

# Bringing Up Great Kids

## Parenting After Family Violence



Facilitating respectful, reflective & effective parenting groups



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The Australian Childhood Foundation acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians and owners of this land and waters. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and to the children who are their leaders of tomorrow. We acknowledge their history and living culture and the many thousands of years in which they have raised their children to be safe and strong.



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### The story so far ...

**Foundation BUGK**

**GOLD Standard BUGK Facilitator Workshop**  
*Face to face / Online*

This workshop enables participants to understand the program and from the demonstrated activities adapt to their own facilitation style with their parent cohort.

BUGK Parenting after Family Violence	*Facilitating an online BUGK group	BUGK Parenting Adolescents
BUGK for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Families	**Implementing BUGK	BUGK In the first 1000 Days
BUGK in Kinship & Foster Care	**BUGK Parenting & Mental Health	* By customised arrangement **Under Development



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# BUGK Resources

Available to Purchase



Websites

Free to Download



[www.childhood.org.au](http://www.childhood.org.au)

- Shop
- Resources
- Prosody Blog

[www.bringingupgreatkids.org](http://www.bringingupgreatkids.org)

- Free Resources
- Information & Education

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# The Primary Aim of BUGK



To increase reflective capacity in parents



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# Self-care

## Self-Care

*“the practise of taking an active role in protecting one’s own wellbeing...”*

*(Oxford Dictionary)*



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### Parent Journal: My Self-Compassion Journal



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### Defining Self-Compassion

Kristin Neff www.self-compassion.org



Mind full, or mindful?



Self-compassion



Self-kindness



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### Parent Journal: Common Humanity

Encourage parents to acknowledge their difficulties with children's behaviour and to be kind to themselves in the midst of that.

- *'When he does that, I find it really hard.'*
- *'All parents find this tricky.'*
- *'It makes me feel...'*
- *'What I need is.....'*



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# Table of Contents

- Chapter 1: Finding Safety After Violence
- Chapter 2: Challenging the Messages of Violence
- Chapter 3: Reclaiming the Messages of My Parenting
- Chapter 4: Understanding My Child's Story
- Chapter 5: Changing the Messages for my Child
- Chapter 6: Understanding and Responding to the Messages of Behaviour
- Chapter 7: Connecting the Stories of our Family



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# Mindfulness for Parents



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# Stop....Pause....Play



- Stop**
  - Stop what you are doing.
  - Make sure your feet are placed firmly on the ground.
- Pause**
  - Focus on your breath.
  - Breathe in slowly, right down into your belly, then exhale completely.
  - Take 5 more slow breaths, being aware of each breath in and each breath out.
  - Smile and enjoy standing like this for a moment. Feel your body relax.
  - Reflect. Ask yourself "What do I need?" and "What does my child need?"
- Play**
  - Respond to your child with new understanding.



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## Deep Listening



**'To listen in reciprocal relationships with no judgment, just to try to understand'**

(JUDY ATKINSON 2017, the Value of Deep Listening-The Aboriginal Gift to the Nation)



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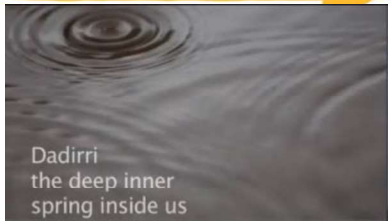
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## Dadirri – To listen is to know me. Miriam Rose



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tow2tR\\_est8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tow2tR_est8)

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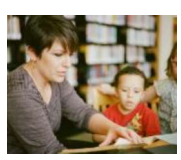
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## Storytime



The reading of children's stories to parents, re-engages parents with their childhood experiences of having stories read or told to them and the inherent "messages" within them.



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## Chapter contents

### Outline

- Key Messages
- Pre-session Facilitator Reflection
- Preparation/set-up/resources

### Part 1

- Welcome/reconnect
- STOP....PAUSE.....PLAY
- Deep Listening

### Part 2

- Core Activities & Options

### Part 3

- Self-Care
- Self Compassion Journal
- Storytime
- Summary

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## Who should come?

- What would be the criteria to enable parents to attend the group?
- When would you think parents were not ready to attend the group?



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## Chapter 1

### Finding Safety after Violence





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### Chapter 1: Finding Safety after Violence Key messages



- The safety of all participants is critical
- Recognising parental strengths and showing compassion for themselves and for each other is vitally important.



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### Chapter 1: Finding Safety after Violence Facilitator Reflection

- What are your experiences of family violence and self compassion?
- How do you see yourself as a family violence parent group facilitator?



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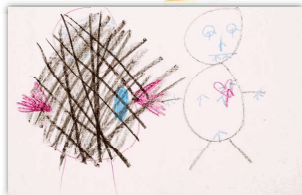
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### Chapter 1: Finding Safety after Violence Defining trauma

**Trauma** is not what happens **to** you, but what happens **inside** you.  
(Gabor Mate 2018)



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Chapter 1: Finding Safety after Violence  
Neuroception of safety

- "The removal of threat is not the same as the presence of safety" (Porges, 2014)
- We need to help parents who have experienced trauma detect more features of safety in their group environment.



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Chapter 2: Challenging the Messages of Violence  
Shedding light on shame



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Chapter 1 Finding Safety After Violence  
Family Soup



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Chapter 1 Finding Safety After Violence  
Bringing safety to life



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Chapter 1: Finding Safety after Violence  
Self-care

One of life's secrets:  
Learn to pause  
Emerge positive



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Chapter 1: Finding Safety after Violence

How will you adapt the content  
of this chapter into your work with parents?

Are there any special considerations you  
need to take into account?



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## Chapter 2

### Challenging the Messages of Violence



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### Chapter 2: Challenging the Messages of Violence Key messages



- All individuals find some way of challenging violence, even if at first it is not easy to identify those actions.
- Individuals have inner strengths that enable them to survive the violence, find ways to keep safe and ensure their children are safe and looked after.
- Safety of all participants is critical



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### Chapter 2: Reconnection Activity



- Important for the formation of the group
- Builds relationships
- Fosters sense of connection, trust and felt sense of safety



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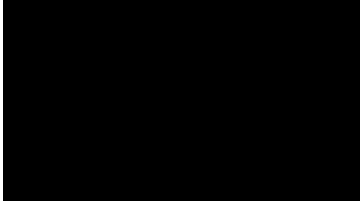
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Chapter 2: Challenging the Messages of Violence  
The power of small steps



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Chapter 2: Challenging the Messages of Violence  
Acknowledging strength and courage



- How would you and your child's story be different if you didn't take even the smallest steps to keep yourself and your child safe?
- What do you think your child would say to you if they could understand how much strength it took to care for them in your family during that time?
- What do you say to yourself now after thinking about it?



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Chapter 2: Challenging the Messages of Violence  
How do you talk to yourself?



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Chapter 2: Challenging the Messages of Violence  
How do you talk to yourself?



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Chapter 2: Challenging the Messages of Violence  
Self-care



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Chapter 3

Validating my Parenting Story




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### Chapter 3: Validating my Parenting Story Key Messages



- Messages parents received in childhood from their parents/caregivers shape their own parenting in the present.
- Each parent has hopes for the kind of parent they want to be for their children.



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### Chapter 3: Validating my Parenting Story Challenging messages from Family Violence

No-one can help you.

You are not able to look after them properly.

It was all your fault.



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### Chapter 3: Validating my Parenting Story Pass the parcel



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Chapter 3: Validating my Parenting Story  
Five messages about parenting



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Chapter 3: Validating my Parenting Story  
Rubbish, recycle or reframe/recreate



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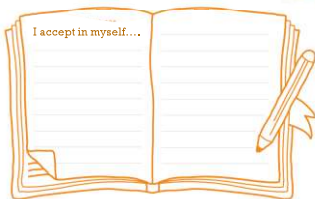
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Chapter 3: Validating my Parenting Story  
Self-care



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**Chapter 4**  
**Understanding my Child's Story**




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**Chapter 4: Understanding my Child's Story**  
**Key Messages**



- Knowing about early brain development can help parents walk in their child's shoes.
- Children's experiences include their perspective, the way their minds and bodies have reacted and their hopes and ambitions for their own lives.
- It is important to understand how children have experienced the relationship in their family.



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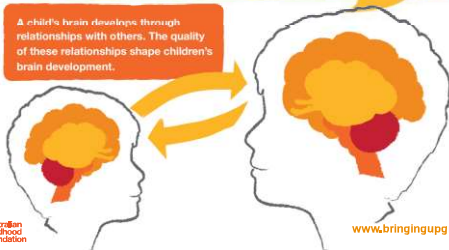
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**Chapter 4: Understanding my Child's Story**  
**Growing Brains**

A child's brain develops through relationships with others. The quality of these relationships shape children's brain development.



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Chapter 4: Understanding my Child's Story  
Neuronal connections in family violence



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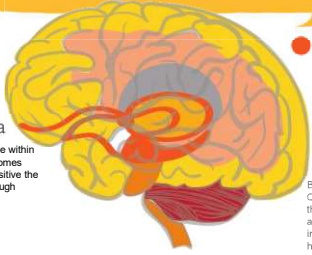
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Chapter 4: Understanding my Child's Story  
Where trauma affects the brain



Amygdala

Survival response centre within the limbic lobe that becomes enlarged and more sensitive the more it is activated through responding to threats

Hippocampus

Consolidates memory by providing the context/ sequential data for episodic memories. Goes offline if trauma overwhelms and disrupts cortex.

Corpus Callosum

Bridge between the 2 hemispheres. Chronic stress can damage and thin down this bundle of neurons and thus compromises the brain's integrity between the two hemispheres.



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Chapter 4: Understanding my Child's Story  
The traumatised brain



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Chapter 4: Understanding my Child's Story  
How experiences in the early years shape brain development



Australian Childhood Foundation Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMyDPYskZSU> www.bringingupgreatkids.org

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Chapter 4: Understanding my Child's Story  
Self-care



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Chapter 5  
Changing the Messages for the Child



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### Chapter 5: Changing the Messages for the Child Key Messages



- Non-verbal messages are very powerful in our communication
- Messages we receive from our childhood can create barriers to or enhance effective communication with our children.
- Positive messages that parents give their children from now on will strengthen their development.



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### Chapter 5: Changing the Messages for the Child Communication patterns



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### Chapter 5: Changing the Messages for the Child Transforming Messages



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### Chapter 5: Changing the Messages for the Child Barriers to Communication

\*Wahit things get in the way of us communicating clearly with our children?

\*Yuur bairn is so pweered, taht it can read sentences with mexid up words as long as frog as the fruit and Isat letters are in the right pacle.



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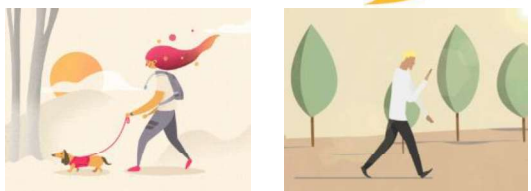
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### Chapter 5: Changing the Messages for the Child Self-care



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### Chapter 5: Changing the Messages for the Child My special Person



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## Chapter 5: Holding Space Video



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEtrj4tqgtU>

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## Chapter 6

### Understanding and Responding to the Messages of Behaviour




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## Chapter 6: Key Messages



- All behaviour has meaning.
- Behaviour is an expression of our feelings and needs.
- A child learns to regulate and shape their behaviour through the experience of being soothed by a calm and regulated adult.
- Rupture happens in all relationships, it is the relational repair that builds capacity.



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### Chapter 6: Responding to Behaviour



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### Chapter 6: Understanding and Responding to the Messages of Behaviour



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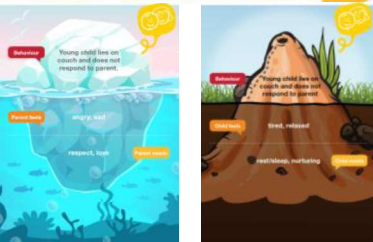
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### Chapter 6: Anthill/Iceberg



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### Chapter 6: Messages of Behaviour



"The problem for children who have experienced trauma is they can develop a mismatched nervous system that can react to the environment as dangerous, when it is safe."  
(Porges, 2014)



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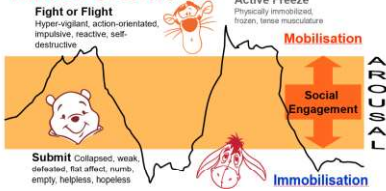
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### Chapter 6: Window of Tolerance

#### Window of tolerance



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### Chapter 6: Understanding and Responding to the Messages of Behaviour 'When kids feel right, they act right'

Rather than asking:

**"What are you doing?"**  
and  
**"How can I stop it?"**

Wonder:

**"What are you feeling?/trying to tell me?"**  
And

**"What do you need (from me)?"**



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Chapter 6  
Helping Everyone with Their Big Feelings

Listening to my **BIG** feelings

SAD ANGRY FRUSTRATED JOYFUL  
EXCITED HAPPY FRIGHTENED



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Chapter 6: Understanding and Responding  
to the Messages of Behaviour  
Self-care



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Chapter 7  
Connecting the  
Story of our Family



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Chapter 7: Connecting the Story of our Family  
Key Messages



- Connecting parents and children together into a new story that has hope as the basis for moving forward after violence.
- All parents need help and support at some time. It is a strength to seek out support, not a weakness.



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Chapter 7: Connecting the Story of our Family  
Strengths, Strengths, Strengths.



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Chapter 7: Connecting the Story of our Family  
Family strengths



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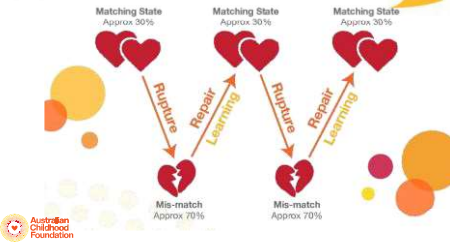
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Chapter 7: Connecting the Story of our Family  
Good enough parenting (Ed Tronik)



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Chapter 7: Connecting the Story of our Family  
Ask for help



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Chapter 7: Connecting the Story of our Family  
Self compassion: be kind to yourself



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**Chapter 7: Passing on Messages**  
Storytime - Rain Before Rainbows



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**Chapter 7: Connecting the Story of our Family Self-care**



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**Hope – An Outcome of Change**

*Hope is the first moment in time when they dare to dream . . . . .*



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## Celebration!!!



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## Reflective Evaluation for a Reflective Program



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## Contacting Us



[parenting@childhood.org.au](mailto:parenting@childhood.org.au)



Bringing Up Great Kids Parenting Programs Professionals Network



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