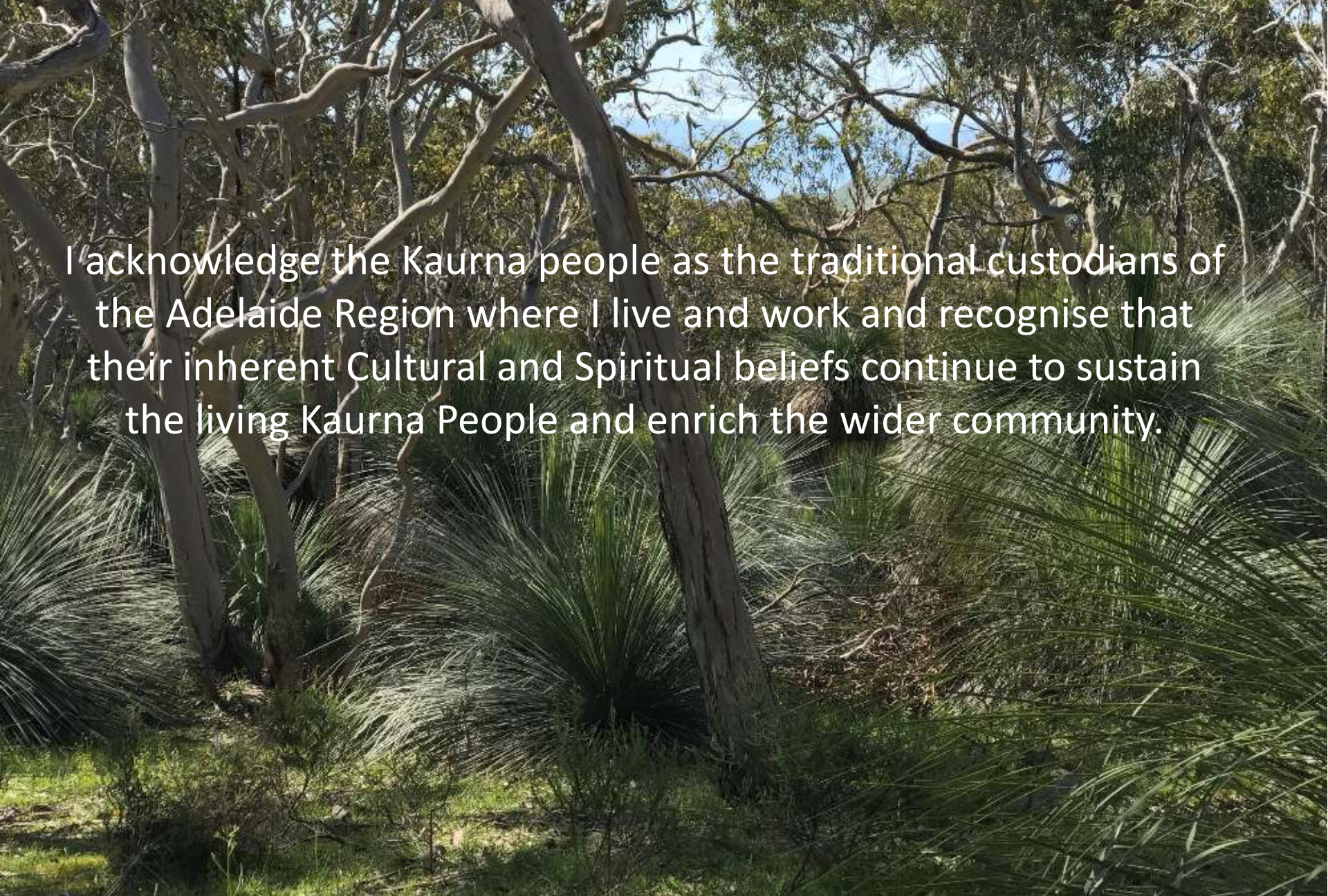


Screening, early interventions & coordinated support

Claire Ralfs Ph.D.

CEO Relationships Australia South Australia



I acknowledge the Kurna people as the traditional custodians of the Adelaide Region where I live and work and recognise that their inherent Cultural and Spiritual beliefs continue to sustain the living Kurna People and enrich the wider community.

Arafura Sea

Solom

Co

NT

QLD

Australia

WA

SA

NSW

VIC

TAS





Relationships Australia South Australia

- 8 service sites
- 300 staff
- > 25,000 clients each year

An epidemic of family troubles



- 50% of OECD families will separate
- By age 15, 40% of Australian children will experience parental separation
- Anxiety and mood disorders twice as likely for separated/divorced adults
- Abuse of alcohol/illicit drugs more likely for separated/divorced adults
- Chronic parental conflict & violence significantly harms short and long term child development
- 1 in 4 Australian children by the age of 10 will be reported to child protection services
- In Australia, more than 1 women a week is murdered by her current or former partner
- 1 in 6 Australian women aged over 15 experience FDV



Risks during
separation are
real and often
acute

System chaos
amplifies
family chaos

Australian's family law system – steps toward integration

- Since 2006, the Australian government has funded 65 community based Family Relationship Centres (FRCs)
 - Designed to provide coordinated, **non-adversarial dispute resolution** that is focused on the wellbeing and **'best interests' of children**
 - They are the **mandated 'front door'** of the family law system and increasingly offer integrated family support
- Increasing collaboration between State Government child protection systems and the Federal family law system

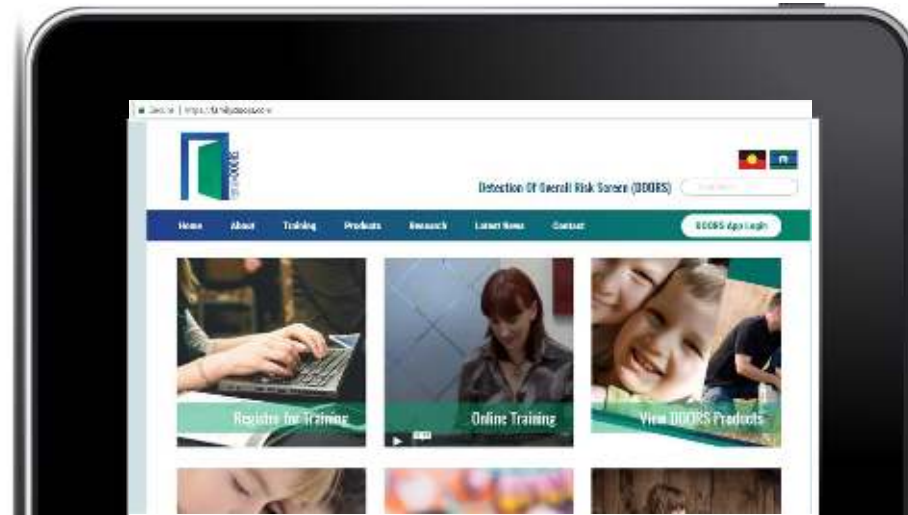


Detection Of Overall Risk Screen (DOORS)

A screenshot of the 'Parent Self-Report Form' interface. It includes a header with logos for 'DOORS 1', 'Relationships Australia', and 'FamilyDOORS'. The form has sections for 'Introduction', 'About you', and a list of questions with checkboxes for 'Yes', 'No', and 'N/A'. The questions cover topics like parental agreement, discipline, and parental involvement.

Professor Jennifer McIntosh AM
Deakin University
Centre for Social & Emotional Early
Development

New DOORS App www.familydoors.com



Translating the funding and policy framework into collaborative practice



- Australian governments are funding a system change but service responses also need to change
- Effective early intervention needs holistic and tailored responses
- Service silos must be replaced with collaborative practices that address family complexity

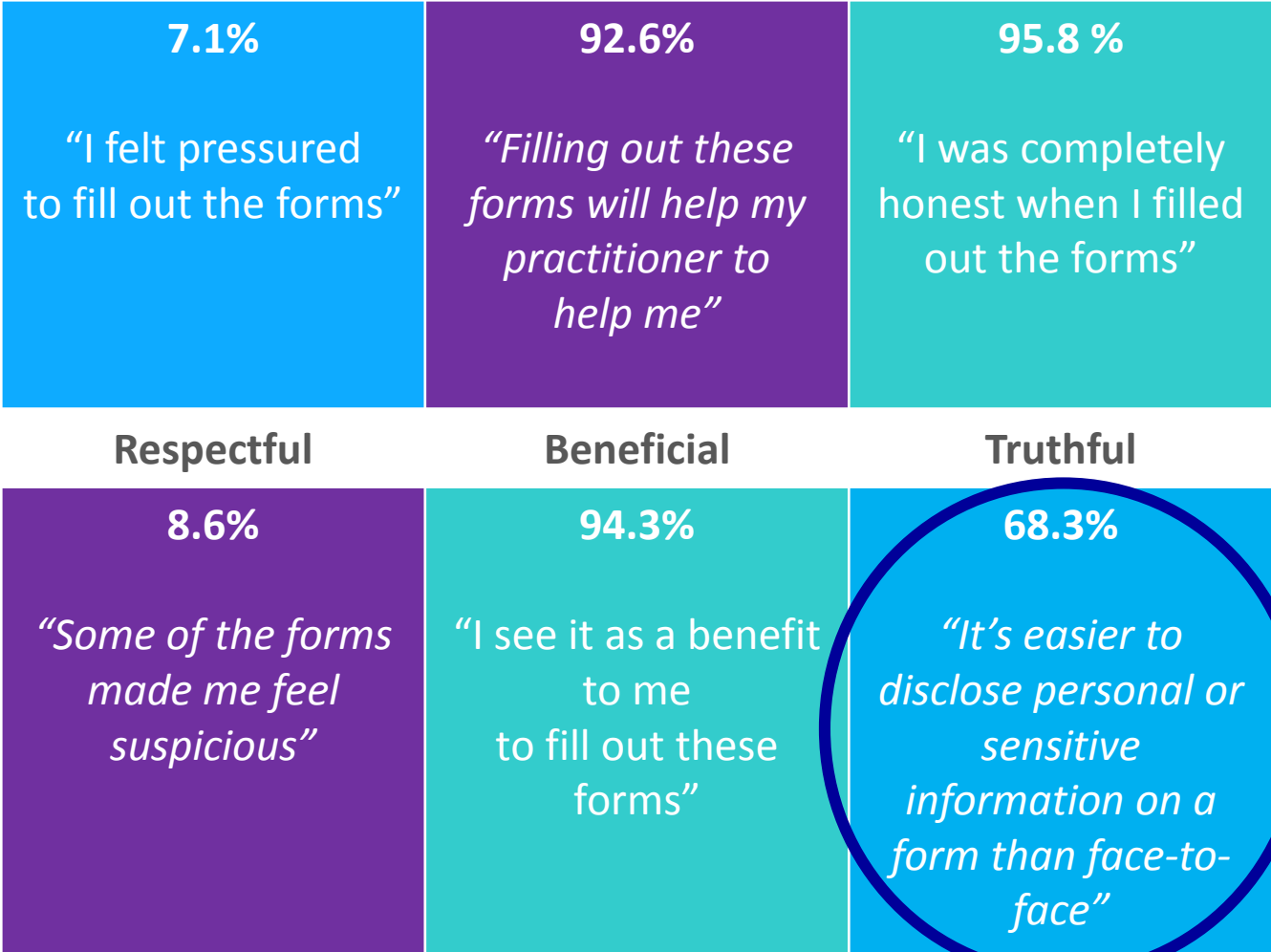
Practice assumptions



- Detection of the multiple risks faced by families is not as simple as most practitioners assume
- Too often practitioners believe they are 'good enough' at identifying family risks and they don't need to change their practices
- Many studies demonstrate we will miss about 50% of client risks unless we systematically ask clients about them

Clients value holistic screening

Anonymous client survey with 134 'just-screened' clients



Clients value holistic screening

95% AGREE

“If something possibly significant found... then I should be contacted”

30% AGREE

“I just want the minimum contact... about my case and nothing else”

15% DISAGREE

“It’s acceptable to share info without consent in an emergency”

15% DISAGREE

“I would like occasional texts or phone calls with updates and advice”

Anonymous survey of 263 – 269 RASA post-separation parents

Parents typically want proactive support and information sharing

They expect more than silos

She says, He says



Independent self-reported items that do not apply to the other parent



Mum:
his
behaviour
is unsafe

Dad:
my
behaviour
is unsafe

I am not
coping well

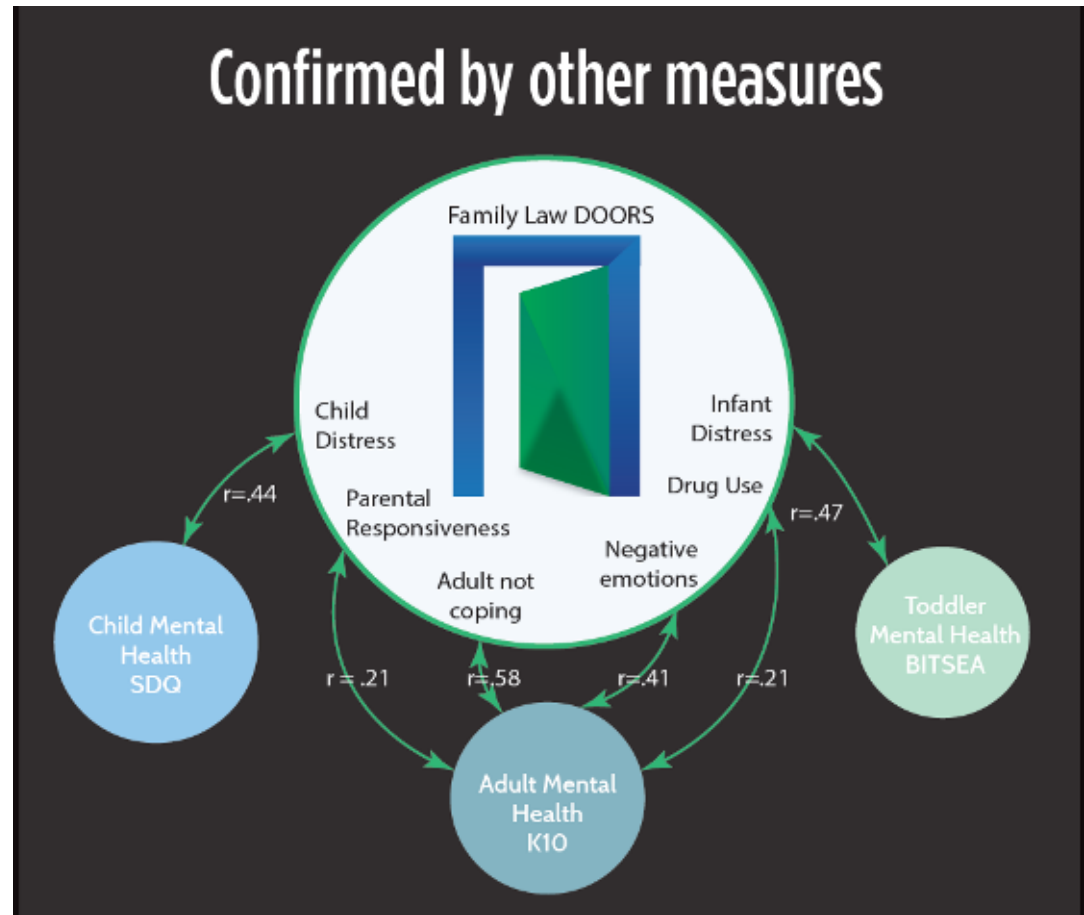
She's not
coping well

He is not
coping well

I am not
coping well

Surprising alignment of self reported items

DOORS research findings: DOOR 1 is efficient



DOORS correlates strongly with ‘gold standard’ mental health measures but using many fewer items – it gets there quicker

Family DOORS has moved beyond Family Law

- RASA uses the Family DOORS in early intervention child protection services
- These new programs provide tailored and coordinated services to vulnerable, often young parents at risk of having their child removed by the state
- First 12 months of new CFARN program, involving 580 highly vulnerable children resulted in only 14 children taken into state care



Thank you



References

Websites

- www.familydoors.com
- www.rasa.org.au

Published articles

- Wells, Y., Lee, J., Li, X., Tan, E. S., & McIntosh, J. E. (2018). Re-examination of the Family Law Detection of Overall Risk Screen (FL-DOORS): Establishing fitness for purpose. *Psychological Assessment, 30*(8), 1121-1126. doi:10.1037/pas0000581
- McIntosh, Lee, & Ralfs, (2016) The Family Law DOORS: Research and practice updates *Family Matters 98*, 34-41
- Rossi, F. S., Holtzworth-Munroe, A., Applegate, A. G., Beck, C. J., Adams, J. M., & Hale, D. F. (2015). Detection of intimate partner violence and recommendation for joint family mediation: A randomized controlled trial of two screening measures. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law, 21*(3), 239-251. doi:10.1037/law000004, ‘