

Policy Environmental Scan
August 2008

Source	Topic	Content
Australian Policy Online	<p>Welfare payments and school attendance: an analysis of experimental policy in Indigenous education</p> <p>Issues paper. Larissa Behrendt and Ruth McCausland Australian Education Union</p> <p>13 August 2008</p>	<p>This paper explores the current trials linking welfare payments to school attendance and outlines what evaluations have indicated about such schemes to date. It then provides an analysis of key concerns about the approach - namely its lack of basis in evidence, the fact that measures introduced under such schemes do not necessarily serve its overall aims, that there are particular human rights implications for such an approach. It also points to the reality that the resources and attention focused on such schemes combined with the ongoing issue of chronic under-resourcing in Indigenous policy generally is unlikely to 'close the gap' for Indigenous communities.</p> <p>http://www.aeufederal.org.au/</p>
Government Policy Media Release	<p>NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Legislation on Altruistic Surrogacy in NSW</p> <p>New South Wales.</p> <p>31 July 2008</p>	<p>NSW announced an in-depth review of surrogacy laws in light of a proposed national model. Terms of reference include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the intended parents and surrogate mother should have to meet any criteria before entering into a surrogacy arrangement • The legislative amendments needed to clarify the legal status of the child • The rights of a surrogate child to access information about their genetic parentage, and • What role the government should play in regulating surrogacy arrangements. <p>http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lawandjustice</p>
Joint Statement	<p>Junk food ad bans on the menu – have your say</p> <p>Premier The Honourable Anna Bligh and Health Minister Stephen Robertson</p> <p>26 August 2008</p>	<p>The Bligh Government will consider banning junk food advertising on children's television to help reverse the alarming rate of overweight and obese children in Queensland.</p> <p>This is an online survey inviting public feedback on restricting junk food ads.</p> <p>http://www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au/consultqld/</p>
Government Initiative Media Release	<p>New youth conduct orders to tackle anti-social behaviour</p> <p>New South Wales.</p> <p>18 July 2008</p>	<p>Under a program being trialled in NSW, young offenders charged with lower level anti-social offences that would be otherwise dealt with under the Young Offenders Act can instead be placed on a Youth Conduct Order for up to 12 months.</p> <p>Offenders will undergo intensive case management with their families, confront issues like drug and alcohol dependence, can be referred to treatment for mental health problems and their families may be given help with parenting support and housing.</p>

Source	Topic	Content
Government Policy Media Releases relating to initiatives in other jurisdictions.	New family friendly workplace guidelines introduced Victoria. Deputy Premier and Attorney-General Rob Hulls launched new guidelines aimed at encouraging family friendly arrangements in the workplace. 8 August 2008	These guidelines complement new amendments to the Equal Opportunity Act which made it unlawful for employers to unreasonably refuse to accommodate an employee's parental or carer responsibilities. The new laws, in effect on 1 September, help parents with children return to work and remain in work by providing family responsibility as grounds for unlawful discrimination.
Government Initiative Media Release	Home based learning for young aboriginal children in Mildura Victoria. 4 August 2008	Mildura will be the first of three sites in Victoria to host an innovative new program designed to enhance home learning environments for local Aboriginal children aged 3 – 5 years. This program will provide Aboriginal parents of children aged three to five years with support strategies to build parenting skills and helping their children realise their full potential, and will support parents to provide a home learning environment that complements their child's experiences at kindergarten.'
Government Initiative Media Release	Free kindergarten for Victoria's Aboriginal children Victoria. Minister for children and early childhood development 2 July, 2008	The Victoria government is giving three year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children access to at least ten hours a week of free kindergarten. The kindergarten fee subsidy will be payable to three year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children whose parents hold an appropriate concession card.