

INSPIRING WORK

GEELONG CHILDREN'S WELLBEING EXPERT MAXINE THERESE BRINGS A REVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVE TO UNDERSTANDING THE INNER WORLD OF A CHILD. SHE TELLS TESSA HAYWARD ABOUT HER UPCOMING EVENT TO ENGAGE WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

You are a leading expert in children's wellbeing, renowned for your holistic approach to childhood development. Why did you get into this industry?

I've always been interested in things I didn't understand and I found when I became a mum to my two sons in the 1990s that none of the parenting approaches made any sense to me.

I was really curious to observe my sons and see what was happening with them. This interest took me back to study at Deakin University and I completed my undergraduate in psychology and philosophy and then my PhD in philosophy.

What does your parenting approach involve and how does it differ?

I created The Foundational Needs Model, which forms the basis of the therapeutic system I meticulously crafted and implemented in my clinical practice.

As parents we only know how to do what we have been shown. A big part of my work is looking at generational imprint.

The model supports the whole child from the very beginning and involves being curious rather than trying to fix and solve.

I've now been working with families for 20 years and I get transformational feedback. Sometimes it's children struggling with nightmares or a phobia of a dog, something you can't quite understand.

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I have also developed a range of products that enhance children's wellbeing, including two books.

What do you enjoy about helping others?

I believe it is my sole purpose in life. All of the things I have experienced in life have led me to an understanding of the self that allowed me to go back to study and create a map and model that works for other people.

It is my passion and purpose. It's the one thing that, no matter what is going on for me, brings me back into my body and heart.

It started really organically as teachers of my



Dr Maxine Therese will be speaking at the Geelong Library about her approach to childhood wellbeing. Photos: Alison Wynd (main) and supplied

boys would notice we'd overcome something at school and would then ask me to talk to other mothers about how I did it.

Personally, I have scleroderma a rare auto immune disease, and it has helped me to relate to my practice through an understanding of body and mind.

There will be opportunity for engaging discussion at the Geelong Library event. What topics will you be speaking about?

The event is for parents, educators and anyone interested in children.

My research is all based on understanding

children from a new paradigm. Instead of feeling they are human beings to put stuff into, I talk about understanding how they unfold and the mind-body connection and how they are triggered by their environment.

It will give an insight into children's development and wellbeing, family dynamics and trauma-informed approaches.

What do you want people to take away from your approach?

I want people to come away with an understanding that parenting is really an opportunity to re-parent yourself and to enter a



space with your children where we are curious. It opens a new way of understanding not just our children but ourselves.

I want to teach people to understand feelings, thoughts and behaviour and how they shape what we do.

There are so many voices on social media, my work and research really helps parents come back to themselves and to trust their intuition.

An Evening with Dr Maxine Therese will be held at the Geelong Library on Tuesday from 7-9pm. Tickets are available at childosophy.com