our school communities have been living through unprecedented times. The past summer has seen Canberra surrounded by bushfires, families and friends impacted directly by fires and the community inundated with hazardous smoke. This was followed by hail storms and freak weather events. As if that wasn't enough, as we prepared for our kids to return to school, we have then faced the threat of novel coronavirus. It's been very overwhelming for our families and students, and many of us are carrying trauma from the impacts of these events on ourselves, our friends and our communities. While the return to school routine is a welcome return to normalcy, please take some time to check in with our families, staff and communities and acknowledge that we all need some friendship and support.

Teachers were provided with additional resources on returning to schools to help support student wellbeing, and the ACT Education Directorate and schools shared resources for families on managing trauma and supporting children's experiences. Thanks to our principals and teachers for stepping up to support families and students during these difficult times.

In a practical sense, Council worked with the ACT Education Directorate and other key stakeholders on Education's response to the two key hazards – the environmental hazards of bushfires and smoke exposure, and the health risks of potential exposure to coronavirus. Council provided feedback and insights on both measures and controls being implemented and focused on the communications to families about the measures and controls put in place.

Both these risks are ongoing. The recent rain

has eased the threat of bushfires and smoke, however the environmental conditions will continue to be monitored. It's likely that Coronavirus will continue to be a threat for some time, so we will continue to follow the advice of ACT Health Commissioner, work with ACT Education, and provide feedback on behalf of families in these conversations.

Council is proud to release our infographic, on page 12, that illustrates what P&Cs add to public schools. Our 93 P&C and Parent Associations run 38 healthy and affordable canteens, 50 low cost uniform shops and 9 after school care services across our Canberra public schools, contributing over 130,000 volunteer hours to support our kids' education. When I consider the role that our P&Cs play in public education, we truly are greater than the sum of our parts. For every service that P&Cs run in our schools, we have a parent-led service experience that provides a better-quality outcome for our students. Our P&C-led services go the extra mile to provide support for their communities, such as Canteens who provide breakfast for children at no or low cost, after school services who increase staffing ratios on Fridays to improve student experiences at the "end of the week", or uniform shops who sell second hand uniforms for token costs in order to provide low cost opportunities for families. It's important that we run our services as a sustainable operation, but that we also add value to our communities, and it's rewarding to see this in action.

Remember, please, that Council is here to help with all that you do for and with your parent association. Give our office a call or send a message and our office staff will endeavor to point you in the right direction or hand you the resources you need.

A final word to thank our volunteers, in advance of this year, because you are the people that make the difference in our schools. Good luck with your AGMs, and let's work together to recover from this summer and look towards a better year ahead. ●

Top tips for P&C

continued from front page

Make it as enjoyable as possible

If being involved in your Parent Association is more fun than expected, people are more likely to come back, so run your meetings well, stick to time, introduce everyone, and even try an ice-breaker activity. At big events, assign someone just to look after volunteers with drinks, sunscreen, breaks and so on. Make sure volunteers are well utilised, have clear tasks and finish at the end of their shift. Always thank everyone profusely.

Our website has templates and information to help you run good meetings, grow your P&C and thank your helpers, or come to our Effective P&C Workshop to learn more (see back page).

Comply with regulations

Parent associations need to comply with a number of regulations and expectations. The committee needs to ensure that office bearers are suitable candidates (use the [declaration form](#) on our website), appropriate [financial controls](#) are in place, and that finances are independently reviewed (or audited) each year and reported to government (see the To Do list on the back page). The association also needs to hold suitable insurance (we will contact you mid-year about this). Be aware of additional regulations for some [fundraising activities](#), and for enterprises such as canteens and after school care.

Work with the principal

Parents and the school will benefit most if you work closely with the principal. Coordinate school and P&C calendars so events and fundraisers don't hit families all at once; align your goals; ask the principal and board for funding priorities; offer parent help (like catering) at school events or use such events as a chance to tell more parents what you do; and provide parent feedback to help the school improve its communication with parents. Always share your proposed agenda with the principal, and an informal chat a few days before each meeting will ensure everyone knows what to expect. •

Who is Council?

The ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations is here to help. We like to simply call our selves 'Council' and we are the peak body for ACT public school parent associations (P&Cs), so your association is a Council member.

We are here to support P&C volunteers to run your organisation as easily as possible, without having to re-invent the wheel or search around for answers. We also advocate on behalf of our members to the ACT government on issues of concern brought by parents through the P&C.

We help P&Cs with:

- online resources, templates, information and tips at www.actparents.org.au
- advice and answers to questions over the phone or by email
- free training
- sharing expertise between P&Cs
- free informative publications, and more!

Introducing Council

Council's direction and focus is set by our Executive Committee of elected volunteers (listed on page 11), led by President Kirsty McGovern-Hooley. Our friendly office staff are employed to assist members and carry out the Executive's plans. Call us anytime for help! •



Council office staff. From left to right:
Janelle Kennard our Communications Officer
Veronica Elliott who looks after policy and tricky matters like constitutions and after school care service deeds
Melissa Lee our Executive Assistant and the provider of a sympathetic ear and great advice
Terry Sanders the Executive Officer, who leads the way, has seen it all, and runs our meetings
and **Marina Spurgin** our Early Learning Officer who focuses on the needs of parents of our youngest school-goers.

Children at play: Playgroups

Marina Spurgin, Council's Early Learning Officer, looks into play, playgroups and the role parent associations might play.

Children at play – Playgroups

The role of play in healthy brain development and wellbeing is a dominant theme in early education practice and research. Through play, children develop their creativity, imagination, and physical, cognitive and emotional strength. They can safely explore new skills and roles, face challenges and learn about working with others. Play is so centrally important that The United Nations' Convention on the Rights of a Child, states that 'play' is the right of all children.

For parents who play with and observe their children at play, the bonding and learning opportunities are broad and far-reaching. Yet modern families are under pressure and playtime often gets squeezed for a variety of reasons. Technology can intervene and research shows that screen-time is no substitute for the immersive, direct experience of children's play.

Play is good for adults too. It relieves stress and improves brain function. It brings joy and is vital for problem solving, creativity and relationships. Psychiatrist Stuart Brown, compares play to oxygen, '...it's all around us, yet goes mostly unnoticed or unappreciated until it is missing.'

Julia Cookson, Coordinator of the Scots College Early Years Centre outlines five reasons why play is important in the early years for children to:

- **Develop secure attachments:** relationships are the key to children feeling safe, secure and supported, which impacts their learning, happiness and self-esteem. Parents are a child's first teacher and much of that teaching happens through play.
- **Healthy brain development:** play has intellectual and cognitive benefits. It is believed that play can in fact shape the structural development of the brain.
- **Develop learning skills:** through play children practise exploring, identifying, negotiating, risk-taking and imagining.



- **Develop speech and language:** during play children are watching, listening, exploring and imitating. Even when playing silently, children are learning important information and vocabulary.
- **Regulate their behaviour:** as children play they learn to concentrate on a task, take turns and how to share. These will help them regulate their behaviour and emotions.

Play also leads to a love of learning. When children play and learn new things they discover that learning can be fun and go on to view learning as something enjoyable, rather than a chore.

Parents sharing knowledge with educators

As children's development progresses most rapidly from birth to five years, so too appropriate and preferred play activities also change, sometimes sooner than expected. The valuable knowledge and feedback from early childhood educators is useful during these years. Educators interpret and facilitate the complex role of children's play, assessing when to intervene and when to observe. Applying the combined knowledge of parents and teachers, they aim to ensure each child is recognised, acknowledged and valued through their learning settings.

While educators play a different role to parents they are each a valuable resource providing insight into the development of their children. Teachers expect to interact with parents and carers to provide support and share information.

Acknowledging the essential nature of this relationship and being open to two-way communication is important to ensure the exchange takes place for the benefit of children.

Playgroups

Prior to preschool or kindergarten, play experiences are vital. Playgroups provide resources, spaces and support for play activities for groups of children and their parents and carers.

Playgroups have been part of the Australian community for more than 45 years. Playgroup Australia is a not-for-profit organisation established in 1984. Members ensure young children along with their parents or caregivers can access quality playgroups nationwide.

ACT Playgroups offers different programs for children (and carers) ranging from drop-in playgroup where families get together in local parks every week; to first-time baby groups, language and cultural immersion groups; nature play and physical play groups; carer-type groups (like dads, grandparents or au pairs) among others. In addition, they run a number of facilitated groups for families with additional needs. Parents can search for an existing playgroup on the ACT Playgroups website (playgroupact.org.au).

Early Intervention Playgroups are run by highly qualified staff in partnership with Tuggeranong and Gungahlin Child and Family Centre, Therapy ACT and Giralang AIU. These playgroups are designed to support the journey of families with young children with additional needs. They're for children up to five years old and are free, fun, interactive, evidence based and accessible to all. All family members including siblings and other carers are encouraged to attend.

Early intervention playgroups not only provide important play-based skills development and socialisation opportunities for young children with additional needs, but also offer peer and parenting support for the adults attending. The playgroups run for two hours most mornings in

various locations around Canberra.

Within some ACT public schools, parents run school-based playgroups to meet a need in their area. Others run them periodically to facilitate transitions to preschool or kindy by introducing new children to peers before they start. ACT Playgroups is an excellent resource if your school's parent association is considering starting a new playgroup. The team provide support with practical advice and resources, tips on starting a playgroup, regulatory requirements, planning and creating play resources, communication, and assistance with venues.

With so many messages about childrearing and sometimes conflicting information about how to prepare children for the future, P&Cs have a unique and important role in building the communication networks between parents, and between parents and the school. Parent associations can support parents to organise playgroups or informal play-based events, and can advocate for developing safe spaces for play after school hours and on weekends. •

If your parent association is involved in a school - based playgroup, Marina would love to hear your experiences.

Email earlylearning@actparents.org.au.

Free Workshops

to help you run your P&C well.

Specialised training for association presidents, secretaries and treasurers from presenters with decades of experience.

Discover great resources, tips and all the rules for directing your association, running great meetings, communicating with parents, attracting volunteers and more!

www.surveymonkey.com/r/PCTraining

Council volunteer recognised

Long-time Council volunteer, Sharon Ding, was recognised with an Excellence in Making Inclusion Happen award at the ACT Chief Minister's Inclusion Awards at the end of last year. The award was well deserved given Sharon's dedication and work on addressing the needs of students with a disability in our schools.

Sharon has been a member of Council Executive for more than five years in which time she has represented Council in advocating for change on disability and special education needs, especially as a representative on the Education Directorate's Disability Education Reference Group (DERG).

"Change is incremental – ongoing, progressive. There's never an end point," said Sharon in reflecting on her time with Council. "It's great to be part of that progressive education movement. Even though it is in gradual steps, you can see that you're making progress. All the parents and Council members and staff are fantastic to work with, so you feel tremendously energised and inspired by people working alongside you to achieve the best education opportunities and outcomes for every student in our community."

Sharon is particularly pleased to have seen significant progress in response to the 'Schools for All' report commissioned by the ACT Government in 2015.

"There were 50 recommendations in that report, so there are a lot of projects that came out of it. Through my work on the DERG, I've seen what is being done. We've seen the Positive Behaviours for Learning framework adopted by a lot of schools. We're seeing schools teaching growth mindset and other important life skills and general capabilities."

Sharon is also passionate about her Council role in representing parents.

"The parent voice needs to be heard and voiced and it is a fantastic privilege to be able to work with Council on that," Sharon said. "In DERG, there are many different community members. Those diverse voices are so important, each



Sharon accepting her Inclusion Award from the ACT Chief Minister, Andrew Barr.

bringing their unique view and knowledge to enrich discussions and achieve a best-practice approach to inclusion."

"No one has all the answers but like a jigsaw, we all hold a piece of the puzzle, so it is important for us to contribute our bit to the collective effort."

Sharon also brings lived experience as a person with mobility disability and carer experience as a parent of a young child with disability. She is unwavering in her support of inclusion and the need to talk constantly about the benefits and value of diversity, to capture the unique contributions of every individual and give all our students the opportunity to aim for the stars and realise their dreams.

Council is grateful to Sharon for her significant contributions to our lobbying, research and development, and her on-going support of other parents. ●

Create-a-café at school

An innovative project is bringing entrepreneurial thinking to help school canteens create a café feel.

At Kingsford Smith School, change is in the air. Canteen manager Ruth Kirk and high school students have been working together to make the canteen more attractive and provide healthier choices. Kingsford Smith is one of eight schools selected to take part in Create-a-Café, a program giving schools a range of supports and resources to transform their food and drink environment.

Delivered by ACT Health, in partnership with Council and YMCA Canberra, Create-a-Café takes a holistic approach to improving the canteen in participating high schools and includes:

- access to the award-winning *Entrepreneurs: It's Your Move (IYM)* curriculum to empower students to lead the change
- seed funding for student-led school projects
- support from a business mentor to work with students and canteens

- a funky 'café-style' furniture fit-out made from recycled materials.

Ruth has been working with local business mentor Klarisa Cengic, owner of The Goods Wholefoods, to create a new, healthier chilli recipe which doubles as a topping for both burritos and nachos. The new recipe is cost effective and reduces Ruth's prep time by having one dish that can cover off two menu items, both of which have been popular with the students.

Ruth has also been collaborating with the school's Create-a-Café team, a group of students leading the change through their engagement with the IYM curriculum. As part of their business studies class in 2018, these students followed the design-thinking process to develop creative solutions for a healthier canteen. The students pitched their ideas at the Festival of Great Ideas, an inter-school 'shark tank' style pitch event held at the end of each semester, and

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FREE SUSTAINABLE EVENT ASSISTANCE FOR ALL PUBLIC EVENTS IN THE ACT

Events that participate in this program have access to free equipment, including delivery, and advice to assist them with strategies to:

- reduce energy and water usage
- reduce waste and increase recycling
- reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- educate and raise awareness of sustainability issues to event patrons

Events can range from small to large, such as school fetes, festivals, shows or sporting events.

Contact Actsmart today to find out we can help your public event.

- ☎ 13 22 81 (Access Canberra)
- ✉ actsmartbusiness@act.gov.au
- 👉 actsmart.act.gov.au



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Reconciliation in focus: activities

National Reconciliation Week in May is a great time for families – and school communities – to explore and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and achievements. There are many ways your family or parent association could be involved.

What is National Reconciliation Week?

National Reconciliation Week (NRW) is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures, and achievements and to explore how each of us can contribute to reconciliation. It is a great time to reflect on the achievements so far and what must still be done to achieve reconciliation.

NRW is held from 27 May to 3 June, the dates of two significant milestones in the reconciliation journey – the successful 1967 referendum and the High Court Mabo decision. Each year, the week has a different theme. The 2020 theme is *Always Was, Always Will Be*, recognising that First Nations people have occupied and cared for this continent for over 65,000 years.

Getting involved

In the ACT, Reconciliation Day, in NRW, is a public holiday – June 1 this year. Community events and activities mark the occasion. Keep an eye out for family fun days and other large-scale community events, or exhibitions and displays where you can learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.

Alternatively, use the holiday to visit one of Canberra's cultural or information sites. We've compiled some suggestions below.

Better still, your P&C or school might be interested in running an event to celebrate NRW. Again, see some ideas and resources below.

Make a visit

The ACT region is rich with cultural sites (more than 3,500 Aboriginal heritage sites). The Ngunnawal people, as Traditional Custodians of the Canberra region, have a continuing sense of responsibility to preserve the spirit and stories of their ancestors throughout the landscape. Neighbouring nations including the Ngarigo, Wolgalu, Gundungurra, Yuin and Wiradjuri people, also gathered here for ceremony, marriage, trade, seasonal foods and lore.



Gubur Dharura, Franklin.

A good place to appreciate this is Tidbinbilla (from the Ngunnawal 'Jedbinbilla' meaning *a place where boys were made men*). You can join an Aboriginal Ranger for a guided activity, examine displays at the visitor centre or take the easy one hour loop walk to Birrigai rock shelter where people have sheltered and practiced culture for over 21,000 years. A ranger suggests you call to his ancestors as you approach.

Namadgi National Park is home to a rock art site at Yankee Hat. As an important site, considerable effort went into protecting it this fire season.

While Tidbinbilla and Namadgi are the obvious places to explore local Aboriginal culture, there are many other opportunities nearby.

- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Trail at the Australian National University (ANU) explores the significance of the campus area. Guide brochures for the self-guided trail are available online, from ANU libraries, or use the ANU Walks App.
- The National Botanic Gardens' Aboriginal Plant Use Trail is one way to learn more about and appreciate Aboriginal people's knowledge and use of plants in Australia.
- Canberra parks and reserves protect a range of heritage sites such as Gubur Dharura ochre ground in Diane Barwick St Franklin, [Scarred trees in Langtree Cres Crace](#), and grinding grooves near Christmas St Theodore. At

Girrawah Park in Ngunnawal (Gamburra St) learn about local stone artifacts via the Canberra tracks App. Of course, treat these areas with respect.

Create an event

NRW is a great opportunity for P&Cs or schools to host an event to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and promote understanding and reconciliation.

Host a film or TED talk screening

Reconciliation Australia has a list of suggested TED Talks on their website which highlight personal stories told by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Sharing these is an important part of the journey towards reconciliation (see www.reconciliation.org.au).

A great selection of films and documentaries from leading Indigenous filmmakers is provided at the [Reconciliation Film Club](#). The website walks you through the process of organising a screening and handles licensing arrangements (modest licensing fees apply to screen the films, like all public film screenings), as well as providing discussion guides and articles to support the event. Hosting a film night is a great way to bring people together to develop a deeper understanding of Indigenous perspectives and histories, ignite conversation and spark change.

Start a book club!

Reconciliation Australia have a [book list](#) to guide your selection. You could hold a one-off book club during NRW, or continue through the year, holding a discussion group once or twice a term (in person or online). It is a great way to learn more, build community and demonstrate your love of books to your kids. If your book club successfully runs for a year, you could vote on your favourite book and host a reading of selected passages during the next NRW!

Other ideas for celebrating the week:

- organise a disco featuring music from indigenous artists
- hold a flag raising ceremony
- work with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander artist to produce an artwork

representing the theme

- invite Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander dancers to perform or artists to visit school
- host a community BBQ or picnic. •

Create-a-café

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received seed funding from ACT Health to launch their project, as well as personalised support from the IYM team. The students' work continued into 2019 and helped them develop skills in innovation, systems mapping, problem solving, pitching and project management. The work has also been embedded into the school's LINK program (Learning I Need to Know).

The students have been working with Ruth to develop, trial and promote weekly "green" specials that appeal students, while taking into consideration the challenges that are a reality for all canteen managers – preparing food that is cost effective, quick, easy, healthy and tasty!

In Term 3 last year, students soft launched the new and improved KSS canteen, named by Ruth 'Il Café Bambini' (The Children's Café), which includes a dining area featuring new recycled timber furniture and several blackboards that promote the canteen's menu and specials. The student team then worked towards a bigger school-wide launch and further promotion of healthier options in a fun and inspiring way.

Business mentor Klarisa has seen some valuable improvements in the food and drink environment at the school and recognises the challenges that canteen managers face daily.

"It's really great to see the students' efforts coming to fruition in the canteen space. They are now truly understanding the business nature of the canteen, in addition to being a vehicle to provide fresh food options to students. Ruth has been integral in making these changes happen. Canteen support is critical and Kingsford Smith has really hit a balance between the two. I'm so excited to see the space thriving right now, even more excited for the all-green specials!" •

At our P&C...

Instead of a full-scale fete, some P&Cs are leveraging smaller, more focused events to create many of the same benefits.

Fetes and fairs are wonderful events for the whole school community. There's an air of collective spirit, fun and solidarity. It's an important way in which parent associations create social capital and gather community support for the school. Of course, they are also excellent fundraisers. But fetes are also a lot of work and as the volunteer planning effort increasingly falls on the few, it's worth looking at some alternative events with many of the benefits, but a smaller workload.

At Neville Bonner Primary, an annual book fair is the focus of a great community day. It's an opportunity to run the reliable fundraising stalls – the BBQ and cake stall – while promoting literacy.

“We've run the book fair since 2017 and it is a great fundraiser,” said P&C President Kylie O'Keeffe. “Most of the funds come from the cake stall and sausage sizzle, but it is not all about the money. It's also for the sake of having a community event, inviting people into the school and building community. People come along and just hang out.”

“The kids love it. They volunteer to help too, which is safe and useful on a book stall, compared to a BBQ. They can get involved and spend the day there. It's great to be selling books, not just sweets. It's really positive for the kids.”

“Now that we have run it a couple of times it has become really easy. We have left over books from last time, sorted into categories and stored in clearly labeled containers. We add books to the right container as they are donated during the year and then we can put the event together in just a couple of weeks,” Kylie explained.

“Over the years we have bought tables as well as generic core-flute signs – “book fair this weekend” – to help us advertise the event. We spend a day sorting and pricing using colour-coded stickers,” she said.



***When you've got a crowd like this to enjoy the end of year concert, why not put on some markets stalls?
At Charles Conder Primary School.***

Another important ingredient for success is the involvement and support of the school and staff.

“The school is really supportive of everything we do, but especially the book fair. Last year, the teachers did a little promo skit at an assembly – the kids thought that was hilarious. And they make sure we have the storage space we need too.”

Another tactic is to create your event around stalls which other people provide. The car-boot sale is a classic – charge people around \$25 for a site at your event to sell their second hand goods while you sell food and drinks, and a cake to take home, to the crowd that follows. Promoting the event well is key to success.

At Charles Conder Primary, the focus was a Christmas market where stall holders were invited to sell their wares and the community turned out to do some Christmas shopping prior to the school's end of year concert. Adding onto school events like this is smart because you capitalise on a captive audience and you don't have to do so much advertising.

Got questions?

All ACT public school parent associations are members of the ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations. We are here to help your organisation run well.

Contact us with your P&C-related questions.

(02) 6241 5759 Maitland House
contact@actparents.org.au 100 Maitland Street
www.actparents.org.au Hackett ACT 2602

9.30am - 2.30pm Monday to Friday.
Closed public holidays and school holidays.

“We have a very small committee,” explained Amy Arnott, P&C President at Charles Conder. “In trying to re-vitalise what we do, re-create our enthusiasm, we thought, ‘we don’t have to do it all ourselves - why don’t we outsource?’”

“We’re not looking to make millions of dollars, we just want to raise something for the school and create an event for the community, something that can involve everyone, that every student and parent can get something out of,” Amy said.

“We are very community focused, so we looked at the other community groups around us. We offered the BBQ to the Tuggeranong Bulldogs footy club, in return for a sports kit for the school. The Tuggeranong Men’s Shed ran a potato on a stick van, and we had other food vendors who we charged \$40-60 for the site. We got something out of it, and they made the funds they needed too. And by outsourcing, the committee members got the chance to enjoy the evening, watch our kids in the end of year concert, rather than cooking sausages.”

“We had 20 market stalls in all, with all sorts of items – candles and cards and treasures from grandmas who knit. We charged \$20 for each of the non-food stalls. It adds up quickly!” she said.

“I’ve also found,” said Amy, “that while parents don’t want to take on a big role, if you can break it down to small, specific jobs, people will do it. You can get a lot done that way.”

There are plenty of opportunities for P&Cs to add on to existing school and community events. Several years ago, Amaroo School added art and plant stalls – one per class – for parents to enjoy and purchase their child’s creations after their end of year awards ceremony. If your school is a polling place, the upcoming ACT election on October 17 is the perfect time to put on a few stalls and feed the voters coming to you. The crowds do come early, though, so it is worth being there when the polls open at 8am with egg and bacon rolls and a coffee ready to sell. ●

About us

The parent voice on public education

The ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations is the peak body for public school parent associations. We bring together delegates from Canberra’s public schools to represent the views of parents to government and the media.

About our magazine

ParentACTion is our free journal. It’s available online and hardcopies are sent to all ACT public school parent associations and school boards, ACT Education decision makers, public education organisations, the media and interstate parent associations.

Contributions, advertising and feedback are always welcome. Contact the Editor, Janelle Kennard, at jkennard@actparents.org.au.

Views expressed in this journal are not necessarily those of the ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations.

Our people

Executive

President: Kirsty McGovern-Hooley
Vice President: Paul Buckley
Secretary: Cecilia Shlegel
Treasurer: Crystal Cox
Committee: Andrew Bidwell, Sharon Ding, Alison Elliott, Vivienne Pearce, Bonnie Rappola, Jayne Trustum, Norma Yap.

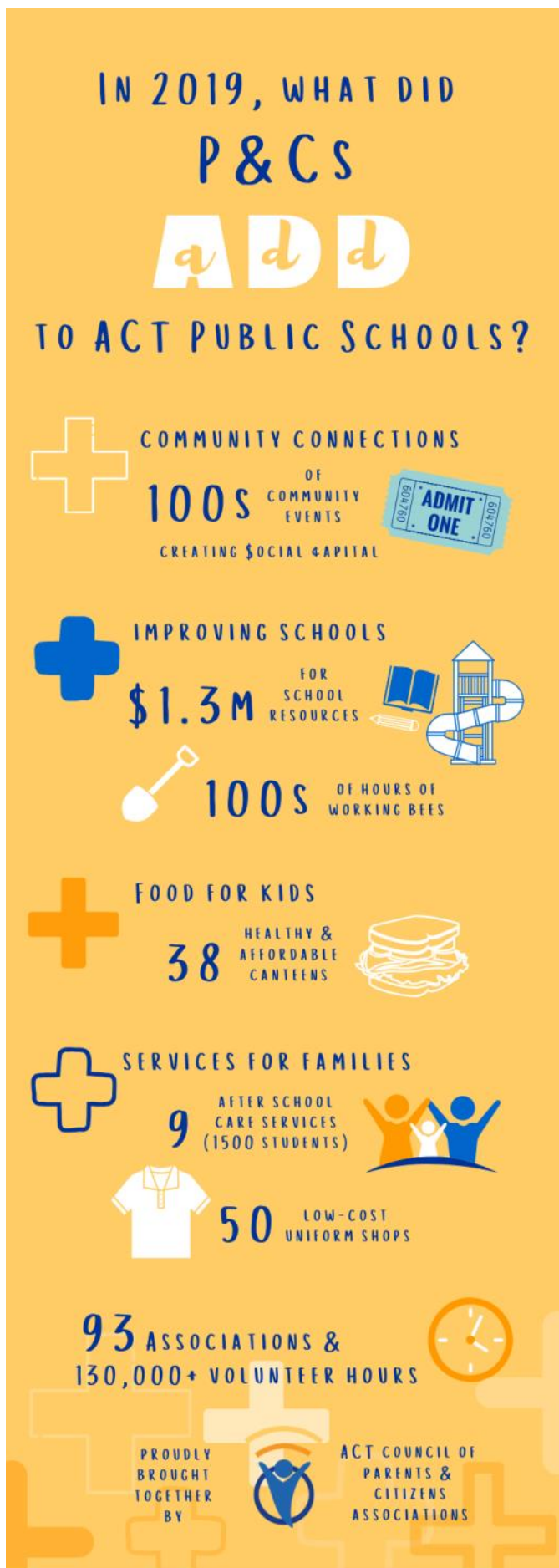
Life members

Grant Battersby, Pam Cahir, Trevor Cobbold, Graeme Evans, Ian Morgan, Richard Scherer, Vivienne Pearce

Office staff

Executive Officer: Terry Sanders
Policy Officer: Veronica Elliott
Communications Officer: Janelle Kennard
Early Learning Officer: Marina Spurgin
Executive Assistant: Melissa Lee

Council acknowledges that we live, learn and work on the traditional lands of the Ngunnawal people. We pay respect to elders past, present, and future.



To highlight the amazing job ACT parent associations do, we've put together this graphic summary. It's available for you to download and share from our website and Facebook page.

To Do: Term 1

Essential tasks for parent associations:

- Get your 2019 financials audited/reviewed. Our [website](#) has all the help you need.
- Prepare for your AGM (must be held by end of May). Our online [checklist](#) will help.
- Prepare handover notes for the new committee (we have [template handover notes](#) that you can adapt).

After your AGM:

- Report to government – submit the Annual Return (AR form) to Access Canberra. (If your association is a registered charity complete the ACNC's Annual Information Statement online instead). Details on our [website](#).
- Complete our [Office Bearer's form](#) so we have up to date membership details.
- Change signatories on your association's bank account to reflect the new committee ([tips on our website](#)).
- Introduce your new committee to the school community.

Dates to remember

- 25 Feb** **Council General Meeting**
7.00pm - 9.30pm
Centre for Teaching & Learning, Stirling
- 24 March** **Council Hot Topics Meeting & RAP 'thinktank'**
7.00pm - 9.30pm
Centre for Teaching & Learning, Stirling
- 7 May** **Effective P&C Workshop ***
6.30pm - 9.00pm
Centre for Teaching & Learning, Stirling
- 19 May** **Effective P&C Workshop (repeat) ***
6.30pm - 9.00pm
Centre for Teaching & Learning, Stirling
- 26 May** **Council General Meeting**
7.00pm - 9.30pm
Centre for Teaching & Learning, Stirling
- 28 May** **Treasurer & Insurance Workshop ***
7.00pm - 9.30pm
Centre for Teaching & Learning, Stirling

* sign up for our free training workshops at www.surveymonkey.com/r/PCTraining.