

**Policy Environment Scan
July 2009**

Source	Topic	Content
Call for Response (i.e Submission, Discussion Paper, Consultation Paper, Review, Inquiry)		
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth http://www.aph.gov.au/ho_use/committee/fchy/homelessness/index.htm	<i>Inquiry into Homelessness</i> 16 June 2009	The inquiry will focus on the principles and service standards that could be incorporated into homelessness legislation, building on the strengths of existing legislation (eg. <i>Supported Accommodation Assistance Act 1994</i>). The Committee shall give particular consideration to: 1. The principles that should underpin the provision of services to Australians who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. 2. The scope of any legislation with respect to related government initiatives in the areas of social inclusion and rights. 3. The role of legislation in improving the quality of services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. 4. The effectiveness of existing legislation and regulations governing homelessness services in Australia and overseas. 5. The applicability of existing legislative and regulatory models used in other community service systems, such as disability services, aged care and child care, to the homelessness sector.
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth http://www.aph.gov.au/ho_use/committee/fchy/youthviolence/index	<i>Inquiry into the impact of violence on young Australians</i> 16 June 2009	The Terms of Reference for the inquiry are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of violence and community safety among young Australians; • Links between illicit drug use, alcohol abuse and violence among young Australians; • The relationship between bullying and violence on the wellbeing of young Australians; • Social and economic factors that contribute to violence by young Australians; and • Strategies to reduce violence and its impact among young Australians.
Australian Government Dept of Health and Ageing http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/pacd-ehealth-consultation	<i>Healthcare identifiers and privacy legislative proposals</i> July 2009	The proposed implementation of Healthcare Identifiers and National Health Privacy Arrangements is designed to facilitate accurate and secure electronic recording and communication of patient health information between a patients health care team and aims to improve the safety of patients and improve efficiency for healthcare providers. Individuals would not need to declare their identifier to receive healthcare services. Existing privacy and other laws (including child protection legislation) would continue to apply in each jurisdiction.
Parliament of Australia http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/rrat_ctte/rural_and_regional_education/tor.htm	Senate Inquiry into Rural and Regional Access to Secondary and Tertiary Education Opportunities 16 June 2009	The Inquiry aims to assess the adequacy of Government measures to provide equitable access to secondary and post-secondary education opportunities to students from rural and regional communities attending metropolitan institutions, and metropolitan students attending regional universities or technical and further education (TAFE) colleges.

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Australian Law Reform Commission	ALRC to develop national legal framework to tackle family violence 24 July 2009	The Commonwealth Attorney-General, the Hon Robert McClelland MP has announced that the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) will conduct an Inquiry to address issues concerning violence against women and their children. The Terms of Reference will focus on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the interaction in practice of State and Territory family violence and child protection laws with the <i>Family Law Act 1975</i> and relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory criminal laws; and 2. the impact of inconsistent interpretation or application of laws in cases of sexual assault occurring in a family violence context, including rules of evidence, on victims of such violence. <p>ALRC President, Emeritus Professor David Weisbrot stated “The protection of women and children is predominantly dealt with under state and territory family and domestic violence laws and child protection laws. These laws vary across the jurisdictions, which may result in women and children being subject to different levels of protection depending upon where they live. There also may be problems recognising and enforcing apprehended violence orders across state and territory borders”</p> <p>The ALRC will commence its program of community engagement—including through the use of its online ‘Talk to Us’ website—and will publish one or more consultation papers for community debate and feedback. The final report and recommendations are due to be provided to the Attorney-General by no later than 31 July 2010.</p>

Research Findings, Reports and Policy papers, etc

CHILD SAFETY

University of Queensland http://www.law.uq.edu.au/index.html?page=112665&pid=26466	Mothers and the child protection system H. Douglas, T. Walsh, & K. Blore. June 2009	This document explores the effect that a child protection intervention can have on mothers. Information was obtained from 5 focus groups attended by community service workers who assist mothers in their interactions with child safety agencies. The following key areas of concern were identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Information and advocacy gaps</u> – parents need to be informed about the child protection process and their own rights and responsibilities. Parents need access to an advocate during the intervention process. • <u>Child protection workers</u> – lack of trust highlights the fears felt by mothers when engaging with the child safety system. Community organisations may be reluctant to report child safety concerns. • <u>The link between poverty and child protection intervention</u> – families in need often considered ‘at risk’, leading to unnecessary child removal. There is a need to build capacity of families to care for children. • <u>Domestic violence issues</u> – child safety workers misunderstand the nature of domestic violence, seeing mother as responsible for stopping the violence. Ultimatums to leave partner and keep child/ren is not a realistic choice. Child safety workers need a better understanding of the dynamics of/issues related to domestic violence.
The Centre for Independent Studies http://www.cis.org.au/poli	<i>Fatally Flawed: The Child Protection Crisis in Australia</i> Jeremy Summut	This report challenges current child protection policy positions across Australia, particularly those advocated in the Government’s <i>National Child Protection Framework</i> and the NSW Government’s response to the Wood Special Commission of Inquiry into child protection services to suggest that it is not underfunding or an overwhelming workload that has caused child protection services to fail the

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cy_monographs/pm97.pdf	with Toby O'Brien 29 June 2009	vulnerable children they exist to protect, but the failure to investigate reports and remove children in danger. The key argument focuses on the ideological shift from traditional child protection to the preventive approach whereby family preservation is paramount. The authors argue that this has led to an expansion in the role of child protection agencies from 'child protection' to include 'family support', which distracts agencies from their core responsibilities – child protection.
Australian Institute of Family Studies http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/sheets/rs13/rs13.html	Pre-employment screening: Working With Children Checks and Police Checks Berlyn, C., Holzer, P. & Higgins, D. 13 May 2009	This resource sheet, produced by the National Child Protection Clearinghouse, provides an overview and comparison of pre-employment criminal history screening across jurisdictions in Australia, including Police Checks, Working With Children Checks as well as checks undertaken as part of professional registrations. It includes an overview of the categories of paid and unpaid personnel who require a pre-employment check in each jurisdiction.
Ofsted (UK Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services) http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/content/download/9695/107376/file/Support%20for%20care%20leavers.pdf	Support for Care Leavers July 2009	This UK study reports on how services are working together to improve the quality of life for young people leaving care. Results were obtained from inspections of six local authorities and four secure estate provisions as well as questionnaires completed by 103 young people, aged 14 to 24 years, who were preparing to leave or who had left the care system. Key factors contributing to quality service provision and positive outcomes for young people included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – High aspirations for care leavers, supported by good corporate parenting strategies and co-ordinated partnerships and services. – Care leavers can retain 'looked after' status to 18 years and beyond. – 'Leaving care' seen as a process of transition into adulthood and young person is supported through this transition. – Tailor-made, flexible support packages and services are needs led, rather than categorised by age or type of care leaver. – Inclusion of care leavers in the planning and development of services – Positive relationships formed between leaving care workers and young person. Areas of concern were identified in some of the areas inspected, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A shortage of some types of suitable accommodation options. – Limited access to lower tier mental health services and employment opportunities. The structure of the benefits system disadvantaged some young people leaving care. – Planning and support options were not always in place prior to a young person leaving secure accommodation. – Insufficient evaluation of outcomes impacted on services abilities to assess their effectiveness. The report acknowledges the difficulty associated with managing challenging behaviours and supporting a young person to leave care as this impacts on the number of preparatory employment opportunities made available to individual care leavers.
Australian Institute of Criminology http://www.aic.gov.au/documents/3/C/1/%7B3C162	Online child grooming: a literature review on the misuse of social networking sites for	The first report, <i>Online Child Grooming: A literature review</i> , documents the nature and extent of online grooming, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the psychopathology of child sex offenders – the incomplete development of social skills of children; children with low self-esteem; and sexually curious young people are more vulnerable which makes them easier targets for paedophiles

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<p data-bbox="71 82 388 178">CF7-94B1-4203-8C57-79F827168DD8%7Drpp103.pdf</p> <p data-bbox="71 240 388 358">http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/tandi/361-380/tandi379.aspx</p>	<p data-bbox="403 82 667 178">grooming children for sexual offences</p> <p data-bbox="403 178 667 224">Kim-Kwang Raymond Choo</p> <p data-bbox="403 261 667 306">July 2009</p> <p data-bbox="403 344 667 373">AND</p> <p data-bbox="403 410 667 570">Responding to online child sexual grooming: an industry perspective</p> <p data-bbox="403 594 667 660">Kim-Kwang Raymond Choo</p> <p data-bbox="403 691 667 737">July 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="667 82 1927 118">– the development of trust between the predator and the child <li data-bbox="667 118 1927 185">– the attraction of new technologies for children as it enables them to communicate with friends quickly, effectively and confidentially <li data-bbox="667 185 1927 251">– the attraction of new technologies for predators as it offers them an anonymous environment to groom children <li data-bbox="667 251 1927 287">– the ability of predators to gain and access further personal information about a child online <li data-bbox="667 287 1927 354">– In Australia, there have been over 130 prosecutions for online procuring, grooming and exposure offences. <p data-bbox="667 354 1927 389">Research identified in the report suggests that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="667 389 1927 456">– victims of online sexual abuse or exploitation are more likely to be female and also experience the same emotional and behavioural problems as those who suffer off-line sexual abuse <li data-bbox="667 456 1927 492">– offenders may have know the child in real life prior to using the internet to further their grooming <li data-bbox="667 492 1927 527">– a high proportion of online sexual offenders are juveniles. <p data-bbox="667 527 1927 756">Both the first and second report, <i>Responding to online child sexual grooming: an industry perspective</i>, document a range of national and international legislative responses to deal with online grooming offences, including legislation that criminalises online child grooming for the purposes of sexual contact and which seeks to regulate the behaviour of sexual offenders. There are also internet filtering programs to restrict user access to various websites and the Restricted Access System Declaration 2007, requiring service providers to check the age of people accessing content hosted in Australia or provided from Australia.</p> <p data-bbox="667 756 1927 823">A range of non-legislative responses including initiatives undertaken by social networking sites and the financial services industry are outlined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="667 823 1927 889">– Deactivation of accounts and/or reporting to law enforcement agencies by social networking sites aiming to prohibit users abusing the site. <li data-bbox="667 889 1927 980">– Financial institutes monitor online payments made for child abuse materials and/or eliminate an offenders access to financial payment systems. In addition, the deregistration of companies that produce, purchase or sell child exploitation materials is an effective strategy. <li data-bbox="667 980 1927 1047">– Online reporting and monitoring systems, such as hotlines, offer an alternative to reporting offences to a law enforcement agency <li data-bbox="667 1047 1927 1114">– Development of tools to locate/identify offenders and distributors of child pornography such as the Child Exploitation Tracking System <li data-bbox="667 1114 1927 1149">– Mapping tools to establish virtual relationships between offenders and their potential victims <li data-bbox="667 1149 1927 1216">– International collaboration between various law enforcement agencies assists in identifying perpetrators <li data-bbox="667 1216 1927 1252">– Educational programs for both parents and children about online risks <p data-bbox="667 1252 1927 1318">The author concludes that online child grooming and prosecution will continue to rise. A multidimensional response is needed to help fight online child grooming.</p>
<p data-bbox="71 1398 403 1471">Australian Institute of Criminology</p>	<p data-bbox="403 1398 667 1471">Intrafamilial adolescent sex</p>	<p data-bbox="667 1398 1927 1471">Sexual abuse of children by other children or adolescents constitutes approximately 40 to 90 percent of sexual offending against children. This paper examines the nature and causes of adolescent intrafamilial</p>

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http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/tandi/361-380/tandi375.aspx	<p>offenders: psychological profile and treatment</p> <p>Trends and issues in crime and criminal justice no. 375</p> <p>J Grant, D Indermaur, J Thornton, G Stevens, C Chamarette and A Halse</p>	<p>sex offending and which treatment approaches are likely to be successful. Using the results of a four-year study in Western Australia, it provides an overview of intrafamilial adolescent sex offenders (IASOs), what is known about them and how they can be conceptualised. Findings show that IASOs have greater developmental trauma and family dysfunction than adult sex offenders. They also demonstrate greater levels of various behavioural difficulties associated with conduct disorders than do extrafamilial and adult sex offenders and the general population; most commonly ADHD and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Adolescent sex offender programs are based on those developed for adult offenders, with cognitive behavioural therapy the dominant model. However, these programs lack appropriate focus on developmental issues and the influence of family on offending patterns. Programs that combine a variety of treatment modalities show more promising outcomes. It is recommended that a need to understand adolescent sex offending as a health issue, rather than a moral one, allows for interventions that have the best possible chance of changing sexually inappropriate behaviour and ending the intergenerational transmission of abuse.</p>
INDIGENOUS ISSUES		
<p>Australia Council for Educational Research</p> <p>http://www.acer.edu.au/documents/PISAReport-Indigenous-web.pdf</p>	<p>The achievement of Australia's Indigenous students in PISA 2000-2006</p> <p>L De Bortoli & S. Thomson</p> <p>July 2009</p>	<p>This document reports on 15 year old Indigenous students' educational achievements in reading, mathematical and scientific literacy at the end of their compulsory phase of schooling.</p> <p>Results from the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) show that Indigenous students' performance has not improved over time. Indigenous students performed more than 80 score points behind their non-indigenous counterparts and 50 points lower than the OECD average. Only 12% reached the higher levels in reading and no more than 5 per cent reached the higher levels in maths and science.</p>
<p>Productivity Commission</p> <p>http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/indigenous/keyindicators2009</p>	<p><i>Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2009</i></p> <p>2 July 2009</p>	<p>This document is the fourth edition of the <i>Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators</i> report. Across almost all indicators, there remain gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. However in some areas these gaps are decreasing, while in other areas they are not improving or are deteriorating.</p> <p>There are a range of high level measures of social and economic outcomes that need to improve to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous outcomes. These are represented in the following six COAG targets and six headline indicators, which demonstrate limited or no change in outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Life expectancy</u> Trend data are only available for the Northern Territory, which shows that life expectancy has increased for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples between 1967 and 2004. - <u>Young child mortality</u> Rates of Indigenous infant mortality (0-12 months) have improved, while child mortality (0-4 years) rates have remained constant (2-3 times as high as those for all infants and

Source	Topic	Content
		<p>young children).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Early childhood education</u> Limited data availability. - <u>Reading, writing and numeracy</u> There has been insignificant changes in Indigenous students performance in the past decade, with the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous performance still evident. - <u>Year 12 attainment</u> Proportion of Indigenous 19 year olds completing year 12 or equivalent increased from 31 to 36% between 2001 and 2006, however the non-Indigenous rate also increased from 68 to 74%, which means the gap is still evident. This target will be measured for people aged 20-24 years in subsequent reports. - <u>Employment</u> Employment-to-population ratio increased from 43 to 48% for Indigenous people between 2001 and 2006, however, there was a similar increase for non-Indigenous people, meaning the gap is unchanged. <p>Similarly, the Headline indicators demonstrate limited or no change in outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Post secondary education</u> There was a slight increase for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people across all age groups between 2001 and 2006. - <u>Disability and chronic disease</u> The need for assistance with a core activity among Indigenous people was almost twice that for non-Indigenous people in 2006. No trend data are available. - <u>Household and individual income</u> Median incomes for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous households increased by around 8% between 2001 and 2006. Median incomes of Indigenous households were 65% of non-Indigenous households in both 2001 and 2006. - <u>Substantiated child abuse and neglect</u> The rate of substantiated notifications for child abuse or neglect increased for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children. However, the Indigenous rate increased from 4 to 6 times the non-Indigenous rate, meaning the gap has widened further. The rate of substantiated notifications for child abuse among Indigenous children increased from 16 to 35 per 1000 children, while the rate for non-Indigenous children increased from 5 to 6 children per 1000. As at 30 June 2008, 41 out of every 1000 Indigenous children were on care and protection orders, compared to 5 out of every 1000 non-Indigenous children. - <u>Family and community violence</u> Limited data are available, however, recent reports suggest violence to be a continuing issue for many Indigenous communities. - <u>Imprisonment and juvenile detention</u> Between 2000-08 the imprisonment rate increased by 46% for Indigenous women and 27% for Indigenous men. In 2008, Indigenous adults were 13 times more likely to be imprisoned than non-Indigenous people, compared to 10 times in 2000. Indigenous juvenile detention rates increased by 27% between 2001-07, with Indigenous juveniles 28 times more likely to be detained than non-Indigenous juveniles as at 30 June 2007.
<p>Social Policy Research Centre</p> <p>http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/about/publicationsarticles/research/occasional/Documents/op23/exec.htm#Serviceprovision</p>	<p>Occasional Paper Number 23 Indigenous families and children: coordination and provision of services Stronger Families and Communities Strategy 2004–2009</p>	<p>This report forms part of the national evaluation of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy (SFCS) 2004–2009. It identifies the impact of Communities for Children (CfC) program on service provision and coordination in communities with high proportions of Indigenous children, as well as the impact of the programs on the lives of Indigenous families and children.</p> <p>Some key findings from the evaluation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program delivery is enhanced by consultations and partnerships with Indigenous organisations and community members • Sufficient time for building trust and relationships may be the most effective way to engage Indigenous families and children in programs. • Many reported improvements in the relevance and quality of service delivery as a direct result of

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	<p>Flaxman, Saul Muir, Kristy Oprea, Ioana</p> <p>June 2009</p>	<p>SFCS 2004–2009 funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the number, scope and capacity of services does not necessarily mean increased Indigenous access or engagement. • Mainstream program models rarely fit Indigenous service users. • It is difficult to identify/target Indigenous families in large, diverse communities. • Indigenous-specific and mainstream services need to be safe, comfortable and culturally appropriate. • Financial and attitudinal barriers can prevent access to early intervention and prevention services for young Indigenous children. This can be addressed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – educating Indigenous communities about the importance of the early years and the nature of programs offered – encouraging families to participate by using ‘soft’ engagement strategies – providing low-cost, culturally appropriate and respectful services to families. • Informal services can introduce Indigenous families to more formal, specialist services. • CfC initiative increased networking, coordination and collaboration between services. • Generally, a four-year program is too short for services to establish effective, strong relationships with each other. In rural and remote areas there are limited services to co-ordinate with. • The greatest change reported was an increase in access to services and in first-time Indigenous family engagement with services. • Lack of transport can hinder Indigenous access to early childhood services. • Socioeconomic disadvantage and social problems make it difficult for families to prioritise early intervention and prevention service use. • Each community is different. Programs need to be adapted to meet unique local needs. • In general, CfC, four-year funding cycle is not sufficient to result in long-term positive outcomes in disadvantaged communities.
<p>Social Policy Research Centre</p> <p>http://www.facs.gov.au/about/publications/articles/research/occasional/Pages/ops-ops25.aspx</p>	<p>Occasional Paper 25: The impact of Communities for Children, Stronger Families and Communities Strategy 2004-2009</p> <p>Edwards, B., Wise, S., Gray, M., Hayes, A., Katz, I., Misson, S., Patulny, R., & Muir, K.</p>	<p>This report presents the results of the evaluation of the short-run impacts of the Communities for Children (CfC) initiative on child, family and community outcomes. The results suggest that the CfC had positive impacts in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fewer children living in a jobless household – Parents reported less hostile or harsh parenting practices, and – Parents felt more effective in their roles as parents. <p>The CfC initiative had some success in improving outcomes among the most vulnerable children and families in relation to children’s early receptive vocabulary and verbal ability, joblessness rates and mothers’ involvement in community activities.</p>
<p>Social Policy Research Centre</p> <p>http://www.facs.gov.au/about/publications/articles/re</p>	<p>Occasional Paper 26: Engaging hard to reach families and children</p>	<p>This report forms part of the national evaluation of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy 2004-09. A review of the literature identified factors affecting access and engagement of hard-to-reach groups in early intervention programs as well as factors which support engagement. Funding and funding structures were seen as pertinent to engaging hard-to-reach groups, with short term funding contributing to program instability which risks relationship building. Indigenous families identified as most</p>

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search/occasional/Pages/ops-ops26.aspx	Cortis, N., Katz. I. & Patulny, R. June 2009	hard-to-reach group, along with young parents, fathers and those not using other services. Strategies are identified for engaging hard-to-reach families, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Intervention design and practice such as relevant interventions, effective outreach and promotion, non-stigmatising entry points, natural gathering places, providing food and incentives and building relationships. – Networks and partnerships to identify needs, find and reach clients, build capacity and ensure continuity. – Staffing, including employing community members and ensuing staff are appropriately skilled. Overall, the report suggests that the efforts of Communities for Children sites to engage with hard-to-reach families seem to have been effective.

LAW AND JUVENILE JUSTICE

Australian Institute of Criminology http://www.aic.gov.au/en/publications/current%20series/mr/1-20/05.aspx	Juveniles in detention in Australia, 1981–2007 Natalie Taylor July 2009	This document provides an overview of young people in detention in Australia from 1981 to 2007, including the numbers and rates of Indigenous young people in detention. It also includes information published for the first time relating to young people sentenced to detention in children's courts around Australia in 2006-07. Key findings include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only around 5% of young people found guilty in the children's courts were sentenced to detention. This is consistent with the general approach that detention should only be considered as a last resort of penalty for a young person. Of these young people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 94% were male – One per cent were aged between 10 and 12 years – Twelve per cent were aged between 13 and 14 years – Eighteen per cent were aged 15 years – Twenty-three per cent were aged 16 years – Twenty-eight per cent were aged 17 years – Eighteen per cent were aged 18 years or over. • Rates of detention for young people (both male and female) aged 10-17 years have decreased by 51% since 1981. • The majority of young people in detention are male (91% as at 30 June 2007). Young males were nine times more likely to be in detention at 30 June 2007 than females. • Fifteen to 17-year olds are consistently the vast majority of detainees in the 10-17 year age bracket (81% at 30 June 2007). • Indigenous young people are consistently detained at higher levels than non-Indigenous young people (403 Indigenous young people per 100,000 compared to 14.4 non Indigenous young people). • Rates of detention of Indigenous young people decreased between 1994-2002 by 32%. The decrease for non-Indigenous young people for the same time period was 44%. • Indigenous young people were 28 times more likely than non-Indigenous young people to be in detention at 30 June 2007. • Around one-quarter of people detained in juvenile detention facilities in Australia were aged 18 years and over. • In Queensland, seven (or 4%) of young detainees in juvenile facilities were over 18 years of age.
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		<p>The report does not include data on the number of young people aged under 18 in adult prisons in Australia. However, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) there were 28 such young people in adult prisons as at 30 June 2007.</p> <p>Over the 2006-07 year, the highest percentage of young people who were remanded rather than sentenced was in Queensland, Tasmania, Northern Territory and the ACT.</p> <p>As at 30 June 2007, there was a total of 974 young people in detention across Australia. Of these, 159 young people (16%) were in juvenile detention facilities in Queensland.</p> <p>Although Queensland defines a juvenile offender as being aged 10-16 years, the Queensland data presented in this report are for young people aged 10-17 in detention.</p>
<p>Bureau of Crime statistics and Research (BOCSAR)</p> <p>http://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/</p>	<p>Recent trends in legal proceedings for breach of bail, juvenile remand and crime</p> <p>Vignaendra, S., Moffat, S., Weatherburn, D. & Heller, E.</p> <p>1 July 2009</p>	<p>This report explores reasons for an increase in the juvenile remand population in NSW between 2007 and 2008. During this period the juvenile remand population grew by 32 per cent, with the annual cost of keeping juveniles on remand increasing by 29 per cent.</p> <p>The authors identify two factors that have together contributed to the growth in the numbers of juveniles on remand and the time spent in remand. Firstly, an increase in the rate at which police are arresting juveniles for breach of bail. Secondly, legislative changes to restrict the number of applications for bail being made serves to increase the length of time juveniles spend on remand. The authors conclude that this increase has not impacted on crime reduction.</p>
<p>ENGAGEMENT</p>		
<p>NSW Commission for Children and Young People</p> <p>http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/kids/resources/publications/askchildren?itemID=15E1569BEA7D9677907E9375B1A996FA</p>	<p>Ask the children: I want to work</p> <p>25 June 2009</p>	<p>In this study, 1,567 children aged 12 to 16 years in government schools were surveyed in 2007 about their experiences of work. Results show that two-thirds of school students undertook some form of work over the preceding 12 months. Much of the work undertaken by children was undertaken for family or friends in a domestic arrangement or working for church groups, sport or community organisations, with only between 19% and 37% working for a business. While relatively few children work formally, this increases with age as children transition from informal to formal work arrangements. Data suggest that children in formal employment do not spend less time on homework, but are more likely to be involved in a variety of activities. Work is identified as a positive activity for most children, providing them with an opportunity to learn and develop. A key issue for 15 and 16 year olds was wanting to work but unable to find it. A lack of transport was cited as a key challenge in taking up work.</p>
<p>NSW Commission for Children and Young People</p> <p>http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/kids/resources/publications/askchildren?itemID=14CCA302E03B43EA4DF3014E6A34CD02</p>	<p>Ask the Children: Children speak about being at school</p> <p>25 June 2009</p>	<p>This document reports in more detail interviews undertaken with school children in 2005. The aim of the report is to improve our understanding of the role of school in children's well-being, as well as to enable children's views to contribute to education policy and practice.</p> <p>Key findings from the report include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Children's enjoyment of school is closely linked to the relationships they have with other kids and teachers. – For many children, friendships are key to their happiness at school. While children's needs at school change over time, the importance of friendship is constant.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers play an important role in engaging children in learning and supporting their well-being. - Children's well-being is supported when they are involved in decision-making, when adults listen to them and take their views seriously, and when adults act on issues that concern them. - Children's well-being is negatively affected by bullying and exclusion, as well as falling behind in class and not being able to catch up.
<p>NSW Commission for Children and Young People</p> <p>ARACY</p> <p>http://www.aracy.org.au/index.cfm?pageName=children_in_research</p>	<p>Involving children and young people in participatory research:</p> <p>Compendium and reflections from a Think Tank – Co-hosted by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth and The NSW Commission for Children and Young People 11 November 2008</p>	<p>This report aims to define and address the challenges associated with conducting research with and by children and young people as well as for and about them. The document focuses on the following key themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research approaches and methodologies - Ethics and consent issues - Implications for practice <p>Four major areas for action are identified:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Building the capacity of children 2. Building the understanding and knowledge of gatekeepers 3. Building the knowledge and capacity of researchers 4. Increasing the influence of research.
SOCIAL EXCLUSION / INCLUSION		
<p>Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations</p> <p>http://apo.org.au/research/social-inclusion-and-early-childhood-development</p>	<p><i>Social inclusion and early childhood development</i></p> <p>Professor Tony Vinson</p> <p>January 2009</p> <p>(Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Sydney)</p>	<p>This report outlines the factors that impact on a positive start to children's education as well as the benefits of quality early education. The authors review of the research shows that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social disadvantage is a key contributing factor to poor school readiness (eg.children living in poverty are 18 months behind the average child when they start kindergarten). • a supportive home environment can have a positive influence on school readiness • high-quality pre-school care has significant benefits for the individual and the broader community (eg. those who participated in a quality pre-school program were more likely to have higher economic and educational status in later life and more stable relationships, while those who did not access such programs were at increased risk of ongoing welfare dependency, increased health care costs and involvement in crime in later life) • failure to gain basic early literacy and numeracy skills can have life-long consequences, including early school leaving and reduced employment opportunities. • Those who are socially disadvantaged are less likely to regularly participate in pre-school programs. <p>Practices and measures that should be considered to support educationally and socially disadvantaged families include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent to child education/support • Agency partnerships

Source	Topic	Content
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre-based parent support • School-based programs.
<p>Carers Australia</p> <p>http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/building_stronger/inclusive/young_carers.html</p>	<p><i>Bring It! Young Carers Forum 08 Final Report</i></p> <p>May 2009</p>	<p>This document reports on the key issues identified at the Young Carers forum held on 26-27 November 2008. Research cited at the forum highlights the often negative outcomes which can impact on young carers, ranging from reduced educational, employment and social opportunities to poorer physical and mental health. There are around 380,000 young carers under the age of 26 in Australia.</p> <p>Young carers identified the following four main areas of concern: access to government services; identification; respite care; and education.</p> <p>Recommendations focus on improving opportunities to better support young carers to identify, care, study, work and access support, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ legislation to recognise and protect the rights of young carers ▪ revised approaches to service provision ▪ training for staff in appropriate departments, such as Centrelink ▪ awareness-raising and education campaigns ▪ increased identification ▪ improved policies and guidelines ▪ support that enables caring to be a choice ▪ equal access to appropriate services ▪ partnerships with education providers.
<p>Australian Institute of Health and Welfare</p> <p>http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10756</p>	<p>Counting the Homeless: Queensland 2006</p> <p>Chamberlain, C. and McKenzie, D.</p> <p>9 July 2009</p>	<p>This document reports on the number of homeless people in Queensland based on information collected from the ABS 2006 Census. Key findings from the Queensland data show that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – There were 26,782 homeless people in Queensland in 2006. Of these: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 51% were in the younger age groups, compared to 58% across Australia. • 4,469 or 16% were teenagers aged 12 to 18 (mainly on their own), compared to 21% across Australia. • 2,914 or 11% were children under 12 who were with one or both parents, which is similar to the national average of 12% – Indigenous people were overrepresented in all sections of the homeless population in Queensland <p>The report also highlights that across Australia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Between 2001 and 2006 there was a decrease of 20.8% in youth homelessness (aged 12-18 years), suggesting that early intervention initiatives have been effective. – At any one time there are 15,000 students who are at risk of becoming homeless – Young people who have been in state care are at greater risk of homelessness – In 2005-06, the number of children accompanying parents in SAAP was almost 54,700.
Events/Seminars		
<p>Family Planning Queensland</p> <p>http://www.fpq.com.au/21st/conference/program.ph</p>	<p>Celebrating 21 Years of Sexuality Education in Queensland</p>	<p>FPQ is hosting a conference to celebrate 21 years of sexuality education in Queensland. The conference will focus on a wide range of aspects of sexuality education including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • research and evidence supporting sexuality education • best practice in sexuality education

Source	Topic	Content
p	15 October 2009 Brisbane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • young people's perspectives • inclusive and innovative approaches to sexuality education • sexuality education and the curriculum • community partnerships and collaboration
Australian Institute of Family Studies http://www.aifs.gov.au/growingup/conf/2009/index.html	<i>Growing Up In Australia: The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC) 2nd Research Conference</i>	<p>The conference, to be held 3-4 December 2009 in Melbourne, will discuss research and policy initiatives that have resulted from the use of data from <i>Growing Up in Australia: The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC)</i>.</p> <p>The conference provides a unique opportunity to take part in discussion of research based on LSAC data.</p>
Media Releases/Speeches		
Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women The Honourable Karen Struthers	Youth homelessness drops, but hard work continues 9 July 2009	<p>Minister Struthers comments on the AIHW <i>Counting the Homeless 2006</i> Queensland report, highlighting the 30% decrease in homeless young people between 2001 and 2006.</p> <p>Queensland Government has committed to further addressing homelessness through a range of measures, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Federal and State governments investing in social housing through the National Partnership Agreements on Social Housing, and the Nation Building and Jobs Plan, which will see 4,000 new homes built across Queensland – Queensland's Implementation Plan for the Homelessness National Partnership Agreement (NPA) builds upon the existing investment in the Responding to Homelessness Strategy – 2009-10 State Budget has allocated over \$1.4 billion into new housing projects in Queensland as part of its investment in jobs-generating infrastructure.
Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women The Honourable Karen Struthers	Keeping kids safe at home 16 July 2009	<p>The State Government is investing more than \$950,000 to help address youth homelessness as part of its \$200 million investment over four years to help reduce homelessness. The 'Kids Under Cover' organisation will receive six relocatable bungalows and \$605,000 to help purchase an additional ten bungalows. The bungalows will be set up in the backyard of an overcrowded home to help reduce tension associated with living in cramped conditions, which may contribute to a young person's decision to leave home. The bungalows will be available to young people in Townsville, Rockhampton, Toowoomba and Inala. Bungalows can be relocated when no longer needed.</p> <p>Another initiative being undertaken by the government is the delivery of new street to home services to help people sleeping rough move into permanent accommodation.</p>
Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women The Honourable Karen Struthers	Panel appointed to review domestic violence deaths 16 July 2009	<p>Five prominent Queenslanders have been appointed to a Death Review Panel to review domestic violence related-deaths. The panel will investigate the circumstances surrounding a domestic violence related death, what could have been done to prevent the death and identify gaps in services for victims.</p> <p>The panel will be chaired by Marg O'Donnell (Chair of the Board of Legal Aid Queensland and former Director General of both the Office of Women's Policy and the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development) as well as Heather Nancarrow, Donna Justo, Ken Georgetown who</p>

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		<p>are Ministerial Advisory Council on Domestic and Family Violence representatives and high-profile advocates, and retired senior policeman Peter Swindells.</p> <p>The panel is the first step in a five-year plan, <i>For Our Sons and Daughters - A Queensland Government strategy to reduce domestic and family violence</i>, to help reduce domestic and family violence.</p>
<p>Australia Attorney-General</p> <p>http://www.attorneygeneral.gov.au/www/ministers/robertmc.nsf/Page/Speeches_2009_24July2009-SpeechtotheAlbury-WodongaFamilyPathwaysNetworkEvent</p>	<p>Speech to the Albury-Wodonga Family Pathways Network Event</p> <p>Albury</p> <p>24 July 2009</p>	<p>In his speech to the Albury-Wodonga Family Pathways Network Event, the Australian Attorney-General outlined his appointment of former Family Court judge Richard Chisholm to conduct a review of the family law court processes, particularly in the context of family violence.</p> <p>Professor Chisholm will consult with experts on family violence and examine whether the practices and procedures in the family courts encourage appropriate disclosures of family violence, and whether appropriate support is provided within the family court system for families who have experienced or are at risk of violence. The review will make recommendations about how the system can better respond to and support the families who come before them. A report of the review is expected by the end of 2009 to enable consideration of the findings together with the findings of the Australian Institute of Family Studies evaluation of the 2006 reforms.</p>
<p>Joint Media Release</p> <p>Hon Julia Gillard MP, Minister for Education, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Minister for Social Inclusion, Deputy Prime Minister</p> <p>Hon Jenny Macklin MP, Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs</p> <p>http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090709_091226.aspx</p>	<p>Australian Government to develop national statement on Social Inclusion</p> <p>8 July 2009</p>	<p>The Australian Social Inclusion Board has released its <i>Compendium of Social Inclusion Indicators</i>. The report provides Australian data on a range of key indicators of disadvantage, including access to work and services, social supports, how well local neighbourhoods are faring and health.</p> <p>Several areas are identified as needing long-term action, including retirement income and homelessness, which the government is currently addressing, including reforms to the pension system and significant investment (\$6 billion) in social housing, which aims to halve homelessness by 2020.</p> <p>The early years are also identified as crucial for children's development and for overcoming long term disadvantage. As such, on 2 July 2009, COAG agreed a new Early Years Learning Framework which provides a long term vision for services to support early childhood development and a new shared framework to improve the quality of early years education and care. In addition, a Paid Parental Leave scheme will underpin investment in children's early development.</p> <p>By the end of 2009, the Government will develop a national statement on Social Inclusion, including a strategy towards making Australia a stronger, fairer society. The whole of Government strategy will encompass important measures already underway, such as reducing homelessness, closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians and creating jobs and skills in local priority areas where unemployment and disadvantage are concentrated.</p>