

identification



INFORM

Organisational capability - Research

Key responsibilities

The Research team analyses, coordinates, conducts and promotes research to inform decision making processes and the quality of services to children and young people in Queensland. The information obtained and relationships developed from these activities are used to further understand children's matters.

The team produces papers and reports on a wide range of topics and issues relating to children and young people. These papers are shared with audiences of diverse interests and geographical locations.

The team identifies trends in research, issues, and practices which enable it to provide the Commissioner and other government and non-government organisations and individuals with quality information and advice.

The Research team:

- analyses reports, research and data to identify trends that may impact on the wellbeing of Queensland children and young people
- initiates, identifies and/or promotes networks and alliances in research with academic, non-government and government partners
- where possible, seeks and reports the views of children and young people on a range of issues, and
- plays an essential role in enabling the Commission to:
 - provide high quality, current and well-informed debate or comment on issues relating to children and young people
 - disseminate information to influence theory, research, and the attitudes, policies and practices of government, service providers, academia and the community
 - contribute to publications at local, state, national and international levels, and
 - provide advice to other government and non-government agencies on draft documents, policies or practices relating to children and young people.

Highlights

Participatory research conference

In October 2004, the Commission co-sponsored with the Queensland University of Technology, a conference promoting young people as researchers.

This conference provided a forum for young people participating in research projects to share their findings and gain recognition for their work. It included a showcase of Participatory Research Projects with Young People, and a Youth Forum.

15th International congress of the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

In September 2004, the Commission co-hosted, with the New South Wales Commission for Children and Young People, the 15th International Congress of the International Society for Child Abuse and Neglect in Brisbane.

The Research team supported Indigenous young people to present at the Congress, providing them with valuable public speaking skills. In addition, a number of Research staff presented at the conference on topics including collaborating on providing support to families and teaching children's rights in the classroom.

Early Years Advisory Group

In 2004-05, the Research team continued support of an Early Years Advisory Group and a larger Early Years Strategic Network. These groups recognise the importance of the early years of life in determining health and wellbeing outcomes over the lifecourse. These groups have members with expertise in child protection, child care, education, health, child development, infant mental health, Indigenous issues, disability, cultural and linguistic diversity, children's rights and family support.

The aim of forming the groups was to support the role of the Commission in advocating for the best interests of Queensland children, antenatal to eight years and their families.

WELLBEING

Research partnerships

In the course of the financial year, the Commission became a research partner in an Australian Research Council Linkage Project to explore the effectiveness of integrated service hubs for children in rural and regional communities.

The Commission also partnered with QUT's School of Public Health and others in an Australian Research Council proposal to conduct research using data from the Growing Up in Australia study to investigate the impact of parents' work on their children.

Snapshot report

The Research team is responsible for researching and producing an annual report which reveals a snapshot of the wellbeing of children and young people in Queensland. The *Snapshot* series is a comprehensive collection of administrative and other statistical data, primarily from Queensland, with some national comparisons.

This regular analysis of the status of children and young people is critical for improving health and wellbeing, as it highlights areas of concern, identifies vulnerable groups in the community and assesses the impact of policies and practices.

Issues paper series

The team also produces an Issues Paper series which focuses on matters that impact on or are relevant to children and young people in Queensland. The Issues Paper series is targeted at academic, health and welfare and policy professionals. In 2004-05, the Commission produced its fourth such paper, entitled *Key Statistics on Children and Young People in Queensland*.



Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) module

In 2004-05, the Research team completed an educational module on children's rights.

A number of trials of the draft module were conducted in Queensland schools during the financial year. Children taking part in these trials provided their views on the content and activities, enabling the module to be modified according to their comments and other information gained during the trial process.

Mentoring Program

The Research team continued a trial Mentoring Program in conjunction with the Volunteers for Isolated Students (VISE) program in 2004-05. It focussed on young people not living at home who need educational support in secondary school.

The Commission identified participants through its Community Visitor Program, and matched them with an appropriately qualified volunteer. The mentors were former or current teachers who provided their time free of charge to help young people in particular subjects to help them successfully complete their secondary schooling.

The initial results of this small pilot program showed the young people who took part completed their education and improved their school results.

Participation on National working party

The Manager Research and the Commission's Employment Screening Services Manager represent the Commission on the Child Safe Organisations Working Group – a Community and Disability Services Ministers' Advisory Group (CDSMAC). This group developed a national framework for creating safe environments for children. This framework is expected to be presented for consideration by the CDSMAC ministers in late July 2005.

The Research team also provided advice on a research proposal commissioned by this group with the National Child Protection Clearinghouse.

Coordination of whole-of-government issues for the Longitudinal Survey of Australian Children

The Commission, through its Research team, is responsible for coordinating the whole-of-government issues in Queensland for the Longitudinal Survey of Australian Children (LSAC). This survey, also called *Growing Up in Australia*, is a key initiative designed to provide information about the influences on children's developmental pathways. This study will collect data from two different age cohorts of Australian children over an eight year period. The Commission provides information to and coordinates responses from, other Queensland agencies.



Outcomes and achievements

In the 2004-2005 financial, the Research team's key achievements included:

- 26 speeches or papers presented by the Commissioner, the Assistant Commissioner, the Executive Director and other staff
- 96 internal papers providing advice and briefings on a range of topics for the Commissioner, Executive Director, and the Policy and Communications teams
- two major national submissions:
 - the Commission's response to the National Agenda for Early Childhood Draft Framework, and
 - the Commission's submission in relation to the National Plan of Action for Children and Young People
- membership of 10 interagency groups related to issues affecting children and young people.

Outlook

Launch of the SOSE module

The Research team's educational module *Children's rights, children's lives*, is scheduled to be launched on 19 July 2005. The module will be published on the Commission's website in July 2005, with a link from the Queensland

Studies Authority's website under the Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) curriculum area. The module provides teachers with background information and support, as well as a suite of resources to use in the classroom to help children understand the concept of children's rights and the values on which human rights are based. The module will be published on the Commission's website with the Queensland Studies Authority providing a link from its site under the Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) curriculum area.

Children and Young People in Queensland: a Snapshot 2005

The success of the Commission's first two Snapshot reports has encouraged the Commission to produce an annual Snapshot, as well as interim data through an Issues Paper to provide updates on key statistics.

The second Snapshot Issues Paper is scheduled for release in late 2005, with *Snapshot 2005* to be released in September 2005. The *Snapshot 2005* together with quarterly Snapshot Issues Papers will provide a comprehensive view of children and young people in Queensland. They incorporate census and survey data, and information from a range of government agencies providing services to children and young people such as health, safety, education and housing.