



# kids' issues

Edition 13 • 2003

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## Working with Children kit launched



Premier Peter Beattie launches the Working with Children Kit with Commissioner for Children and Young People Robin Sullivan.

The Commission achieved a major milestone recently with the official launch of the Working with Children kit.

Launched by Premier Peter Beattie, the kit provides practical advice for volunteer, professional and commercial organisations.

The kit was developed to complement the Commission's criminal history screening – the Working with Children Check – to ensure it is not the only strategy relied on for protecting children.

Commissioner for Children and Young People, Robin Sullivan, said parents should check that the organisations they entrust their children to have adequate policies and procedures in place to protect children and young people.

"The Working with Children kit explains strategies organisations should have to create safe and friendly environments for children and young people," she said.

The kit provides comprehensive information on:

- policies, procedures and codes of conduct
- the management and operation of organisations
- recruitment, selection and screening

- staff and clients
- organising activities, and
- dealing with challenging issues.

The kit is being sold on a cost-recovery basis of \$35 each. Customised training is available throughout Queensland to complement the kit at \$135 per person (kit included), although some discounts may apply.

The training will help organisations develop practical approaches to their specific needs and is available over a full day or two half days or evenings.

More information about the kit is available by phoning the Commission on 3247 5525 or by emailing [wwckit@childcomm.qld.gov.au](mailto:wwckit@childcomm.qld.gov.au)

## Early Years Advisory Group maps early years initiatives

The Early Years Advisory Group established by the Commission earlier this year, will map all services and activities relating to the early years, including trials and projects.

Commissioner for Children and Young People Robin Sullivan said the process will allow a better understanding of the services available to children from birth to eight years of age and their families.

In addition, the information will enable the Early Years Advisory Group to provide a high standard of information to the Commission in its advisory role.

"It's vital the Commission has access to the most up-to-date information on the early years," the Commissioner said.

"I believe the advice of the Early Years Advisory Group will allow us to better promote the interests and wellbeing of young children in the future."

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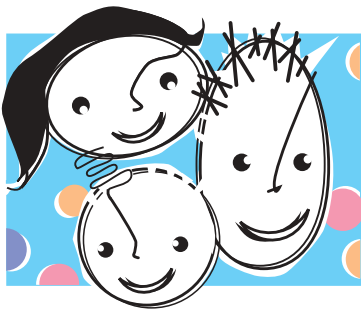
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Commission for  
Children & Young People  
Queensland Government



## Commissioner's Column

Given current interest in problems faced by children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, I felt it is timely to discuss the Commission's involvement in visiting and supporting these communities.

Executive Director, Barry Salmon, visited Thursday Island in May with representatives of the Anti-Discrimination Commission and the Police Service to talk to members of the community on a range of family issues. The visit provided valuable insights into issues of concern which impact on children and young people on the Island.

The Commission was also invited to take part in the Which Way You Mob! Youth Policy Development Forum in Cairns during Youth Week in April, to help young people develop a youth policy to guide their participation in decision-making in their communities. The forum involved young people from each of the 15 DOGIT (Deed of Grant in Trust) communities.

I was fortunate to be asked to address the forum to discuss our role and initiatives involving consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

These include consultations on Palm Island about planning a new youth centre, and looking at the impact on Indigenous children when their fathers are incarcerated.

Upcoming consultations include my trip to Cherbourg in Child Protection Week with Fiona Stanley, Australian of the Year and head of the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY).

Finally, our commitment to improving the wellbeing of Indigenous young people can be seen in our Indigenous Graduate Program. Each year, a recent graduate of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background is appointed for 12 months to provide them with the foundation for a career in the public service.

Robin Sullivan

**Commissioner for Children and Young People**



*Australia Day baby Alex and his proud mum at Roma Street Parkland.*

## Commission greets Australia Day Babies

A steady procession of prams, mums, dads and proud friends and relatives took over Roma Street Parkland's Forest Meadow recently for the Australia Day Babies ceremony.

The Commissioner hosted the celebration of babies born on January 26 this year - Australia Day - in conjunction with the Twenty-sixers Club of Queensland.

Dr Sullivan presented each baby with a certificate to commemorate the occasion.

## Child labour review underway

The Commission for Children and Young People's review of child labour in Queensland is underway in response to a range of issues raised in Queensland in recent years.

Project manager, Jason Kidd, said the review aims to ensure the rights, interests and wellbeing of children under 18 years are protected in the workplace.

"The Commission has already canvassed a broad range of information about child labour in Queensland," Mr Kidd said.

A discussion paper on the review is expected to be available soon and a report outlining the results of consultation and recommendations will be forwarded to Cabinet by the end of the year.

Anyone interested in knowing more about the review can call the Commission on 3247 5525.

## Kidspeak



*Corinna Smith, 15, attends Mountain Creek State High School on the Sunshine Coast, and was recently chosen to attend a course at the US Space and Rocket Centre in Huntsville, Alabama.*

For the duration of this course I participated in many briefings, lectures from past astronauts, military influenced training, experienced four G's of lift-off forced and one-sixth gravity in the scuba tank, mild astronaut training and the highlight of a six-hour simulator mission.

Throughout my time at Advanced Space Academy, I had a variety of briefings and lectures on space related topics. For instance, solar physics, astronomy, orbiter systems, history and rocketry are subjects well covered. Practical lessons were also completed in rocketry, astronomy, robotics, optics, scuba diving and simulator missions.

Each participant chose a specific track, including payload specialist, pilot or mission specialist. Each track does some different lessons relevant to the specific track, for example payloads do space medics, pilots do space piloting and mission specialists do space engineering.

Our main objective was the six hour mission. For this mission, three one-hour preparation missions were completed. For the mission, each member of the team was placed in a certain position in mission control, the space station or the orbiter. Each position has certain checklists and tasks to be done and have a timeline to follow.

I was lucky enough to be chosen for the prestigious 'Right Stuff' medal, which is given to the individual member who shows the potential and necessary skills, attitude and leadership of a member of the NASA corporation.

I would strongly recommend this experience to anybody, especially to those with a background of science and maths and an interest in space.

*Corinna Smith*

## Congratulations Commissioner!

The Commissioner for Children and Young People, Dr Robin Sullivan, has received two prestigious awards in recognition of her work with Queensland's children and young people.

The Commissioner was recently awarded a Centenary Medal for distinguished service and commitment to children and their welfare.

Created during the Centenary of Federation, the Centenary Medal recognises the achievements of Australians who have contributed to Australian society or government. The Commissioner's award was announced by the Prime Minister, John Howard.

The Commissioner has also been recognised by Central Queensland University, who awarded her an honorary Doctorate in Education.

Congratulations Commissioner!



*Commissioner, Robin Sullivan receives her honorary doctorate from Central Queensland University.*

## Join our electronic mailing list

If you would prefer to receive Kids' Issues electronically, send an email to [julia.golobocov@childcomm.qld.gov.au](mailto:julia.golobocov@childcomm.qld.gov.au) and you will be added to our mailing list.

## Employment Screening celebrates 2nd birthday



*Manager of Employment Screening, Michelle Miller, celebrates the unit's second birthday with Executive Director Barry Salmon.*

Employment Screening recently celebrated its second birthday, with staff marking the occasion with a birthday cake and presentation.

Since its inception in May 2001, Employment Screening has issued over 128,000 blue cards, and 32 applicants have been prohibited from working with children.

The second anniversary also marked an important new phase for the Commission.

As required under the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000*, a review of the legislation is underway.

Conducted by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the review will include widespread community consultation.

Following the review, Cabinet will consider any proposed changes to the Act.

A discussion paper will be released in coming weeks, to raise issues for comment.

For a copy of the paper, write to the Premier at PO Box 185, Brisbane Albert Street QLD 4002 or phone the Department of the Premier and Cabinet on 3224 2111.

## Performance stats

April 1 – June 30 2003

### Employment screening

Employment Screening Services has had another busy quarter, processing 20,899 applications and issuing 29,238 Blue Cards in the three month period.

During the quarter, 1,353 applications were withdrawn, including 12 as a result of a challenge by the Commission.

### Complaints and Investigations

Also experiencing a busy quarter was the Complaints and Investigations unit, with 712 telephone enquiries recorded in the quarter.

Of that total, 52 per cent of enquiries came from Brisbane, with the remainder originating in regional areas.

Fifty cases were progressed during the quarter and 35 per cent of cases were closed.

### Community Visitors

Community Visitors had an eventful quarter, with three new CVs appointed – Alicia Davenport (Mackay), Rosemary Connors (Ipswich) and Merrill Holbeck (Brisbane).

During the three months 476 visits were conducted across 204 sites. Of these, 138 sites were in Brisbane.

Manager of Community Visitors, Dennis Palmer, made site visits in the Mackay, Rockhampton and Townsville areas during the quarter.

## calendar of events

7-13 September - Child Protection Week. For more information, contact Gwenda on 07 3395 3778 or email [zappalag@bigpond.com](mailto:zappalag@bigpond.com)

18-26 October - Children's Week. For more information, contact the Queensland committee on 3269 8648 or email [qld@childrensweek.com.au](mailto:qld@childrensweek.com.au)