



# Shoalhaven eNews

September/October 2020

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Welcome to the latest eNews. What a couple of months it has been! In addition to our regular daily challenges, COVID-19 has created extra layers of difficulty for most of the things we do. Of course there have been positives amongst the challenges but sometimes these can be hard to see. Did you know that the DCO website has a page dedicated to **Mental Health and Wellbeing**? Here you can find tips and strategies for coping with the unique set of challenges faced by Defence families. Additional support and information is still available 24/7 from the Defence Family Helpline on 1800 624 608 or email [defencefamilyhelpline@defence.gov.au](mailto:defencefamilyhelpline@defence.gov.au).

## July/August Recap



For our Ultimate Holiday competition in July, winner Maxine shared the ultimate holiday she had booked for her and 5 other couples to celebrate her 20 year anniversary and wonderful friendships! She says "There were 5 couples booked to celebrate 10 years of friendship. Many planets had to align for everyone to be available (2 Defence families making it nearly impossible) and for the combined 11 children to have care over the 9 days. We were to be cruising to the Pacific Islands" - sounds amazing! Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 they had to cancel their trip but they still enjoyed donning their holiday kits and sharing them with us.



During August we ran an Art Competition which was such a pleasure to host. There were so many incredible pieces sent through to us, as well as some wonderful memories shared about people's ADF loved ones. One of our winners Abigail (aged 7) shared with us that her favourite memory of her Dad is when he came home from a 6 month deployment and met her baby sister for the first time!

## Eventbrite



In line with Australian Government guidelines on social distancing and non-essential travel, as well as gatherings and events in response to COVID-19, all Defence Community Organisation face to face social events have been restructured to follow appropriate guidelines.

To keep up with how these changes have impacted the way we host restricted face-to-face events, head to the [DCO Nowra Eventbrite](#) page. Here you can find all the information and registration details for upcoming events, including what you need to know during COVID-19.

## Mental Health Month - October



October is Mental Health Month. The 2020 theme is “Tuning In”. The Mental Health Month [website](#) tells us that:

“Tuning In means being present, being aware of what’s happening within you and in the world around you.

Tune In to your senses – what can you sense right now? What can you feel?

Tune In to your communities – what’s happening that you can be part of or that you can help others be part of?

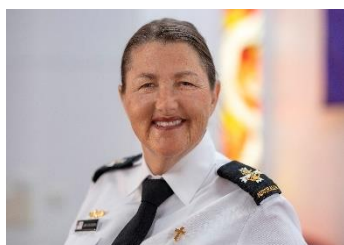
Tune In to stigma – how do attitudes and understandings of mental health and wellbeing impact people’s ability to live the lives they want?

Taking a moment to Tune In can help still and focus your mind, it can help you understand what’s going on for you and others. Tuning in can help you find a new perspective and it can help you reflect and be present.

Tuning In has been shown to help build self-awareness, help make effective choices, reduce the impact of worry and build positive connections. Tuning In to communities and the impact of mental health stigma can help ensure that people who need support have safe places to talk about their experiences and reach out.”

If you or someone you know is seeking more information or support or if you would like to host an event for Mental Health Month, you can find more [here](#).

## Chaplains Chirp



### Relationships Part 2

Your Marriage or relationship is a long term investment, something that you put a lot of effort into developing. You made the effort to spend time together to grow the relationship. You reached the point where you decided that you want to be together for life, maybe raise a family and become a family unit.

However, marriages go through seasons. The early years are like Spring, new and fresh. During this time you’re discovering things about each other. The greatest need at this time is the need for acceptance.

Summer is a time of increased demands. Perhaps this could be family or career pressures. Your relationships greatest need is the investment of time to the relationship. Make time to be together and talk. One of the biggest killers of relationships is lack of communication. Why is this so? Watch [here](#).

This week’s activity is to sit and talk. Recall times of stress from the past and how you got through them. What strengths do each of you bring to the relationship? What different ways do you complement each other’s character? Is

one of you more positive than the other? Is one outgoing and one quieter? How do these traits either strengthen or strain your marriage? Have fun.

If you're interested in learning more, take a look at [The Marriage Course](#).

Blessings, Chaplain Jenny

## A message from the Education Liaison Officer for NSW



Adult Learners Week is celebrated at the beginning of Spring with hundreds of events and activities promoting the benefits of learning. Across Australia there are so many opportunities available to learn.

Adult Learners Week is a UNESCO initiative supported in Australia by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Skills and Employment and coordinated by [Adult Learning Australia](#). Adult Learners Week runs from 1–8 September and incorporates International Literacy Day, which is celebrated annually on September 8.

Adult Learners Week in Australia is part of an international festival of adult learning.

The move to create broad celebrations of adult learning began with the American Association for the Advancement of Education (AAAE) in the late 1980s. In 1990, governments met in Jomtien, Thailand for the Education for All world Conference. The aim of this conference was to set goals for:

- universal access to and completion of primary education and
- reducing the adult illiteracy rate to one half its 1990 level by 2000.

To link into learning or find or host an event, please click [here](#).

## From the Defence community



During August, Bomaderry High School commemorated the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of WWII with a display put together by Defence School Mentor, Tracey Clothier. The items in this image include some original pieces from the WWII era, along with items that Tracey has crafted herself.

August 14, 1945 marks the day Japan accepted the Allied demand for unconditional surrender, ending the Second World War and freeing many Australian prisoners of war. This came three months after Germany surrendered in Europe. WWII spanned 6 years and multiple continents, and cost the lives of some 40,000 Australian servicemen and servicewomen.

On the morning of August 15, 1945, Prime Minister Ben Chifley addressed the Nation, "Let us remember those whose lives were given that we may enjoy this glorious moment and may look forward to the peace which they have won for us".

## Shoalhaven Defence Families Association



The [Shoalhaven Defence Families Association](#) and Kookaburra Retreat is a local community group where you can meet new people and other Defence families in the community. Keep an eye out on their [website](#) and [Facebook](#) page for updates on events and activities. Weekly events at SDFA include:

- Kookaburra Playgroup every Tuesday 10am-12pm. During COVID-19, this will be conducted in the outdoor space to comply with government restrictions.



- Coffee & Crèche every Monday, Thursday and Friday 9:30am-12:30pm. The number of spaces are limited to meet government restriction guidelines and it is open for SDFA members only.
- Mask Sewing Bee. If you would like to try your hand at sewing, coordinator Maxine is an excellent teacher. Help SDFA to sew reusable face masks for you and the rest of the Defence community.

To find out more information, reach out via social media, phone the office on 02 44245766 or [email](#).

Kookaburra Retreat—where fun and support meet.

## Shoalhaven Defence Catchups



Shoalhaven Defence Catchups is a group run by local Navy partner Natalie. The group invites fellow Defence partner's to connect both online through their Facebook page and in person through events such as dinner and coffee catchups.

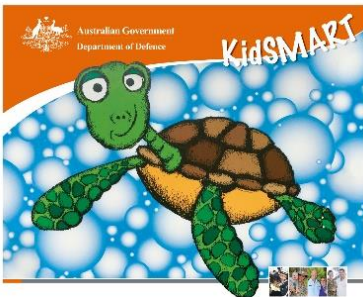
To find out more, search "Shoalhaven Defence Catchups" on Facebook.

## ForceNet



You can access ForceNet whenever and wherever you like using the free mobile application. Keep up-to-date with news, events and information. Stay involved with your unit group, other specific interest groups or group discussions and never miss that important notification again. ForceNet Families is also available via the ForceNet mobile app at Google Play and the App Store.

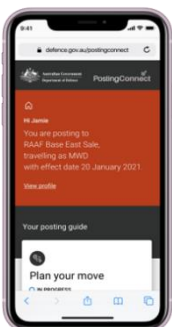
## KidSMART, TeenSMART and FamilySMART



These DCO **SMART** programs are aimed at helping ADF kids and families manage military life.

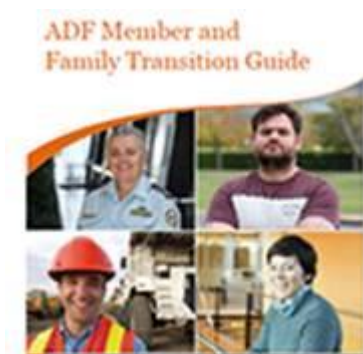
These programs have been postponed until further notice in line with Australian Government guidelines on gatherings and events. If you are interested in taking part in a DCO SMART program in the Shoalhaven, please email the **DCO Nowra group inbox** to be placed on a waiting list.

## Posting Connect – Providing a simpler posting experience



Posting Connect is a new Defence platform that will streamline the posting process for members and their families and is currently on track to be available from September 2020. ADF members will receive an email invitation on the Defence Protected Network (DPN) inviting them to use Posting Connect once a posting order has been issued. **Sign up to receive the monthly Posting Connect Newsletter** to ensure you receive the latest updates, or contact [posting.connect@defence.gov.au](mailto:posting.connect@defence.gov.au) or view the **Posting Connect website** for more information.

## ADF Transition



As part of DCO, ADF Transition is now offering virtual support in line with Government guidance on COVID-19 and is changing the way we support you and your family to transition to civilian life. Our local ADF Transition teams have been busy working on flexible ways to support you in these different times. Transition coaches are able to support you and your family by video call, phone call or email. They will help you progress your transition plan or adjust your timeline, depending on what works for you. Contact a coach in your local area to discuss your needs or access the ADF Member and Family Transition Guide online at any time on the [DCO website](#).

## ADF Family Health Program



The ADF Family Health Program makes healthcare more affordable and accessible for recognised dependants of full-time ADF Members and Reservists on Continuous Full-time Service. Families can claim unlimited reimbursement of gap fees for Medicare recognised GP visits, and also receive a financial allocation (up to \$400 per dependant) for use towards allied health and medical specialist services.

Easy registration and electronic claiming make the Program extremely user friendly. The ADF Member can register family members by completing the WebForm ([AD858-1](#)) or they can find the form on the [ADF Family Health Program Website](#).

Once notified that they have been successfully registered they can start claiming quickly and simply via the ADF Family Health Program Website or via the ADF Family Health App which is available for both Android and Apple devices.

For further information on the Program and how to register please visit [ADF Family Health Program](#) website or phone 1300 561 454.

## What's on in the Shoalhaven?



For the film buffs, from September 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Huskisson Pictures is hosting the Travelling Film Festival. The program includes films from around the globe as well as acclaimed directors from countries such as Poland, Palestine, Australia, Colombia, USA and Saudi Arabia to name just a few. To find out more about the festival and to see how Huskisson Pictures in ensuring all health and safety protocols are in place, take a look at the [event website](#).

If being outdoors is more your style, why not try your hand at Glamping. Pitch South Coast are embarking on a glamping adventure each month and pitching a campsite at different locations along the South Coast in a bid to bring some much needed tourism back into our region. Check out their [website](#) for more.

## Navy Health



Established in 1955, [Navy Health](#) provides health cover to the wider ADF community, serving and ex-serving members and their families. As a not-for-profit health insurer and part of the Members Health Fund Alliance, Navy Health put their members at the heart of everything they do. They also offer a 10% discount off premiums for serving ADF members, Active Reservists (SERCAT 3-5) or White or Gold Veteran Card holders.\*

\*Active Reservists (SERCAT 3-5) and White and Gold Card holders must be covered by the membership for the discount to apply.

## Defence Health



Defence Health are an award winning, not-for-profit health insurer with great value health insurance designed specifically for ADF families. If you're interested in private health insurance for you and your family, contact them on 1800 335 425.

## Defence Special Needs Support Group Inc



DSNSG is a national, not-for-profit, benevolent volunteer organisation providing support, information, assistance and advocacy for ADF families who have a dependant with special needs.

For more information, visit the DSNSG [website](#), follow them on [Facebook](#) or email [nowra@dsnsg.org.au](mailto:nowra@dsnsg.org.au)

## Soldier On



Soldier On is a not-for-profit veteran support organisation delivering a range of services to veterans and their families. They provide a range of health and wellbeing services, employment opportunities, learning and education programs and community, social and sporting activities. To find out more, follow them on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) or visit their [website](#).

## Kookaburra Kids



The Kookaburra Kids Foundation delivers free camps and activities for young people aged 8-18 who are experiencing family mental illness. They aim to empower young people to build resilience, lifelong knowledge, skills and abilities so they can reach their potential. Kookaburra Kids provides a simple referral service, along with a range of resources.

To find out more information, follow them on Facebook, call 1300 566 525 or email [info@kookaburrakids.org.au](mailto:info@kookaburrakids.org.au)

## Defence Families Australia (DFA)



Defence Families of Australia (DFA) is the official ADF families' advisory body to the Minister for Defence Personnel and the Chief of the Defence Force. The organisation sits outside of Defence systems, allowing DFA independence and impartiality to act in the best interests of ADF families.

DFA are currently hearing many questions about postings. Some families have had postings cancelled, postponed or looking different to what was expected.

It's safe to say nothing about 2020 has been expected.

What happens if you are getting posted during this time?

DFA recommends that you take the time to read the [Toll Relocation Guide](#) so you understand the basics of how a posting works. Do some research into where you are coming from and where you are going to. The advice will be different for each state or territory.

DFA recommends that you check regularly with your state or territory government website or with their social media pages as information can change quickly. You may need to download a border declaration depending on where you are relocating. You may be required to quarantine.

The new **PostingConnect** platform will be available from 1st September 2020.

Your Toll Case Manager will support and guide ADF Members and their families who are posting into a location that requires a quarantine period. Please do not hesitate to contact Toll with any concerns or uncertainty you have about your relocation.

If you have other questions, make sure you check in with

**Defence Housing Australia**, Toll, or the Defence Family Helpline at

**Defence Community Organisation**

DFA are also there to advocate for you should you need them.

Contact the delegate for ACT and Southern NSW

at [act.sthnsw@dfa.org.au](mailto:act.sthnsw@dfa.org.au) and follow DFA on

their [national](#) or [regional](#) Facebook pages, [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#).

## Australian Military Wives Choir (AMWC)



AMWC is a “no audition, no experience necessary” choir for women significantly connected to serving ADF members. They welcome new members at any time during the year and despite the word “wives” in their name, they welcome girlfriends, partners, wives, mothers, sisters, as well as female ADF members.

For more information or to join, email the Shoalhaven Coordinator, Justine at [shoalhaven@amwchoir.com](mailto:shoalhaven@amwchoir.com) or take a look on the AMWC [website](#).

## Defence Family Helpline

**1800 624 608**

For advice, support or local community information, contact our Defence Family Helpline. The Helpline is the best way to access the programs and services that we offer to help Defence families manage the military way of life.

The helpline is available 24/7 and is staffed by qualified human services professionals including social workers and psychologists.

The information contained in this bulletin is sent out on behalf of other agencies and groups. It does not necessarily indicate DCO support or involvement. The intention is to provide information to readers so that they can self-select and research its suitability.

If you would like to receive this bulletin or no longer wish to receive it, please email your request to [dco.canberra-nowra@defence.gov.au](mailto:dco.canberra-nowra@defence.gov.au).



Follow Defence Community Organisation to receive updates.

