

The Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian provides this information as a service to stakeholders. The content or opinions are those of the contributing authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Commission.

Consultation Opportunities

Family Violence Inquiry - Australian Law Reform Commission and the New South Wales Law Reform Commission
Feedback on proposals and specific questions is being sought to improve family violence laws and practice to make systems for dealing with family violence more approachable, effective and easy to navigate.

The deadline for submissions has been extended until **25 June 2010**.

<http://alrc.gov.au/media/2010/mr0429.html>

Young Children and the Media: Discussion paper - Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY)

This consultation will inform ARACY's 'Children and Media' project. The project aims to identify and act on media strategies for enhancing the wellbeing of children in the early years.

Submissions are due on **25 June 2010**.

http://www.aracy.org.au/index.cfm?pageName=children_and_media.

Children & Young Person's Multicultural Mental Health Consultation Forum – The Queensland Transcultural Mental Health Centre

Feedback is being sought on the development of a Queensland Multicultural Mental Health Plan for delivering culturally appropriate and responsive mental health services.

Consultation ends on **31 August 2010**.

<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/pahospital/qtmhc/policies.asp>

Inquiry into the Administration and Reporting of NAPLAN testing, Senate Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Committee

Feedback is being sought as part of the Senate inquiry into NAPLAN testing. The Inquiry will examine the impacts arising from the publication of test results on teaching practice and schools generally.

Submissions are due on **25 June 2010**.

http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/eet_ctte/naplan/tor.htm

Draft Senior Secondary Years Australian Curriculum for English, Mathematics, Science and History consultation – Federal government

Feedback is being sought on the draft national curriculum for Senior Secondary Years English, Maths, Science and History.

Consultation ends on **30 July 2010**.

<http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Home>

Indigenous Economic Development Strategy – have your say – Federal government

Feedback is sought on a draft strategy to increase the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the economy.

Submissions are due on **1 November 2010**.

<http://resources.fahcsia.gov.au/IEDS/>

Reports, research papers, policy initiatives etc

Child Protection

Pathways From Out-of-Home Care, Johnson, G., Natalier, K., Mendes, P., Liddiard, M., Thoresen, S., Hollows, A. & Bailey, N. Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, April 2010

This research focuses on the housing experiences and outcomes of young people leaving state care. The project aims to inform policy and service practice to promote positive and sustainable housing outcomes for young people leaving the out-of-home state care system.

It is the first Australian study to specifically examine the connection between accommodation and young people's transition to independent living.

77 young people who had been in state out-of-home care in Western Australia (n=35) and Victoria (n=42) were interviewed.

Key factors for those successfully transitioning from care were that they:

- had few placements
- generally felt safe and secure in care
- felt involved in the planning process
- left care at a later age
- felt that they were better prepared for leaving care, and
- had a successful first placement, which facilitated a smoother transition from care.

Key factors for those whose transition from care was volatile were that they:

- had a high number of placements while in care
- experienced physical and/or sexual abuse prior to, or while they were in care
- rarely had an exit plan
- left care in crisis at a younger age, and
- were discharged into inappropriate accommodation, such as refuges or boarding houses.

The housing experiences and outcomes of those young people experiencing a volatile transition were marked by:

- poor experiences of supported/transitional accommodation and specifically, being forced to share
- a lack of professional support
- a lack of privacy, safety and control over their accommodation
- substance abuse and mental health problems destabilising their housing
- an absence of relationships offering resources that could be used to access and maintain housing
- losing accommodation because of harassment, violence and/or relationship breakdown, and
- difficulties in coping with newly found autonomy and independence.

www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/download/30540_fr

Effects of Child Abuse and Neglect for Children and Adolescents, Lamont, A., National Child Protection Clearinghouse, Australian Institute of Family Studies, April 2010

The aim of this resource sheet is to:

- indicate the possible effects of child abuse and neglect, and
- explore whether different types of maltreatment are associated with specific adverse consequences in childhood and adolescence.

The resource sheet examines:

- the types of abuse and neglect
- the factors affecting the consequences of child abuse and neglect
- factors that increase the risks for, or protects against, adverse outcomes
- chronic and multiple types of abuse and neglect, and
- consequences of child abuse and neglect.

Key findings

- Child abuse and neglect can have physical, psychological, cognitive, behavioural and social consequences, which are often interrelated
- specific types of abuse are more closely related to some adverse outcomes than others; for example, the links

- between physical abuse and violent or aggressive behaviour, and
- experiencing chronic and multiple forms of abuse increases the risk of more damaging and severe consequences for children and young people.

<http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/sheets/rs17/rs17.html>

Effects of Child Abuse and Neglect for Adult Survivors, Lamont, A., National Child Protection Clearinghouse, Australian Institute of Family Studies, April 2010

This resource sheet aims to identify the potential long-term effects of child abuse and neglect that may extend into adulthood.

The resource sheet found that the consequences for adults who experience abuse and/or neglect as children vary considerably. For some adults the effects are chronic and debilitating, while others have more positive outcomes, despite their abuse and neglect histories.

The resource sheet identifies those factors that may impact on the way child abuse and neglect affects adults. These include:

- the person's age when the maltreatment occurred
- the severity of maltreatment
- the frequency and duration of maltreatment
- the relationship that they had with the perpetrator
- the type/s of abuse/neglect
- whether the abuse or neglect was detected and action taken to assure the safety of the child (eg. child protection intervention)
- positive or protective factors that may have mitigated the effects of maltreatment (eg. a strong relationship with grandparents), and
- whether victims/survivors received therapeutic services to assist them in recovery.

The resource sheet found that experiencing child abuse and neglect may lead to adverse physical, cognitive, psychological, behavioural or social consequences in adulthood, including:

- physical health problems
- mental health problems
- suicidal behaviour
- eating disorders and obesity
- re-victimisation
- alcohol and substance abuse
- aggression, violence and criminal behaviour
- intergenerational transmission of abuse and neglect
- high-risk sexual behaviour, and
- homelessness.

<http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/sheets/rs20/rs20.html>

Mothers' Spanking of 3-year-old Children and Subsequent Risk of Children's Aggressive Behavior, Catherine A Taylor PHD, Jennifer Manganello PHD, Shawna Lee PHD and Janet Rice PHD, May 2010

The study examines the association between three year old children subjected to corporal punishment and subsequent aggressive behaviour among those same children at five years of age and involved 2461 respondents from 20 large American cities.

Key conclusions from the study were that:

- parental use of corporal punishment may lead to increased aggression in children
- even minor forms of corporal punishment, such as spanking, increased the risk for children becoming aggressive
- most parents approved of, and had used, corporal punishment as a form of child discipline
- corporal punishment is not a necessary form of child discipline and other, more equally effective, non-physical forms of discipline exist
- reductions in parents' use of corporal punishment have been shown to reduce children's subsequent aggression
- other forms of harsh parenting such as child neglect, intimate partner aggression or violence, maternal parenting stress, depression, use of substances and consideration of abortion were found to be associated both with corporal punishment use and child aggression, and
- parents should be encouraged and assisted in the development of methods other than spanking for managing

undesirable behaviour.

<http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=4&hid=12&sid=2b74c6ab-7588-4ab9-937e-df0077922dee%40sessionmgr12&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWwhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#db=mnh&AN=20385647#db=mnh&AN=20385647>

My So-Called Emancipation - From Foster Care to Homelessness for California Youth, May 2010

This report by Human Rights Watch is based on semi-structured interviews with 63 self-selected homeless young people who had previously been in California's foster care system. The study explores the pathways these young people took from the care system into homelessness. It concludes that the state is implicated in this all-too-common trajectory of care leavers by:

- failing to prepare children adequately for adulthood
- putting inadequate preparation and planning into young people's transition from care
- providing too little support for too short a period following young people's 'emancipation' from the care system, and
- failing to build an effective and enduring support network around children and young people while they are in care that can sustain them and provide a safety-net in periods of stress and crisis that are likely to occur in early adulthood.

The report advocates for:

- extended support for young people in foster care beyond age 18
- legally-mandated transition-from-care plans that incorporate concrete arrangements for housing, income, connection to others and medical coverage
- more effective and comprehensive provision of life-skills training for young people in foster care to prepare them for independent living, and
- more state support to young people to establish relationships with people who can offer guidance and support throughout early adulthood.

The strength of the study is its ability to trace, in a qualitative sense, young people's pathways into homeless from the care system and identify the nature of the gaps in support that young people experienced in the transition-from-care process. The study is based on a non-probability sample, however, and can therefore not provide reliable quantitative data on this sub-group of the care leaver population. Neither can the study shed light on the frequency with which the observed failures of the system occur, although the study's authors suggest that the identified problems are endemic and widespread.

http://www.crin.org/docs/HRW_USA_my_so-called_emancipation.pdf

Youth Justice

Review of Effective Practice in Juvenile Justice (Report for the NSW Minister for Juvenile Justice) – Noetic Solutions Pty Limited, May 2010

This report reviews juvenile justice policy and practice in New South Wales.

The report identifies effective juvenile justice practice by reviewing international and Australian juvenile justice systems and drawing from the 'what works' literature to evaluate a range of programs, as well as traditional penal and 'get tough' programs including juvenile incarceration. Specific issues of reducing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander overrepresentation, and realising and coordinating whole-of-community action are also discussed.

This report will be used by the NSW government to build a comprehensive evidence base from Australia and overseas in order to test current practice.

The report contains 77 recommendations including that:

- all juvenile justice pilot programs must be adequately funded and have an evaluation framework
- the juvenile justice conferencing program be strengthened
- the Department of Juvenile Justice be required to take responsibility for placing juvenile offenders who have been granted bail into suitable accommodation
- the Government involve children and young people in decision-making, and
- strategies be developed to reduce the numbers of young people placed on remand.

The NSW government has agreed with some of the 77 recommendations.

http://www.djj.nsw.gov.au/strategic_review.htm

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People

Working and Walking Together: Supporting Family Relationship Services to Work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Families and Organisations, Secretariat for National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC), 2010

SNAICC has released a resource to assist non-Indigenous services to work in culturally appropriate ways with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and their communities.

The booklet-style publication provides information, ideas, advice, cultural protocols and guiding principles for non-Indigenous organisations to develop appropriate services and professional practice.

Services are also being encouraged to share stories, case studies and findings from action research projects to highlight successful achievements in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities.

<http://www.snaicc.asn.au/>

National Congress of Australia's First Peoples, May 2010

The aims of the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples are to create a national and collective voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, be a partner for government and industry and a think-tank for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander's issues.

The National Congress is a company limited by guarantee with a Board of Directors that is based on a model developed by an independent Indigenous steering committee after extensive community consultation.

<http://www.indigenous.gov.au/>

Emerging themes in Aboriginal child and Adolescent Mental Health, Williamson, Raphael, Redman, Daniels, Eades and Mayers, 2010

This qualitative study was conducted in Sydney, between April 2008 and September 2009. The study used a semi-structured approach in focus groups and group interviews to elicit the views of 15 Aboriginal parents and 32 social and health workers on important factors surrounding the mental health of Aboriginal young people.

The study identifies the major themes of centrality of family and kinship relationships, importance of identity issues, confounding factors in the mental health of Aboriginal young people and issues of service access and implementation.

http://www.mja.com.au/public/issues/192_10_170510/wil10001_fm.html

Generational Change, Learning and Remote Australian Indigenous Youth, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR), CAEPR Working Paper No. 68/2010, Inge Kral

This paper draws on research from remote central and northern Australia to explore community-based approaches to youth learning and cultural production.

It argues that the current public and policy discourse promoting the 'participation in the real economy' (Pearson 2000) as the singular pathway for realising future opportunities, does not take sufficient account of culture-specific logic which underpins the individual pursuit of credentials in mainstream western society, for remote Indigenous youth.

The paper seeks to demonstrate that unlike its western counterpart, the remote Indigenous context of transition from school to training and employment is not necessarily perceived as a prerequisite for fulfilling life, as other socio-cultural schemas underpin daily life and the construction of social identity. Additionally, the author seeks to demonstrate how rapid social change over recent generations has impacted the traditional process of youth socialisation, maturation and learning for adult life.

The paper suggests that more attention needs to be paid to alternative approaches to learning if Indigenous young people are to become competent, mature adults who are able to shape their own futures and the economic and social viability of their communities.

<http://www.anu.edu.au/caepr/Publications/WP/2010WP68.php>

Contextual Factors that Influence the Achievements of Australia's Indigenous Students – Results from PISA 2000 - 2006, Thomson, S and De Bortoli L, Australian Council for Educational Research

This report is based on the findings from three completed cycles of the Office of Economic Co-operation and Development's Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). The report focuses on the psychological factors that affect educational achievement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

The report found that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students:

- had on average lower levels of confidence in their abilities, less interest and engagement in reading and science and higher anxiety levels about education, particularly in mathematics, than non-Indigenous students
- were less likely to attend pre-school, and
- were more likely to be late to school on a regular basis, to miss consecutive months of schooling and to change schools several times than non-Indigenous students.

However, the report also found that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students put in as much effort and persistence with studying as non-Indigenous students and felt a similar sense of belonging at school as their non-Indigenous peers.

<http://www.apo.org.au/research/contextual-factors-influence-achievement-australias-indigenous-students>

Education

VET in Schools 2008, Australian Vocational Education and Training Statistics, May 2010

This report presents information on vocational education and training (VET) undertaken by school students as part of their senior secondary certificate. VET in schools includes school-based apprenticeships and traineeships and VET subjects and courses.

Key findings from this report were:

- In 2008, there were 220,000 VET in schools students, representing 41.0% of senior school students in Australia
 - 25,700 school-based apprentices and trainees, representing 11.7% of all VET in schools students
 - 194,200 students enrolled in other VET subjects and courses
- Compared with 2007, there was a 25.8% increase in the number of VET in Schools students in 2008
 - There was a 71.9% increase in school-based apprentices and trainees, and a 21.5% increase in other VET programs
 - These increases can be at least partly explained by improvements to reporting requirements for the Queensland Certificate of Education in 2008
- The most popular subject fields of education in 2008 were:
 - Management and commerce (26.2%)
 - Mixed field programmes (21.5%)
 - Health (13.3%)
 - Engineering and related technologies (10.4%), and
 - Food, hospitality and personal services (10.0%).
- Two-thirds of VET in schools students passed their assessment (67.7%), with 15.0% failing and 12.2% continuing their studies

http://www.ncver.edu.au/statistics/vis/vis08/VET_in_Schools_2008_2230.pdf

Health and Wellbeing

State of the World's Mothers Report 2010, Save the Children, 4 May 2010

This report includes the 11th annual *Mothers' Index*, which ranks the best and worst places to be a mother among 43 developed nations and 117 in the developing world.

In 2010 Norway, Australia, Iceland and Sweden were ranked as the top four countries which are the best places in the world to be a mother. The top 10 countries, in general, attained very high scores for mothers' and children's health, educational and economic status.

Afghanistan ranked last amongst the 160 countries surveyed.

<http://www.savethechildren.net/alliance/media/newsdesk/2010-05-04.html>

The Best Start: Supporting Happy, Healthy Childhoods, Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS), May 2010

This fact sheet examines the role that families and the community can play in giving children the best possible start in life.

The report found that:

- raising happy, healthy children is the collective responsibility of the whole community
- families need to be given support to ensure that children have a good start
- to address the problems that frequently emerge in childhood and adolescence a better understanding of how children spend their time, the quality of their relationships and the impacts that these have on their happiness and health is needed, and
- longitudinal data can be a valuable resource for policy makers by helping to identify the kinds of practical family supports needed.

<http://www.aifs.gov.au/institute/pubs/snapshots/ssbrochure10/ssbrochure10.html>

Nature Childhood Health and Life Pathways, Pretty, J., Angus, C., Bain, M., Barton, J., Gladwell, V., Hine, R., Pilgrim, S., Sandercock, S. & Sellens, M. Interdisciplinary Centre for Environment and Society Occasional Paper, University of Essex, UK, 2009

This report examines the beneficial effects that outdoor physical activity can have on the health and wellbeing of children and young people.

The report found that:

- children who were encouraged to participate in outdoor activities were more likely to continue these activities into adulthood, and
- the layout of urban areas, particularly the allocation of green space, can affect children's health.

The report contains ten action priorities for improving the health and wellbeing of children and adult by:

- encouraging a better understanding of the long-term outcomes of parental and social connections during the early years
- encouraging more outdoor free play for children aged 6 – 11
- developing better provisions for teenage children, between the ages of 12 to 18, to meet in their own communities
- encouraging doctors and other medical professionals to accept that nature and the outdoors delivers important immediate and long-term health benefits
- encouraging urban planners to incorporate access to green space as a fundamental right for all people
- encouraging schools to incorporate as part of their curriculum the use of gardens, allotments and woodlands
- evaluating the outcomes of outdoor play and green education on the cognitive capacities of children and their long-term health
- accessing the full economic benefits (personal and public) of a shift in life pathways from unhealthy to healthy for all age groups
- accessing how policies and institutions can best encourage widespread behavioural change so that participating in outdoor activities becomes a matter of preference and choice rather than enforcement, and
- establishing physical activity as a national priority area.

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/ces/occasionalpapers/Nature%20Childhood%20and%20Health%20iCES%20Occ%20Paper%202009-2%20FINAL.pdf>

An Ethnographic Study of the Day-to-Day Lives and Identities of People Who Are Homeless in Brisbane, Parsell C, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, May 2010

This research study examines Australian and international research on homelessness and explores the personal identities of homeless people, how they live on a daily basis and how they perceive these experiences. Approximately 100 homeless people, including young people, were involved in this research study.

The study found that the needs of those homeless people who participated in the study could be met through the provision of 'normal housing' and access to appropriate support.

<http://www.apo.org.au/research/ethnographic-study-day-day-lives-and-identities-people-who-are-homeless-brisbane>

Events and Conferences

Action Against Bullying & Cyber Bullying Education Series – Presenter Dr Michael Carr-Gregg, (May – August 2010)

Registration has opened for this state-wide free education series on bullying and cyber bullying.

This series is aimed at school leaders, teachers, teacher aides, guidance officers, behaviour management staff and parents.

<http://education.qld.gov.au/student-services/bulletins/action-against-bullying.html>

Australia's Health 2010 Conference - National Convention Centre Canberra, (22-23 June 2010)

Registration has opened for this conference.

The three conference themes are:

- preventative health
- health reform, and
- chronic disease.

<http://guest.cvent.com/EVENTS/Info/Summary.aspx?e=eda4785e-4d4b-414a-98aa-82fbcdf7c2db>

The 11th Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference – Melbourne Convention Centre, (7-9 July 2010)

Registration has opened for this conference and a draft program is available.

The six conference themes are:

- economic wellbeing of families
- families and work
- social inclusion
- violence, abuse and neglect
- family transitions and family law, and
- children, young people and their families.

<http://conference.aifs.gov.au/>

1st Annual Family Law Interdisciplinary Intensive and the 4th Annual Family Law Conference – Palazzo Versace, Main Beach Gold Coast, (21 – 23 July 2010)

Registration has opened for this conference.

The conference will focus on the four areas of:

- substantive property matters issues
- procedural property matters issues
- parental issues, and
- emerging family law issues.

http://www.tved.net.au/index.cfm?simpleDisplay=dsp_searchProduct_ts.cfm&PC=GFIJUL10&Type=4

Inaugural Children and Childhoods Symposium – Institute of Early Childhood, Macquarie University, (24 – 25 September 2010)

Submissions are currently being invited from individuals or organisations interested in presenting their research results on children and childhoods at this year's conference.

Submissions are due on **15 June 2010**.

<http://www.iec.mq.edu.au/research/research.htm>

Suicide Prevention: A Dialogue Across Disciplines and Cultures – 4th Asia Pacific Regional Conference of the International Association for Suicide Prevention, (17- 20 November 2010).

Expressions of Interest are currently being sought for attending at this year's conference.

Abstracts are also being sought from individuals interested in presenting at the conference. Abstracts are required to address one of 25 themes ranging from suicide in adolescence and the elderly, suicide and the internet, suicide survivors and assisted suicide.

Abstracts are due on **14 June 2010**.

<http://www.suicideprevention2010brisbane.org/>

Media Releases and Speeches

Cyber-bullying brochure for parents, Queensland government, 4 May 2010

A new cyber-safety brochure to assist parents to keep their children safe from online bullies will be released shortly.

The brochure provides:

- guidance on where parents can go to get more information about improving children's safety when using mobile phones and the internet, and
- a list of the new technologies that children use.

<http://education.qld.gov.au/student-services/>

Strengthening Indigenous Fathers and Families, Federal government, 7 May 2010

A new parenting initiative '*Strong Fathers, Strong Families*' for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men has been announced.

This aim of this initiative is to strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men's skills and confidence in their role as fathers, grandfathers and significant male relatives in the lives of their children, by increasing their participation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men will be given access to:

- antenatal programs to assist in preparing for fatherhood
- community and group activities and strategies to promote their involvement in the early development of their children and grandchildren
- health promotion information, and
- referral and support services.

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr10-ws-ws040.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2010&mth=5>

Boosting the Quality of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, Federal government, 11 May 2010

Funding has been announced to support the introduction of the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Child Care.

The framework will require all child care providers to:

- deliver better staff-to-child ratios, and
- improve staff qualifications.

Funding has been allocated for:

- improving infrastructure and staff qualifications in 142 rural and remote early childhood services
- implementing the National Quality Standards including a child care and early education services rating system, and
- supporting new child care regulatory measures.

The Minister for Early Education and Child Care has also been given new powers to commission an independent, confidential investigation or audit of a particular provider where there is a concern about their financial viability.

http://www.deewr.gov.au/ministers/gillard/media/releases/pages/article_100511_174044.aspx