

Courage to Lead, Clarity to Act

Conversations that matter in school psychology

Conference Program
25 - 26 September

20
25



SPAWA
School Psychologists Association of Western Australia Inc.

Connect Inform Inspire

Acknowledgement of Country

SPAWA acknowledges the traditional owners of the lands on which we work and live throughout Western Australia, and recognises their continuing connection to these lands, waters, and communities. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and Elders past and present.

SPAWA is committed to collaborating with First Nations communities to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan.

Please note that every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and completeness of information throughout the conference brochure. Given the volume of detailed information, omissions or errors are possible. Thank you for your understanding.

Welcome

A warm welcome to the SPAWA Annual Conference for 2025. Hosted again on beautiful Whadjuk Noongar Boodjar at the University Club of Western Australia. The 2024/2025 SPAWA Committee is thrilled to present to you this year's conference focusing on contemporary professional issues within the field of school psychology.

The Conference program is designed to fulfil our goal to inform, inspire and connect our members. Our theme is **“Courage to Lead, Clarity to Act: Conversations that matter in school psychology”**, and we look forward to sharing a range of workshops and keynote presentations for you to feel informed and confident to be a part of important matters across the school psychology field. A welcome and thank you also to our presenters from within WA and across the country. We look forward to learning from you to inspire our practice.



We will again provide a further opportunity to connect by offering our complimentary 'Coffee with the Committee' from 7:30 am on the Thursday morning. If you plan to arrive early, we would love to invite you for a coffee on us in the University Club Café. We also have a very special Smoking Ceremony for Friday morning's Welcome to Country at 8 am.

A special thank you to our amazing Conference Committee, led by Jess Hatton, for curating and organising this year's conference, as well as the whole SPAWA Committee, who have supported this work and contributed to collating our incredible presenters. We look forward to seeing you there.

Please enjoy our 2025 Conference.

Sharon Declerck
SPAWA President

About Us

SPAWA was established in 1989 by a small group of School Psychologists who were keen to provide professional support for School Psychologists in Western Australia.

SPAWA is affiliated with the Australian Psychologists and Counsellors in Schools (APACS), previously the Australian Guidance and Counsellors Association (AGCA), and is an active Association that comprises School Psychologists working in public, Catholic and Independent schools.

Our Association provides opportunities for resource sharing, professional development and regular events that address the complex aspects of working as a psychologist in schools. Our professional events are open to non-members and focus on the practical aspects of working with young people and school systems.



2024/2025 COMMITTEE

President: Sharon Declerck
Vice President: Emily Helmore
Secretary: Jess Hatton
Treasurer: Catherine Cleary
Membership Secretary: Sarah Morphet
General Committee: Amy Patience, Priya Ramu, Brendan Everett, Maryssa Stacey, Nicole Tiller, Shannon Heard, Lana Hayes, Alisha Madurun, Jordan Dalton, and Jay McDermott

CONFERENCE SUBCOMMITTEE

Jess Hatton
Alisha Madurun
Amy Patience
Priya Ramu
Jay McDermott
Sarah Morphet
Brendan Everett
Nicole Tiller
Emily Helmore



SPAWA
School Psychologists Association of Western Australia Inc.

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CONFERENCE SPONSORS



Information

CATERING

Arrival tea and coffee, morning tea and lunch will be provided for all registrants. Seating will be in the ground-floor foyer and on the terrace.

SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

All food on the catering stations will be clearly labelled. If you have any queries, please approach a venue staff member.

CPD CERTIFICATES + SESSION HANDOUTS

CPD certificates and session handouts will be made available electronically after the conference. The presenters may provide some handouts in their workshops.

CONFERENCE EVALUATION SURVEY

Attendees can complete the evaluation survey by scanning the QR code at the back of this booklet. Please complete the evaluation survey by Friday afternoon to go into the draw for the grand prize. The grand prize will be drawn electronically and announced on Friday at the end of day programme in the Auditorium.

MOBILE PHONES

In consideration of both speakers and delegates, please switch your mobile phones to silent mode during presentations and workshops.










CONSENT TO USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC AND VIDEO IMAGES

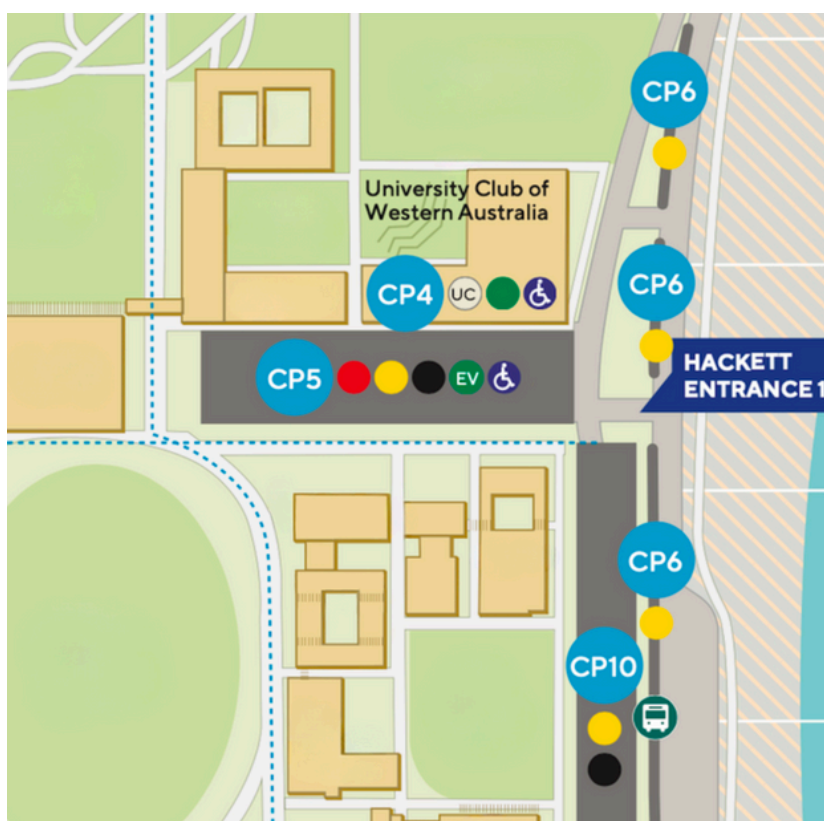
Registration and attendance or participation at the 2025 SPAWA Conference and its affiliated events constitutes an agreement by the registrant for SPAWA and its affiliates to use and distribute (both now and in the future) the registrant's or attendee's image and/or voice in photographs, videotapes, electronic reproductions and audiotapes of such events and activities. Please advise a committee member if you do not wish to be photographed on the day.

ENDORSEMENT DISCLAIMER

SPAWA is pleased to present a forum for sharing professional learning with the conference delegates. The information, products and programs presented at the 2025 SPAWA Conference do not necessarily reflect the opinions or carry the endorsement of SPAWA. Whilst this is a conference for School Psychologists, we also welcome those from all professions, including those who are currently employed in other professions and not working in school psychology.

KEY

-  Parking
-  Red (staff)
-  Yellow (students and visitors)
-  Green (special reserved visitor)
-  Motorcycle Parking
-  Accessible Parking
-  Undercover Parking
-  EV Charging Stations
-  Public Transport



VENUE AND PARKING

The annual conference is held at the University Club of Western Australia (Entrance 1, Hackett Drive, Crawley, WA).

Parking is available in the yellow bays or across the road on Hackett Drive. Payment is required (\$3 per hour) and can be purchased through either the EasyPark App or a machine. For more information on parking, please visit <https://universityclub.uwa.edu.au/parking/>

Alternatively, you can use public transport to get to and from the UWA campus. For up-to-date information on the best route via public transport, please visit <https://www.transperth.wa.gov.au/Journey-Planner>

ECO-FRIENDLY CONFERENCE

The SPAWA Committee is committed to reducing waste across several aspects of the annual conference and has initiated an eco-friendly approach by creating digital evaluation forms, streamlining the CPD certificates, and reducing the use of plastics.

This year, we are placing a stronger emphasis on sustainability, a focus informed by valuable feedback from last year's conference attendees. As part of our commitment to reducing waste, we encourage attendees to bring their bags - perhaps even the "35 Years of SPAWA" bag from last year's conference! We will also have a small selection of bags from previous conferences available for those who would like one this year. We will also be asking attendees to select if they would like a printed brochure when registering for their conference tickets.

Social Events

COFFEE WITH THE COMMITTEE

SEPT
25

Would you like to know more about SPAWA or connect with like-minded colleagues? Join members of the SPAWA Committee for a friendly coffee (on us!) and chat in the morning. We are excited to connect with you!

Time: 7:30 am - 8:00 am

Venue: University Club Café & Bar

CONFERENCE SUNDOWNER

SEPT
26

What better way to end the conference than to join your colleagues and friends for complimentary canapes, live music, and refreshments out on the Terrace. We will be entertained by live music from The SPArts, our very own talented colleagues.

Time: 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm

Venue: University Club Terrace

GALA AWARDS NIGHT

SEPT
27

Join us in celebrating the innovative practice of school psychologists across the state. Each year, candidates are nominated from across the education sectors and winners are determined by a panel comprised of leaders and representatives from school psychology and education.

Time: 6:00 pm - 11:00 pm

Venue: Aloft Perth

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

SEPT
25

7:30 am	Coffee with the Committee
8:00 am	Registration
8:30 am	Welcome to Country and Official Opening

Movement Break within Auditorium

9:15 am	Keynote Address: Towards Inclusion: Neurodiversity-Affirming Practice in Educational Settings
10:30 am	Morning Tea

Movement into Workshops at 11:00 am

11:05 am	1 DBT for School Psychologists (All Day)	2 Leading Beyond Clinical Expertise	3 Beyond IQ Scores	4 Creating a Safe School Environment for LGBTIQA+ Students	5 Let's Talk Grief: What Children Want to Know About Death
1:00 pm	Lunch				

Movement into Workshops at 2:00 pm

2:05 pm	1 DBT for School Psychologists (Continued)	6 Making the Invisible Visible: Using Psychological Theories and Frameworks for Systems Change	7 A Survival Guide for School Psychologists - Effectiveness, Efficiency, Clarity and Care	8 Universal Design for Learning: Enhancing Access, Engagement, & Outcomes for Every Student	9a Meaningful Conversations: Attuned Clinical Interviews
					9b Supporting Students with Eating Disorders

Movement into Auditorium at 4:00 pm

4:15 pm	End of Day Programme, Prize Draws, and AGM
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Connect. Inform. Inspire.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

SEPT
26

7:45 am	Registration
8:00 am	Smoking Ceremony

Movement into Auditorium

9:15 am	Keynote Address: Acknowledge This!
10:30 am	Morning Tea

Movement into Workshops at 11:00 am

11:05 am	10 Narrative Therapy in Schools (All Day)	11 Leading without Authority: Influence and Advocacy for School Psychologists	12 Integrating AI into School Psychology	13 SCASA - Equitable Access to Assessment Policy and Guidelines	14 Recognising and Responding to ADHD in Adolescent Girls
1:00 pm	Lunch				

Movement into Workshops at 2:00 pm

2:05 pm	10 Narrative Therapy in Schools (Continued)	15 Anxiety in Autism: Engaging the Anxious & Autistic Client	16 Walking Together: Cultural Safety in School Psychology	17 Behaviour Support Planning with a Trauma Informed Lens
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Movement into Auditorium at 4:00 pm

4:05 pm	End of Day Programme and Prize Draws
4:25 pm	Conference Close

Movement into University Club Terrace at 4:25 pm

4:30 pm	Complimentary Sundowner featuring the SPArtans
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Day One

WELCOME TO COUNTRY



Emeritus Professor Dr Len Collard is a Whadjuk Nyungar Traditional Owner of the Perth metropolitan area. Len was awarded a Doctor of Education honours causa at Edith Cowan University and Emeritus Professor at the University of Western Australia in the School of Indigenous Studies in 2023. Len is currently a Director of Moodjar Consultancy, working with stakeholders from government, commercial and non-profit sectors to share Noongar knowledge and culture, producing a positive impact for all sectors locally, nationally, and internationally.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

TOWARDS INCLUSION: NEURODIVERSITY-AFFIRMING PRACTICE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

SESSION OUTLINE

The landscape of psychological practice is evolving, with growing recognition of the need for inclusive, neurodiversity-affirming approaches, particularly within our schools. This keynote will explore how psychologists working in education can move beyond deficit-based frameworks to better support neurodivergent students, with a particular focus on Autism and ADHD. Drawing on current research, practice-based insights, and the lived experiences of neurodivergent individuals, Amanda will highlight how traditional practices may unintentionally marginalise students and what it truly means to work from a neurodiversity-affirming lens in educational settings.



With upcoming changes to the psychology competencies—particularly Competency 7, which places explicit emphasis on neurodiversity-affirming practice—this keynote will also examine what these shifts mean for school psychologists. Attendees will be guided through practical, real-world strategies for embedding affirming practices across assessment, intervention, and consultation in schools.

SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Understand the core principles of neurodiversity-affirming practice and how they apply in educational settings.
- Recognise how traditional psychological frameworks may contribute to the marginalisation of neurodivergent students, particularly those with Autism and ADHD.
- Identify key elements of AHPRA's updated Competency 7 and its implications for school-based psychological practice.
- Develop greater confidence in applying affirming approaches to assessment, intervention, and consultation with neurodivergent students.
- Be equipped with practical strategies to challenge deficit-based narratives and foster more inclusive, responsive school environments.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Amanda Moses is a neurodivergent senior psychologist, Board-approved supervisor, educator, and PhD candidate. Through her work at Amanda Moses Psychology, she has trained thousands of psychologists and allied health professionals across Australia in neurodiversity-affirming practice, ethical assessment, and clinical decision-making. Amanda is best known for her work in the assessment and diagnosis of Autism and ADHD in individuals with internalised or non-stereotypical presentations. She is currently completing a PhD at La Trobe University, where her research focuses on improving the identification of Autism in children and adolescents who are often missed due to masking, clinician bias, or internalised traits. Passionate about shifting the field towards more inclusive and affirming models of care, Amanda combines evidence-based insight with real-world clinical experience to challenge outdated practices and support meaningful change.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Founder of Amanda Moses Psychology, an international platform providing professional development training, clinical resources, and supervision for psychologists and allied health professionals, focusing on neurodiversity-affirming practices.
- Founder of Divergent Assessments, a clinical service offering affirming Autism and ADHD diagnostic assessments for adults across Australia, specialising in high-masking and internalised presentations.
- Developed widely utilised diagnostic templates and clinician resources, including a comprehensive training program on Autism and ADHD diagnostic assessment, and a National Psychology Exam preparation course for provisional psychologists.
- Delivered training to thousands of health professionals internationally on various aspects of psychological practice, including Autism and ADHD identification and inclusive clinical methodologies.
- PhD candidate at La Trobe University, researching the identification of Autism in youth with internalised presentations who are often overlooked by standard diagnostic tools.
- Regular speaker, clinical educator, and advocate for reshaping psychological practice to be more inclusive, ethical, and aligned with the neurodiversity paradigm.

WORKSHOP 1 (ALL DAY)

DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOUR THERAPY (DBT) FOR SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS



Chris Hepworth

SESSION OUTLINE

Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) was created by Marsha Linehan (1993) to treat individuals with Borderline Personality Disorder, or more specifically, highly suicidal individuals. Technically a Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy, with the emphasis on the behavioural, DBT is a multi-component treatment modality which is often considered the gold standard for treating Borderline Personality Disorder (e.g. Cochrane review) and has been adapted for helping to treat other mental health problems. Based on an underlying dialectical philosophy, DBT teaches people skills to do with acceptance (mindfulness; distress tolerance) and change (emotional regulation;

interpersonal effectiveness) to provide emotional regulation and ultimately help individuals achieve a life worth living.

Since its original creation, DBT has been adapted to many settings, including in schools, for different ages, including children and adolescents, and has been shown to be an efficacious skills program for teaching emotional regulation, resiliency and communication skills, also for individuals without a diagnosed mental health problem or personality disorder. For these reasons, knowing and being able to teach skills from DBT can be an excellent tool for school psychologists and those who work with children and teens.

In this workshop, Chris will teach:

- Crisis survival skills - these include STOP, TIPP, distraction skills and self-soothing - these skills help people navigate stressful situations without making them worse (e.g. self-harming, sending that text they're going to regret, etc).
- Simplified emotional regulation skills - including why emotions are important, sitting with emotions and opposite action.
- Interpersonal Effectiveness skills - skills in assertiveness, validation, maintaining one's self-respect and also trying to take the perspective of others. These can help improve relationships.

SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Have an overview of the skills in the DBT crisis survival module.
- Understand the function of emotions and the principles of Opposite Action.
- Have a teachable framework for assertive communication.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Chris is a Clinical Psychologist and accredited advanced schema therapist, trainer and supervisor who lives in Perth, Western Australia. He has a small private practice and has also been the Clinical Lead on the DBTeen Program in Western Australia (<https://wa.lifeline.org.au/services/dbteen/>) for the past 5 years, within which he provides clinical consultation and guidance to DBTeen group clinicians and to Lifeline about clinical aspects of the program. Chris has been coordinating and delivering Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) programs for a number of years in the public health system, in addition to now providing individual DBT skills training from his private practice. His practice is also informed by Schema Therapy, EMDR and other cognitive-behavioural therapies.

Chris is known for his warm, clear and practical manner of teaching, which helps participants walk away from his trainings with immediate and tangible skills. He provides frequent in-person trainings on Schema Therapy and has been a trainer for the Australian Psychology Society for a number of years on courses around psychologist Supervision, DBT and Schema Therapy. He presents both in Australia and abroad.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

National and International Trainer on Schema Therapy, DBT and psychology Supervision (for the APS).

RECOMMENDED READING

DBT in a Nutshell - This will be emailed out to attendees before the conference.

WORKSHOP 2

LEADING BEYOND CLINICAL EXPERTISE



Dr Tom Parker

SESSION OUTLINE

Leadership is a privilege, but it can also be extremely challenging. This workshop is about the key principles of effective leadership and how to help team members work cohesively and reach their potential. This workshop will cover areas such as understanding and adapting leadership styles to maximise team performance, practical approaches to empower team members and enhance capability, techniques for developing strong, cohesive teams through targeted interactions and psychological safety, and effective communication methods.

SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Understand the key principles associated with effective leadership.
- Learn about high performance and what is required to help team members reach their potential.
- Gain a better understanding of what team members need from their leaders.
- Learn how to have constructive conversations that strengthen individual and team relationships.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Dr Tom Parker is the founder and Director of Headway Psychology, a large psychology and wellbeing practice that employs over 30 people. Dr Tom has extensive experience in the delivery of counselling and therapy, working with issues such as anxiety, depression, trauma, relationship problems and workplace issues. Dr Tom's special interests are high performance and leadership. With a background in WAFL football and athletics, Dr Tom works with athletes, medical professionals and other high performers to help them achieve their goals. Dr Tom provides services to business owners and leaders in a mentoring capacity to help develop the necessary skills and capacity for leading people. Dr Tom has previously worked for the West Coast Eagles and recently worked as the psychologist for the WA Cricket Men's team.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Developing a successful business that focuses on delivering quality services.
- Developing a high-performing team that facilitates excellent client outcomes.
- Forming a leadership team that supports and guides less experienced practitioners.
- Consulting to the West Coast Eagles.
- Working as the Psychologist for the WA Men's Cricket Team.

WORKSHOP 3

BEYOND IQ SCORES: CLINICAL VALUE OF OBSERVATIONS, HOW TO MODIFY ASSESSMENTS, AND NEURODIVERSITY AFFIRMING ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

SESSION OUTLINE

This workshop provides clinical insights into the observations during cognitive assessments, and practical strategies around making your assessment space more neurodiversity friendly, modifying assessments, analysing error patterns and subtest profiles, writing neurodiversity affirming reports, and responding to parents' questions. We will capture observations from a short video of a cognitive assessment using Autism Understanding's free Cognitive Assessment Observation Checklist. We will also discuss thinking styles as described in Autism Understanding's free Neurodivergent Student Profile.



Lydia Meem

SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Use the Cognitive Assessment Observation Checklist to identify characteristics associated with autism in a cognitive assessment video.
- Consider whether the Neurodivergent Student Profile would be helpful in their school setting (i.e. for IEPs, casual teachers, end-of-year handover).
- Consider how they might modify assessments and include clinical observations in their cognitive assessment report.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Lydia is a neurodivergent clinical psychologist who is passionate about neurodiversity affirming practice, particularly autism assessment and strategies. She has been working with Autistic clients since 1998 and delivering autism workshops for teachers and health professionals since 2009. Lydia leads a neurodivergent psychology team in Newcastle serving neurodivergent children, adolescents, adults and their families, and provides clinical supervision and training for psychologists. She presents at conferences and offers customised training for schools, allied health services and disability organisations.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

Lydia is the author of the Beyond IQ Scores handbook for psychologists. She developed the Supporting Autistic Students online course for teachers and the Neurodiversity Affirming Clinician online membership hub to help clinicians ensure that their practice is neurodiversity affirming. She created and hosted the Neurodivergent Clinician Symposium in Melbourne on 3-4 September 2025.

WORKSHOP 4

CREATING A SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT FOR LGBTIQA+ STUDENTS



SESSION OUTLINE

Interested in building a more inclusive and supportive environment for LGBTIQA+ students and staff at your school? The Youth Pride Network invites WA-based school psychologists to a workshop focused on inclusive education practices. This session is designed for those wanting to better understand and support the needs of LGBTIQA+ students. The session will draw on key findings from our State of Play Report II: LGBTIQA+ Young People's Experiences of High School, which reveals how the current education system is falling short in ensuring the safety, wellbeing, and inclusion of LGBTIQA+ students.

SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Learn practical strategies to create safe and inclusive classrooms and school communities.
- Access up-to-date resources and tools to support LGBTIQA+ students and staff.
- Connect with other educators, allies, and LGBTIQA+ staff to share experiences and insights.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

With a background in Community Development and Gender Studies, Chloe has spent the past decade working at the intersection of art, activism, and policy to champion LGBTIQA+ rights, particularly through an intersectional lens. In 2017, she launched a non-binary fashion label, using creative expression as both personal empowerment and a tool for social change. Chloe's artistic practice is deeply informed by her advocacy, serving as a platform for systemic critique, community engagement, and storytelling. Her work not only celebrates queer identities but also amplifies the lived experiences of those too often pushed to the margins. In her current role at Youth Pride Network (YPN), Chloe draws on her background in government and policy to elevate the voices of young LGBTIQA+ people in decision-making spaces. She is passionate about co-creating opportunities for youth-led change and ensuring their insights inform the policies that directly affect their lives. Through her leadership at YPN, Chloe is committed to guiding the organisation into a bold new chapter—one that centres creativity, collaboration, and genuine inclusion in the fight for equity and visibility.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Out for Australia Sponsorship Recipient – recognised as an emerging LGBTIQA+ leader.
- Founder of a non-binary fashion label dedicated to gender-inclusive design and visibility.
- Leadership role at Youth Pride Network, advocating for LGBTIQA+ youth in policy reform.
- 10+ years' experience in community development, youth engagement, and intersectional advocacy.

WORKSHOP 5

LET'S TALK GRIEF: WHAT CHILDREN WANT TO KNOW ABOUT DEATH

SESSION OUTLINE

Bereavement in childhood is common; 1 in 20 children will experience the death of one or both parents by age 16. When including the loss of siblings, other close family members and friends, over 50% of children have been bereaved. The prevalence of childhood bereavement highlights the need for effective and appropriate support, particularly considering the potential for adverse outcomes (anxiety and depression, poor academic performance, suicidality, and the development of affective, psychotic, and substance use disorders) associated with the loss of a close person. Mitigating these impacts requires bereavement support for children that considers their unique understandings of death and experiences of grief in a context where their support networks (i.e. parent/caregiver, extended family and schools) are also upskilled through psychoeducation on the best ways to support the grieving child. Come along and hear about our research into what children want to know about death and grief.



Shelly Skinner

Whether you work in a school with families at time of life limiting diagnosis, through treatment, at end of life or through bereavement, we will share our research, share information about children's grief, along with some simple, single session activities, games and conversation starters you can use with children in your work, you can share with parents for them to do with their children or you can teach your colleagues in the schools you're working in. You will also have an opportunity to ask your questions to the presenter/s. Join us to build your toolkit and have a little fun at the same time. Together, we can build a connected community where grief is seen as a normal and healthy response to loss and where no child grieves alone.

Please note that while this presentation is about grief following death, this content is transferable and applicable to all forms of grief, including divorce, chronic illness, death of a pet, etc.

SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Gain knowledge about current understandings of children's grief.
- Be informed about the latest research on what children and young people want to know about death and grief.
- Gain strategies, activity ideas and conversation starters for working with grieving children and families.
- Have an opportunity to ask questions about children's grief to the presenters.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Shelly will present with co-facilitators Laura Butshiire and Ania Michalska.

Shelly is the Founder and CEO of Lionheart Camp for Kids. As a Social Worker whose own mother died when she was a young adult, Shelly is committed to building a community where grief is seen as a healthy and normal response to death and life challenges. A world where everyone is taught the skills to identify grief and grieve in a healthy and safe way.

Shelly has a passion for supporting and educating families, educators, health professionals and the community. Empowering people to explore and discuss their life goals; communicate their end-of-life wishes with family and health professionals, and to identify and attend to their needs in grief and bereavement.

Since graduating from The University of Western Australia in 2001 with a Bachelor of Social Work, Shelly has contributed to the field of social work in health in the fields of Oncology, Palliative Care, Acquired Brain Injury, Spinal Injury and Emergency Medicine within Western Australia and the United Kingdom.

Shelly is the mother of three daughters, a published children's book author and researcher.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Shelly started Lionheart in 2015.
- Shelly was the recipient of the John Curtin Medal in 2020.
- Shelly was awarded a Westfield Local Hero award in 2021 for her commitment to improving outcomes for grieving children, teens and families.
- Partnering with Curtin University for research.

RECOMMENDED READING

<https://cdn.lionheartcampforkids.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Journal-of-Child-and-Family-Studies-What-Bereaved-Children-Want-to-Know-About-Death-Oct-2023.pdf>



WORKSHOP 6

MAKING THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE: USING PSYCHOLOGICAL FRAMEWORKS, THEORIES AND APPROACHES FOR SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

Krista Bingham & Robyn Cooksey

SESSION OUTLINE

Effective School Psychologists understand that child and adolescent development occurs in the context of multiple family, school and other systems. They don't just treat disorders, but also prevent them and promote flourishing. They build staff capacity, guiding others to understand the interrelatedness of student achievement, engagement and wellbeing. They apply their psychological skills as they work alongside school leaders, contributing to the building of positive school cultures and safe and supportive schools.

In this session, we will explore how the existing psychological knowledge, skills and competencies of school psychologists can be applied at the whole school and system level to maximise impact. We will demonstrate the practical application of organisational psychology frameworks, theories and approaches, including Theory U, process consultancy, solution-focused therapy, psychology of leadership and influence, implementation science and change management.

With reference to the Department of Education's School Psychology Service scope of practice and statewide service planning process, participants will be guided through a scientist-practitioner process that can be applied in schools and education systems to influence positive change for the benefit of all students.

SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Understand how psychological theories, approaches and frameworks can support change at a whole-school or system level and apply a psychological lens at multiple tiers of intervention.
- Apply existing knowledge of case formulation to understand systems issues and plan effective interventions.
- Develop an appreciation of how psychological process consultancy skills can be used to influence individuals, schools and the wider education system.
- Understand transactional and transformational change and how the implementation of different approaches can drive sustainable outcomes in schools.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Robyn Cooksey likes to play Russian roulette with her career, resulting in a winding journey through a range of School Psychologist and public sector roles including Principal Consultant Schools Plus, Project Manager Child and Parent Centres, Principal consultant Speech and Language and Lead School Psychologist across a range of contexts include Disability Service and Support, metropolitan and country education regions. Robyn was appointed as one of the inaugural collegiate LSPs and acted as Chief Psychologist during a period of significant change in the service. Robyn is mother to two extremely talented artistic humans and three fluffy four-legged friends.

Connect. Inform. Inspire.

Krista Bingham began her career as a School Psychologist in the Cannington Education District in 2001. She has provided psychological services in over 100 different schools across North and South Metro regions and statewide services, developing a deep appreciation for how systems around young people can act as both enablers and barriers to student wellbeing, engagement and learning. Krista has also held consultancy, project management and research roles in the broader public sector and non-government organisations, contributing to her ability to understand, navigate and positively influence complex systems. As a Lead School Psychologist in the North Metropolitan Education Region, Krista supports a team of 20 amazing School Psychologists who service schools on unceded Whadjuk and Yued Nyoongar country. Her practice is guided by client-centred and strengths-based positive psychology, inclusive and ethical practices, a commitment to listening to and understanding the perspectives of others, and core values of kindness and authenticity. She is a wife and a mother to three adults, one teenager, a spoiled groodle and a grumpy old sausage dog.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

Robyn's career highlights include:

- Established and led a new, highly skilled team of specialist Psychologists, building and strengthening the school psychology workforce's professional practice in the assessment and reporting of disability and managing complex issues involving students with significantly high educational needs.
- As Chief Psychologist and in response to the Auditor General's recommendations, led the development and implementation of the overarching strategic framework and operational plans aligned with the school psychology service leadership vision for a united workforce and transparent service delivery.
- Continued and unwavering support and advocacy for inclusivity, and the pivotal role of School Psychologists in strengthening school systems to enhance student wellbeing, engagement and achievement.

Krista's recent career highlights include:

- collaborating with A/Chief Psychologist Robyn Cooksey and the LSP team to design and implement a scope of practice for School Psychologists in the Department of Education
- mentoring 14 newly appointed Lead School Psychologists, who have quickly established themselves as exceptional leaders in their regions
- Chair of the SPS service planning advisory group, responsible for developing and implementing consistent school psychology service planning processes in every public school across the state in 2023
- Ongoing opportunities to work with and learn from the incredible School Psychologists and Lead School Psychologists in our NMER 'dream-team'

WORKSHOP 7

A SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS-EFFECTIVENESS, EFFICIENCY, CLARITY AND CARE

SESSION OUTLINE

In the demanding and diverse world of school psychology, sustaining your wellbeing isn't a luxury—it's a necessity. This session explores practical strategies to increase efficiency, clarify your role, and proactively support your wellbeing. We'll unpack common role tensions, identify system-level improvements to reduce overload, and provide tangible tools for scheduling, note-taking, and referrals. The session will also explore how practitioners can intentionally embed wellbeing into their everyday routines to support both personal and professional sustainability.



Dr Matt O'Connor

SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Identify common role discrepancies in school psychology and reflect on their impact on workload and wellbeing.
- Analyse key areas of practice for potential system improvements (e.g. note-taking, referrals, automations) that enhance efficiency and reduce overwhelm.
- Apply practical scheduling strategies to ensure time is allocated across the full scope of the role, including time for proactive care and non-session-based activities.
- Consider how to best embed wellbeing practices in your day that support sustainable and values-aligned practice, as well as have options for increasing levels of care as needed.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Dr Matt O'Connor is a Clinical and School Psychologist, Board-Approved Supervisor, and Director of ConnectEd Counselling and Consultancy—a Brisbane-based clinic supporting young people, families, and schools. With experience across clinical, educational, and organisational settings, Matt brings a deep understanding of the real-world challenges facing school-based professionals.

His areas of expertise are in supporting school psychologists, counsellors, and pastoral care staff to navigate the layered dynamics of school systems, where limited time, complex relationships, and competing demands can make the work especially challenging.

Matt's work focuses on implementing practical, sustainable approaches to student wellbeing, including the design of effective school counselling systems, early intervention initiatives, and whole-school pastoral care frameworks. He helps schools create clear, usable processes that align with best practice.

Matt's academic work, cited over 1,200 times and translated into more than 50 languages, reflects the research-informed foundation of his work; as a sought-after presenter, he has delivered over 1,000 workshops, presentations and keynotes for schools, universities, and organisations across Australia, combining academic insight with practical strategies that support those working on the ground.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Youngest ever Director of ReachOut.com.
- Publication of the Mental Health Literacy Scale, which has been cited in more than 750 journal articles.
- School Psychologist - St Peters Lutheran College.
- Re-shaped his career to provide a better balance for family and work.
- Founder and Director of ConnectEd Counselling and Consultancy.

WORKSHOP 8

UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING: ENHANCING ACCESS, ENGAGEMENT AND OUTCOMES FOR EVERY STUDENT

SESSION OUTLINE

This session introduces the core principles of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework, focusing on how this framework supports equitable access, sustained engagement, and improved outcomes for students. Through interactive activities and classroom-based scenarios, participants will explore how UDL is practically applied to support diverse learners. This session is relevant to school psychologists across primary, secondary and education support settings working with learning support teams to increase accessibility for students with different learning needs.



Dr Susan Main

SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Describe the core principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
- Identify how UDL supports inclusive practice, multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS), and equitable access to learning.
- Reflect on opportunities to integrate UDL-informed thinking into school psychology consultation, assessment, and intervention practices.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Dr. Susan Main is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education at Edith Cowan University, with extensive expertise in inclusive education, literacy, and evidence-based instructional practices. She has led research projects focused on improving outcomes for students with diverse needs and regularly works with schools across Australia to support inclusive teaching. Dr. Main has presented to both in-service and pre-service teachers on Universal Design for Learning (UDL), helping educators apply its principles in real-world settings. She is widely published and committed to bridging research and practice to promote equity, access, and meaningful engagement for all learners.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Collaborated internationally with institutions such as the University of Virginia on research around inclusive practices.
- Led and co-led numerous school-based literacy improvement projects across Australia, including with schools in the Darling Downs South West Region of Queensland, and the Kimberley region in Western Australia, as well as metropolitan primary and high schools in Perth, Western Australia.
- National board member of the Institute of Special Educators (InSpEd) and President of the WA branch of AASE, showing leadership in shaping national policy and practice in special education.

WORKSHOP 9A

MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS: ATTUNED CLINICAL INTERVIEWS



Sarah Harrower

SESSION OUTLINE

Checklists and rating scales have their place, but they rarely capture the depth or nuance of neurodivergent experiences. This workshop is for school psychologists who want to strengthen their clinical interviewing skills through a neuroaffirming lens. Clinical interviewing is one part of the broader process of gathering assessment information for neurotype identification, whether or not a formal diagnosis is being pursued. This workshop focuses on how to have meaningful conversations that help you understand the lived experiences, strengths, and support needs of autistic and ADHD students.

Participants will learn how to move beyond surface-level tools and develop a deeper, more respectful interviewing approach. This includes strategies for adapting your communication style to meet students where they are, such as accommodating nonlinear storytelling, sensory preferences, and communication differences. We will also explore ways to include psychoeducation for families in a way that is strengths-based and collaborative.

This workshop aligns with PBA Competency 7—focusing on culturally responsive and human rights-informed practice, which becomes a minimum expected standard from December 1, 2025. Without awareness and application of this framework, there is a risk of practising in ways that are out of step with updated professional expectations.

You'll leave with practical tools for building trust, recognising often-missed strengths, and understanding the functional impact of neurodivergence in daily life.

These skills support you in holding clinical conversations that are not only informative, but also relationally safe and deeply helpful—especially during a time that can feel uncertain or distressing for students and families seeking clarity around neurotype identification.

SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Understand the limitations of standardised assessments and embrace a human rights-informed, culturally responsive approach to understanding neurodivergent experiences (aligned with PBA Competency 7).



Jon Heath

- Apply practical strategies for building rapport and creating a relationally safe environment during clinical interviews with neurodivergent students and families.
- Utilise dynamic, open-ended clinical interviewing skills to explore needs, strengths, and functional impacts of autism and ADHD in real-world settings (e.g., home, school, social).
- Integrate strengths-based psychoeducation seamlessly into clinical interviews with parents/carers.
- Feel more confident in conducting meaningful neuroaffirming conversations that build shared understanding and validation of neurodivergent lived experiences.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Sarah Harrower is a neurodivergent perinatal psychologist, board-approved supervisor, and the founder of a Perth-based telehealth private practice. She is a member of the Centre for Perinatal Psychology (CPP), the League of Autistic Psychologists and Colleagues (LOAPAC), AAPI, AAIMH, and EMDRAA. With a deep commitment to neurodiversity-affirming care, her work focuses on therapeutic assessment for adults exploring their neurotype, offering single-session consultations and full diagnostic autism assessments. Her approach prioritises psychological safety and compassion, particularly for those who have experienced previous relational and healthcare trauma. She is passionate about supporting neurodivergent adults in navigating pregnancy, parenting, and the perinatal period in a way that aligns with their unique needs.

Jon is a neurodivergent school psychologist and parent who is deeply passionate about ensuring neurodivergent kids' needs are genuinely understood by both themselves and the adults around them. He brings a unique lived experience perspective to his clinical work, prioritising compassion, patience, and understanding to foster genuinely safe and relationally secure environments for growth. His practice leverages fluid, dynamic clinical interviewing interlaced with psychoeducation. He enjoys this collaborative journey of discovery, empowering families to become active participants in understanding their child's neurotype (and their own). This lens of exploring individual experiences, strengths and needs helps families build clarity, reduces uncertainty, and helps chart more effective pathways to support.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

Sarah was awarded the SPAWA Early Career Psychologist and has been involved in the delivery of many highly informative seminars, workshops and panels at multiple conferences. Her 2025 appearances include Supporting Autistic and ADHD Folk in the Perinatal Period Conference, Spectrum Space Conference and International Childhood Trauma Conference.

While Jon is a little quieter in the presentation space, he isn't known to be quiet generally and will happily talk/advocate if given a soapbox. He is looking forward to running another workshop at SPAWA Conference with Sarah and has delivered various sessions for School Psychologists and parents in different formats.

WORKSHOP 9B

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH EATING DISORDERS THROUGH ESUS CENTRE'S ADOLESCENT INTENSIVE TREATMENT PROGRAM



Megan O'Riordan

SESSION OUTLINE

This session will outline the various signs and symptoms of eating disorders that may present in students at school (including physical, psychological and emotional factors). A discussion about referral options for treatment will be discussed. The importance of early intervention for the treatment of eating disorders will be outlined.

Following this, the Adolescent Intensive Treatment Program (AITP) at Esus Centre will be discussed. The AITP is an intensive six-week program for school-aged students 12-18 years old presenting with eating disorders. It involves a family-based therapy (FBT) informed style of treatment, as well as the

incorporation of CBT-E and DBT modalities. The structure of the program will be discussed, as well as an overview of the outcomes of the program in its first 12 months of operation. A discussion about how the program has assisted in improving school attendance for clients with school avoidance will also be included in the session.

SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Have an improved understanding of warning signs that a student may be experiencing an eating disorder.
- Be aware of referral options for treatment of eating disorders.
- Have a better understanding of the Esus Centre's intensive treatment program for adolescents.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Megan is a Clinical Psychologist and ANZAED Eating Disorders Credentialed clinician experienced in utilising evidence-based treatments (e.g. CBT-E, FBT, SSCM) to support the recovery of adolescents and adults with eating disorders. She is currently the coordinator of Esus Centre's Adolescent Intensive Treatment Program, which supports 12-18 years and their families in recovery from eating disorders. She previously worked in public health settings, including inpatient medical wards and a community eating disorders specialist service. She is passionate about working with clients with comorbidities such as ADHD, ASD and OCD, and is particularly interested in ARFID and emetophobia treatment in the eating disorders space.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Coordinator of Esus Centre's Adolescent Intensive Treatment Program.
- Publication of five journal articles in JMIR Human Factors, Crisis: The Journal of Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention, and Health and Social Care in the Community.
- Presenter at the Australia & New Zealand Academy of Eating Disorders 2025 Conference.
- Clinical Psychologist with a Bachelor of Psychology (1st class honours) and a Master of Clinical Psychology.

Day Two

SMOKING CEREMONY



Emeritus Professor Dr Len Collard is a Whadjuk Nyungar Traditional Owner of the Perth metropolitan area. During the Smoking Ceremony, Dr Collard will foster a deep connection to boodjar (land) through storytelling, which is enriched with Nyungar language and the evocative sounds of the didgeridoo which creates a warm and inviting atmosphere. The Smoking Ceremony involves lighting a small fire in a contained receptacle, using traditional and locally sourced plant materials. This is burned down to embers to produce smoke, and attendees are invited to gently 'wash' in the smoke to clear away warra wirrin (bad spirits) and welcome the blessings of kwop wirrin (good spirits).

Please register via Trybooking for the Smoking Ceremony if you would like to attend.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

ACKNOWLEDGE THIS!

SESSION OUTLINE

In today's world, most organisations, businesses, and schools are embracing Acknowledgements of Country. However, the reasons behind this practice often go unrecognised. Most of the time, Acknowledgements are read from a script, reduced to a mere formality to tick a box. This approach undermines the significance of what Acknowledgement of Country truly represents.

Join Rhys Paddick as he guides you in delivering a heartfelt Acknowledgement of Country, free from fear.

Together, we'll explore the essential steps to crafting a genuine and meaningful Acknowledgement that reflects the place, the people, and your own connection to Country. You'll learn about the concept that lies behind the words, enabling your own personal stories and connection to shine through.



SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this experience, you will:

- Gain a deeper understanding of what an Acknowledgement of Country is.
- Discover the purpose of an Acknowledgement of Country.
- Develop your own personalised Acknowledgement, adaptable for any gathering where you wish to honour our shared history.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Rhys Paddick is a cultural educator, artist, and storyteller known for his ability to shift rooms, not just minds. As the founder of Modern Custodian, Rhys helps organisations move beyond ticking boxes and into a space of real presence, cultural courage, and authentic connection.

With over 15 years of experience working alongside Aboriginal communities and across the corporate, education, and government sectors, Rhys has become a leading voice in cultural transformation. His workshops, including the widely acclaimed Acknowledge This! and the soon-to-be-released Authentic You, challenge the status quo with humour, honesty, and heart.

Rather than approaching Aboriginal engagement from a place of shame or fear, Rhys invites people into it with excitement, clarity and joy. His work is grounded in lived experience, legacy, and the belief that cultural desensitization is the first step toward cultural depth.

Rhys is a designer of experiences, not just programs. Whether through storytelling, immersive gameplay, or quiet moments on Country, his mission is simple: Help people remember who they are - and where they stand.

[@the_wholesome_yamatji](#)

[Rhys Paddick - LinkedIn](#)

<https://moderncustodian.com.au>

WORKSHOP 10 (ALL DAY)

CREATIVE COLLABORATIONS IN A SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE: DISCOVERING AGENCY AND POSSIBILITY THROUGH RE-AUTHORING PRACTICES AND NARRATIVE THERAPY IN SCHOOLS



Ben Shannahan

SESSION OUTLINE

The stories we hold about ourselves and our relationships inform how we respond to problems and dilemmas that enter our lives. Children and young people possess abundant knowledge and skills. These can become hidden from view or subjugated by the dominant narratives or discourses that shape the meanings attributed to their experiences. If we listen carefully and work with young people to discover multiple stories they tell about their passions, interests, values and creativity, we can create fertile ground for new possibilities. Furthermore, if we listen for traces of agency in the face of hardship, we can begin a collaborative adventure of re-authoring a

young person's experiences as a means of loosening the grip of serious problems in their life.

This experiential and skills-based workshop will explore what Narrative Therapy might offer in work with young people, families and schools. Through the use of practice stories, skill-development exercises, video and other learning methods, participants will learn practice skills to foster the discovery of new possibilities in the lives and relationships of young people they work with.

SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Have developed their understanding of ethics and positioning that guide question crafting in Narrative practice that can effectively undermine problems young people face
- Be familiar with ways in which listening practices and metaphor might be used to guide the discovery of alternative and preferred storylines of people's lives
- Have awareness of how Narrative practice might be used in dignifying ways in school contexts
- Understand ways in which re-authoring practices might be used to help young people connect with their own knowledge, skills and values in ways that harness historical, relational, cultural, political and other contextual factors



Dr Davina Shannahan

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Ben (he/him) is a Family Therapist and Clinical Member of The Australian Association of Family Therapy (AAFT). He strives to work in creative ways that address injustices, honour the struggles people are engaged in and facilitate people discovering hidden stories of their lives that contribute to a renewed sense of possibility. Ben is an experienced supervisor and trainer and teaches Narrative Therapy and Family Therapy nationally and internationally. He is part of the teaching faculty of The Dulwich Centre (Adelaide), The Systemic Consultation Centre (Perth), The Institute of Narrative Therapy (UK) and PartnershipProjectsUK.

Davinia (she/her) is a registered Psychologist and board-approved supervisor. She has considerable experience working with children, adolescents and families facing a wide range of challenges. Davinia utilises creative and playful approaches to supporting young people and their families to explore difficulties, forge new understandings and develop alternate stories about life and it is not unusual to hear laughter coming from her consulting room. She adopts a systemic approach to problems, engaging with families and their community as a means of helping young people and those who care about them to see problems they face within the wider context of their lives.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

Ben is very grateful to have had the opportunity to collaborate with people he has consulted with in therapy in the development of various publications (please see www.thefamilyrooms.com.au/publications), support and social action initiatives, art exhibitions, film making, music performances and conference presentations in Australia and UK. This work has included collaborations with young people who have been impacted by suicide, queer youth, young people with out-of-home-care experiences and with families affected by intergenerational sexualised violence. Ben was involved in developing the not-for-profit queer youth mental health service Rainbow Community House from its inception. Being an international faculty member of Dulwich Centre has brought many wonderful opportunities for cross-cultural collaborations through various teaching adventures nationally and globally in narrative and family therapy. In 2024, Ben was a Western Australia Mental Health Awards Finalist in recognition of his work with CYPRESS, a youth postvention counselling service with Anglicare WA.

Davinia thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to work with very culturally diverse populations in schools in London (UK) that were often overcrowded and underfunded. Davinia had the opportunity to bring creativity to her work in education settings to support young people and school staff working with them to bring about meaningful change in their lives. In the past 7 years since moving to Perth, a highlight for Davinia has been working with First Nations families navigating Autism. In recent years, Davinia has ventured into private practice to forge her own rules about what a therapy that privileges the wisdom, skills and values young people and their families hold might entail.

WORKSHOP 11

LEADING WITHOUT AUTHORITY: INFLUENCE & ADVOCACY FOR SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS



James Page

SESSION OUTLINE

In this two-hour interactive workshop, you'll explore how to wield influence when you don't have formal authority. We'll begin by unpacking the unique challenges school psychologists face: from being pigeon-holed as "testing specialists," to navigating misconceptions about your expertise. You'll ask yourself: "How can I reshape others' understanding of my role?" and "What strategies turn empathy and active listening into persuasive advocacy?"

Next, we dive into practical tools for building trust and credibility across your school community. Through real-world scenarios, you'll practice tailoring messages

to resonate with busy administrators, collaborate more effectively with teachers and administrators, and use data to back up your recommendations. You'll also learn quick-win techniques for handling tough conversations, so you can confidently speak up for student-centred initiatives.

Finally, you'll leave with a concrete, personalised plan: identify one relationship to strengthen, choose an advocacy technique to test, and map out 'next steps' for leading from the middle.

SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Understand and leverage informal leadership roles to increase their influence within school communities.
- Articulate the value of the school psychologist's role in clear, strategic language tailored to diverse stakeholders.
- Build stronger, trust-based relationships with administrators and teachers through proven collaboration strategies.
- Gain confidence in navigating and resolving challenging conversations to champion initiatives effectively.
- Develop an actionable plan to strengthen at least one key relationship and to implement a new advocacy approach in their daily practice.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

James Page is a Registered Psychologist with Headway Psychology's Organisational Services team. After graduating from the University of Western Australia, he honed his skills in private practice, developing a specialty in leadership coaching, high-performance team development, and strategic communication. James has developed his clinical skills focusing on training around Couples Counselling, is Schema-Therapy trained, and has completed Level 2 EMDR training. In his current role, he partners with organisations to help professionals enhance their leadership impact, improve team effectiveness, and communicate with greater confidence.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Clinical & Organisational Expertise - Combining private-practice experience with organisational consulting, designing programs that bridge clinical insight and workplace leadership.
- Collaborative Partnerships - Partnered with multiple schools and corporate clients to co-design data-driven advocacy strategies, such as a questionnaire to analyse organisation culture, that have helped inform teams' ability to institute meaningful change and drive systemic improvements.
- Professional Development Leader - Regularly delivers bespoke in-house workshops for schools and organisations on topics including: mental health awareness, facilitating difficult conversations, managing staff conflict, empowering teams to lead from within, trust-building, and stakeholder engagement.

WORKSHOP 12

INTEGRATING AI INTO SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY



Dr Matt O'Connor

SESSION OUTLINE

Artificial intelligence is rapidly becoming part of daily professional life, including in school psychology. This workshop explores practical, ethical and sustainable ways to integrate AI tools into your work, with a particular focus on reducing admin load and enhancing documentation. We'll examine key legal and ethical considerations, acknowledge the risks and limitations of AI (including its environmental and professional implications), and offer hands-on demonstrations of tools like digital scribes and large language models (e.g. ChatGPT). Whether you're looking to streamline note-taking, enhance report writing, or just stay ahead of the curve, this session

will provide grounded guidance for using AI in a way that supports your practice and protects your values.

SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Explain key concepts behind AI and large language models, and their relevance to school psychology.
- Identify appropriate and ethical uses of AI tools, with particular attention to digital scribing, documentation and report writing.
- Evaluate the limitations and risks of AI, including concerns around data privacy, professional identity and environmental impact.
- Demonstrate basic use of digital scribing tools and AI platforms such as ChatGPT for common tasks in school-based practice.
- Reflect on the future of AI in school psychology and identify next steps for responsible exploration and implementation in their own settings.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Dr Matt O'Connor is a Clinical and School Psychologist, Board-Approved Supervisor, and Director of ConnectEd Counselling and Consultancy—a Brisbane-based clinic supporting young people, families, and schools. With experience across clinical, educational, and organisational settings, Matt brings a deep understanding of the real-world challenges facing school-based professionals.

His areas of expertise are in supporting school psychologists, counsellors, and pastoral care staff to navigate the layered dynamics of school systems, where limited time, complex relationships, and competing demands can make the work especially challenging. Matt's work focuses on implementing practical, sustainable approaches to student wellbeing, including the design of effective school counselling systems, early intervention initiatives, and whole-school pastoral care frameworks. He helps schools create clear, usable processes that align with best practice.

Matt's academic work, cited over 1,200 times and translated into more than 50 languages, reflects the research-informed foundation of his work; as a sought-after presenter, he has delivered over 1,000 workshops, presentations and keynotes for schools, universities, and organisations across Australia, combining academic insight with practical strategies that support those working on the ground.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Youngest ever Director of ReachOut.com.
- Publication of the Mental Health Literacy Scale, which has been cited in more than 750 journal articles.
- School Psychologist - St Peters Lutheran College.
- Re-shaped his career to provide a better balance for family and work.
- Founder and Director of ConnectEd Counselling and Consultancy.

WORKSHOP 13

SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND STANDARDS AUTHORITY- EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ASSESSMENT POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Glenn Carroll, SCASA

SESSION OUTLINE

This session will provide attendees with an overview of aspects related to their roles as school psychologists in assisting students, parents and schools with navigating the Equitable Access to Assessment Policy and Guidelines; the preparation of applications for adjustments for ATAR, and the requirements for completion of applications for sickness/misadventure during the ATAR examinations period.

SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Have a better understanding of the relevant processes related to their role.
- Feel more confident in how to better assist those at a school level to provide the evidence required to support students.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Glenn is the Principal Consultant - Special Provisions with the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCASA).

The School Curriculum and Standards Authority is an independent statutory authority that is responsible to the Western Australian Minister for Education. The School Curriculum and Standards Authority is responsible for:

- Setting standards of student achievement and for the assessment and certification of student achievement according to those standards.
- Developing an outline of curriculum and assessment in schools that, taking account of the needs of students, sets out the knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes that students are expected to acquire and guidelines for the assessment of student achievement.
- Developing and accrediting courses for schools.
- Maintaining a database of information relating to:
 - The participation by students during their school years in education, training or employment as provided by the School Education Act 1999.
 - The achievement of students during those years.
 - Records of assessment in respect of students.

WORKSHOP 14

MASKED, MISUNDERSTOOD, MISDIAGNOSED, OR MISSED ENTIRELY: RECOGNISING & RESPONDING TO ADHD IN ADOLESCENT GIRLS

SESSION OUTLINE

Girls with ADHD are often overlooked or mislabelled – especially in adolescence, when masking, perfectionism, and emotional dysregulation can be mistaken for anxiety, mood disorders, or even emerging personality concerns. School psychologists are uniquely placed to notice the subtle signs and make a real difference in how these young people are understood and supported.

This practical, neuroaffirming workshop will help you recognise common presentation patterns in girls, avoid misdiagnosis pitfalls, and support teens in understanding their own brains. We'll explore real case examples, language, and relational markers, and ways to collaborate with staff and families to advocate for meaningful change – even in the absence of a formal diagnosis. Attendees are invited to submit questions or case-related reflections before the session via a quick pre-registration form, so the discussion can be shaped to your practice.



Brendan Everett

SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Identify common and less-recognised presentations of ADHD in adolescent girls, including internalised and masked symptoms that are often misdiagnosed as anxiety, depression, or emerging personality vulnerabilities.
- Understand the impact of masking, perfectionism, and relational compensation strategies on how ADHD is expressed and experienced in secondary school females.
- Use a neuroaffirming lens to support adolescent girls in understanding their own brains, reduce shame, and promote self-awareness in language that makes sense to them.
- Differentiate ADHD from other commonly confused presentations through practical case formulation strategies relevant to the school context.
- Collaborate effectively with school staff and families to advocate for appropriate supports, build shared understanding, and ensure the student's needs are recognised, even without a formal diagnosis.
- Apply workshop insights to real-world questions and challenges, including those submitted in advance via a pre-session registration form.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Brendan Everett is a highly experienced school psychologist. In his private work, Brendan focuses on ADHD assessment, diagnosis and developing multi-modal treatment plans, with a particular strength in identifying ADHD in complex and often-missed presentations, especially in women and girls.

With over two years of dedicated ADHD research and clinical practice, Brendan brings a unique perspective grounded in lived experience, evidence-based practice, and systemic school support.

He currently works across schools to build the capacity of psychologists and has developed tools and frameworks to support accurate formulation, meaningful intervention, and family collaboration.

Brendan is passionate about shifting the ADHD narrative towards one of understanding, clarity, and strength-based support.

WORKSHOP 15

ANXIETY IN AUTISM: ENGAGING THE ANXIOUS & AUTISTIC CLIENT

SESSION OUTLINE

Anxiety is recognised as the most commonly co-occurring clinical diagnosis for Autistic individuals, and it can have debilitating effects on social relationships, family functioning, education, and, if left untreated, adult outcomes. Research has found that school is the biggest trigger of anxiety symptoms for Autistic young people, and this is not surprising considering it is the environment where they are likely to experience the most people, the most sensory input, the most potential change and the least amount of control. In this workshop, you will learn how anxiety presents and is expressed for our Autistic students and be introduced to a range of practical strategies to increase the person-environment fit at school to help students reduce and manage their anxiety symptoms in the classroom.



Dr Theresa Kidd

SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Have an increased understanding of how anxiety presents and is expressed in Autism.
- Learn to recognise the early warning signs of anxiety in Autistic students.
- Gain knowledge on common triggers for anxiety within the school environment.
- Develop tools to assist Autistic students in managing their anxiety symptoms in the classroom.
- Improve communication and work collaboratively with anxious students and their families.
- Feel more confident in assisting with co-regulation through the interactional process of regulatory support.



Dr Miriam Kirby

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Dr Theresa Kidd is a clinical psychologist, research fellow and the clinical director of The Kidd Clinic, a private psychology group practice focused on Autism, ADHD, and Mental Health across the lifespan. Theresa is committed to helping neurodivergent individuals of all ages to minimise their challenges, increase their strengths and achieve meaningful life goals. Drawing from her own experience of living within a neurodivergent family, Theresa is passionate about increasing family quality of life by assisting families to be as strong and healthy as possible.

With a passion for intervention research, Theresa embarked on a PhD, which focused on using family-based cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) to reduce anxiety in autistic adolescents. Concurrently, she co-developed and managed the Curtin University Specialist (peer) Mentoring Program to support autistic university students to successfully engage in tertiary settings. Following, she embarked on a post-doctoral research fellowship with Macquarie University, where she coordinated a national trial to reduce anxiety and bullying victimisation in children.

In addition to her clinical and research work and supervising other psychologists, she regularly presents to parents and professionals on Autism and co-occurring mental health problems, and on Pathological Demand Avoidance. She has co-authored several articles and manuals related to Autism and has recently written a book, *Helping Autistic Teens to Manage Their Anxiety*.

Dr Miriam Kirby is an experienced Clinical Psychologist from The Kidd Clinic, a private psychology and allied health group practice in Perth and Melbourne. Miriam has worked within the areas of Autism and Mental Health for over 20 years and is committed to helping neurodivergent individuals of all ages understand their identity, identify and advocate for supports and accommodations, and manage co-occurring mental health conditions.

Miriam has experience with undertaking comprehensive Autism diagnostic assessments and supporting Autistic women and girls from a neurodiversity affirming perspective, particularly those who have been identified as Autistic later in life.

In addition to her clinical work, Miriam is the Training and Development Lead at The Kidd Clinic, and regularly facilitates training for parents, educators and professionals on topics such as Autism and co-occurring mental health conditions, neurodiversity in the workplace, and PDA.

WORKSHOP 16

WALKING TOGETHER: CULTURAL SAFETY IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

SESSION OUTLINE

This interactive workshop will explore the concept of cultural safety and its key principles in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. It will focus on how school psychologists can meaningfully apply these principles in their everyday work with students.

Attendees will develop a deeper understanding of what cultural safety is—including how it differs from concepts such as cultural awareness and cultural competence—and why cultural safety is essential to the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. Attendees will learn how to meaningfully engage in self-reflexivity, to ensure that they are operating in a culturally safe way when working with Aboriginal young people, parents, and colleagues.

The workshop will draw on new findings from a research project examining cultural safety in mainstream mental health services, which involved gathering insights from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, their families and caregivers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, and cultural experts. The workshop will unpack the core principles that emerged from this research and facilitate attendees in translating these into practical and culturally safe strategies for use in their work settings. Culturally safe practices will be embedded throughout the session, including the use of yarning circles and reflective activities. Attendees will also receive practical tools and resources to support culturally responsive and respectful engagement in their everyday practice.

SESSION OUTCOMES

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Define cultural safety and distinguish it from related concepts.
- Understand the importance of cultural safety in supporting the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.
- Engage in ongoing self-reflexive practice.
- Identify key principles of cultural safety.
- Apply culturally safe strategies and ways of working in school psychology practice.
- Use tools, resources, and culturally safe methods—such as yarning—to enhance culturally safe engagement with students.



Professor Helen Milroy

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Professor Helen Milroy will present with co-facilitators from The Kids Research Institute & The University of WA.

Professor Helen Milroy is a descendant of the Palkyu people of the Pilbara region and a renowned advocate for the mental health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Helen is the Co-Director of Embrace at The Kids Research Institute Australia; Western Australia's first research collaboration devoted to the mental health of infants, children and young people ages 0-25. Helen is also the Co-lead of the Healing Kids, Healing Families team at The Kids Research Institute, the Stan Perron Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (PCH and UWA), and an Honorary Research Fellow. Professor Milroy has built an exceptional career in child and adolescent psychiatry across clinical practice, teaching, research, and leadership. Her work draws on holistic, trauma-informed, and culturally grounded approaches to mental health and healing.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Commissioner on the National Mental Health Commission (2017–2021) and the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (2013–2017).
- Lead researcher and co-head of a national program investigating the impact of trauma on the mental health of children and young people.
- Key contributor to the WA Aboriginal Child Health Survey (2000–2002).
- Recognised expert in child mental health, Aboriginal health, trauma-informed care, holistic medicine, and Indigenous knowledge systems.
- Renowned author and illustrator of children's books.
- Contributor to national and international policy, advisory, and research groups through teaching, mentorship, and publications.

RECOMMENDED READING

Attendees may find it helpful to refer to Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice. This resource offers valuable insights to support culturally safe practice in everyday work, but knowledge of this text is not required to attend the workshop.

<https://www.thekids.org.au/globalassets/media/documents/aboriginal-health/workingtogether-second-edition/working-together-aboriginal-and-wellbeing-2014.pdf>

For Helen's academic works, please refer to

<https://research-repository.uwa.edu.au/en/persons/helen-milroy/>

For a list of Helen's published children's books, please refer to

<https://fremantlepress.com.au/contributor/helen-milroy/>



WORKSHOP 17

BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT PLANNING WITH A TRAUMA INFORMED LENS

SESSION OUTLINE

Behaviour Support Planning has been used for many years across services to address challenging behaviour and promote positive change for individuals with neurodiversity, mental health and other complex needs. In schools, the overlay of a trauma-informed lens to develop therapeutic systems of care is key to responding to students' pain-based behaviour.

Join Stella to learn more about and how to apply a systemic assessment tool to identify drivers of complex behaviour presentations. Stella will discuss understanding how the drivers of complex behaviour fit into a trauma-informed functional behaviour assessment (TI-FBA), and developing a Trauma-

Informed Behaviour Support Plan for school staff and to translate into a student plan. This presentation will summarise the innovative trauma literature and weave it into a TI-FBA process to use to build school staff capacity in responding to complex behaviours. The process will lead to the application of trauma-informed practices within a behaviour support plan that can be used as an implementation tool to promote student and staff safety, enhance a culture of non-violence and support overall school wellbeing.



Stella Smith

SESSION OUTCOMES

The presentation will provide a framework to promote trauma-informed thinking about neurodiversity and complex behaviour to apply to a plan to bring a trauma-informed system and framework to life, ready to implement into daily school practices.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Stella Smith is a registered psychologist and has worked in a range of roles specialising in behaviour consultancy, systemic behaviour therapy, counselling and mental health across metropolitan and regional Perth. She is an international Instructor in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI), Circle of Security (COS) and Mentalisation-based treatment for Parents. Stella is completing her PhD at UWA in Teacher Burnout and Post-Crisis Responses in schools. Stella is a previous Secretary of the Australian Psychologists and Counsellors in Schools (National) committee (APACS) and is passionate about trauma-informed practice, attachment and coaching the learning of adults to better support our young people.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

Stella received a scholarship to explore reflective practice between infants and parents in 2014 in WA. She then received the Anika Foundation Scholarship to support research into adolescent depression and suicide in 2019 and completed a study tour of the application of Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) systems in schools internationally. Stella published a journal article on her research findings.

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