

PRESS RELEASE

Preparing Our Hearts: New Research and Podcast to support foster carers when a child leaves their care

"...now we know ... we kind of prepare our hearts a little bit more for it..." — Foster Carer, MacKillop Family Services

While there is joy in caring for children, saying goodbye is never easy — especially in foster and kinship care, where endings are often accompanied by deep feelings of grief and loss. For many carers, these goodbyes are a regular part of their journey and can be challenging for them and their families.

Recognising the need to better understand and support foster carers during these critical moments, MacKillop Family Services commissioned Dr Margaret Kertesz from the University of Melbourne to explore the impacts of grief and loss on carers when a child leaves their care.

During her research, Dr Kertesz was struck by one recurring idea: the importance of “walking alongside carers” and helping them “prepare their hearts” for the inevitable transitions in foster care.

Building on these findings, MacKillop Family Services recorded a powerful new podcast series which will be launched on Thursday 8 May: ***Preparing Our Hearts: A Foster Care Journey***.

This five-episode series highlights the real voices, stories, and experiences of foster carers — and their biological children — as they navigate the grief and loss that are part of the foster care experience. Moving, honest, and deeply human, the series offers profound insights into the everyday reality of foster care.

Through candid interviews, carers share the coping strategies and practical ways they “prepare their hearts” for goodbyes, while MacKillop Family Services professionals reflect on how they can best “walk alongside” carers, providing the support needed when placements end.

CEO of MacKillop Family Services, Dr Robyn Miller AM, says “the *Preparing our Hearts* podcast series not only brings Dr Kertesz’s research to life but also celebrates the unwavering commitment of foster carers and the incredible difference they make in the lives of children and communities.”

Dr Miller added, “The new research and podcast series advocates for deeper listening and a stronger understanding of carers’ experiences, so that we can better support those who open their hearts and homes to children who need love and support the most.”

Podcast Available Now. Listen to *Preparing Our Hearts: A Foster Care Journey* wherever you get your podcasts.

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[Mackillop Family Services](http://MackillopFamilyServices.org.au) is a national child and family welfare organisation with extensive experience delivering therapeutic and trauma-informed services. We operate residential care, foster care, family support, disability support, youth homelessness and education programs across NSW, VIC, WA, the ACT and the NT.