

PGC Children's Counselling Service
9328 1888

PGC Women's Counselling Service
93001022

Women's Domestic Violence Helpline
9233 1188

Kids Helpline
1800 551 800

Crisis Care
92231111



For enquires and referrals please call
Michelle - (08) 9300 0340

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Building Animal Relationships with Kids



BARK

A group for children and young people who have lost a pet through family violence or who have begun hurting animals.

Ph: 9300 0340

www.patgilescentre.org.au

BARK is an animal assisted therapeutic group program for children affected by family violence.

The group is held at the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) centre in Malaga.

It is a six week program, for primary school aged children, held after school and includes afternoon tea.

Each session runs from 3.30-5pm, the children will spend time with small animals that are used to being handled (guinea pigs, rabbits and cats). Very few children have a strong negative reaction to small animals unlike dogs which can cause anxiety.

The group program is facilitated by a Children's counselor, a child support worker and the RSPCA animal educator, the program promotes empathy, healing and trust in primary aged children who have witnessed and/or experienced family violence.

The children will be taught how to safely handle and care for the animal by using the animal as the focus of conversation about physical and emotional safety; children can identify when the animal is relaxed and when it's nervous. Noticing and interpreting the feelings of another and changing their behavior helps children demonstrate empathy.

The group process allows children to discuss their own experiences of past pets and family events (violence). This reduces their sense of isolation, allows for peers to model positive interactions with animals and each other.

- Weekly Themes
- Safety
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Body language



Witnessing parent and pet abuse may compromise children's psychological adjustment, increase their propensity for interpersonal violence (via observational learning and/or identification with the aggressor) and make children's cruelty to animals more likely to emerge as a symptom of their distress..."

(Ascione, Weber & Wood, 1997b, p.4).

The Patricia Giles Centre is a not for profit incorporated community organization, that delivers innovative and well respected crisis services to women and children who have experienced domestic and family violence.

The centre has over twenty years of experience delivered by skilled and professional staff who are committed to providing responsive and relevant services to women and children.

PGC is supported by Department of Child Protection, Department of Housing, Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations, Department of Family and Communities Housing and Indigenous Affairs, Lotterywest Department of Attorney-General's, Department of Corrections and many individuals and community groups.

Patricia Giles Centre is a fully incorporated, charitable organisation and donations of \$2.00 or more are tax deductible. Donations can be directed to specific services of your choice.

The centre appreciates the donations it receives from individuals, community groups and the corporate sector.

