



Families Australia publishes *National Family News* (NFN) ten times per annum. NFN contains information about latest major developments in national family policy, services and research.

Child Protection Australia

28 April: The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) produces an annual publication called "Child Protection Australia". The report is based on the following three national child protection data collections:

- Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations
- Children on care and protection orders
- Children in out-of-home care.

These data are collected annually by the AIHW from the relevant departments in each State and Territory. The 2004-05 publication is available online at:

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10245>

Welfare-to-Work Fact Sheets

20 April: The National Welfare Rights Network has released a Welfare-to-Work information package outlining the major changes to the social security system from 1 July 2006. The information will be updated as further details become available closer to 1 July as much of the detail of the changes is to be set out in Departmental policy guidelines that have not yet been finalised. The fact sheets are available at:

<http://www.welfareinrights.org.au/wrtraintr/introduction.htm>

WorkChoices Fact Sheets

26 April: A range of fact sheets are now available on the WorkChoices website. The fact sheets are also available in 15 community languages. Further information is available through the WorkChoices enquiry line on 1300 363 2764 or on the website at www.workchoices.gov.au.

Families, Incomes and Jobs – A Statistical Report of the HILDA survey

11 April: The Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey aims to provide a new type of social statistics for Australia and to investigate new methods of measuring change and social trends. The report is based on the first three waves of data collected by the HILDA Survey and analyses changes in the HILDA Survey panel in four key areas:

- households and family life
- incomes and wealth
- employment and unemployment
- life satisfaction and wellbeing

The full report is available at:

<http://www.melbourneinstitute.com/hilda/statreport.html>

FRSP Performance Framework: Consultation Paper

10 April: On behalf of FACSIA, RPR Consulting has prepared a consultation paper, *Family Relationship Services Program (FRSP) Development of an Integrated Performance Management Framework*. The paper, developed with the assistance of a small working group, provides a suggested approach and seeks feedback on performance information and data collection that

will enable evaluation and reporting on the achievements of the FRSP at a range of levels. Further consultations are happening in Canberra in early May. More information on the performance framework is available at http://www.facs.gov.au/Internet/facsinternet.nsf/News/frsp_performance_framework.htm

Raising Children Website

26 April: As part of the *Early Childhood – Invest to Grow* initiative of the *Stronger Families and Communities Strategy*, Government has committed \$4 million over four years to the development, implementation and maintenance of a website to give parents and professionals quality assured information on early childhood development, the health and wellbeing of children and positive parenting. The website

www.raisingchildren.net.au is due to be launched during national Families Week.

More at: http://www.facs.gov.au/Internet/facsinternet.nsf/News/australian_parenting_website.htm

Families Australia Family Consultation Project

1 May: Families Australia is conducting a series of focus groups around the country to gain first hand experience and knowledge of the issues affecting the lives of Australian families. Eight focus groups have, so far, been conducted in the ACT, SA, NSW and Victoria and a report of the findings will be published in the next FA Bulletin due in June. The project will consult with the broad range of families including Indigenous families, CALD families, elderly people, teenagers, single parents, non-custodial parents, and couples without children and aims to ensure an equitable balance between urban and rural families in each State and Territory. For more information about the project or to organise a focus group in your area contact the project officer, Grace Concannon on 02 62734885

*****Special Feature*****

Out of sight – Out of mind

19 April: A new report “*Out of sight – Out of Mind*”, produced by the Australian Childhood Foundation in partnership with the National Research Centre for the Prevention of Child Abuse at Monash University and Quantum Market Research, contains findings of a national study on child abuse.

With 252,831 reported cases of child abuse and almost 700 new reports per day, in 2004-2005, the study found that these numbers may potentially only be a fraction of the extent of the real problem in Australia.

Other key findings included:

- Australian's rank child abuse 13th on a list of community issues, behind rising petrol prices and problems with public transport.
- 1 in 6 (16%) respondents were unaware that the majority of child abuse is committed by people known by the child.
- 1 in 6 (16%) respondents were unclear about whether or not sex between a 14 year old and an adult would constitute sexual abuse.
- An 'out of sight, out of mind' attitude is still prevalent in the community - 49% of respondents could not bear to look at pictures of children who had been abused or neglected.
- 20% of respondents did not know what to do if they believed a child was being abused or neglected.
- The level of community concern about child abuse has not changed since 2003 (comparison of 2003-2006 studies).

From Tolerance to Respect: Cultural Competence in Practice

26 April: The Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of NSW (MDAA) and the National Ethnic

Disability Alliance (NEDA) are holding a two-day conference, in September, focusing on practical approaches to working with people from diverse backgrounds.

Proposals are currently being sought, for individual papers, panels and/or workshops, in the following areas:

- ‘Cultural competence’: what is it and why does it matter?
- Best practice examples of cultural competence
- Creating environments for cultural competence to flourish
- Cultural competence tools and resources
- Building capacity and developing communities
- Workforce development: the challenges and opportunities in building a culturally competent workforce
- Government policies and planning for diversity
- Culturally competent service planning and development
- Evaluation: how to build cultural competence into evaluation frameworks and how to evaluate the impact of culturally competent policies, planning and practices.

Proposals are due by 31 May. More information is available from: theresa.clark@mdaa.org.au

A national approach to mental health – from crisis to community

28 April: The Senate Select Committee on Mental Health, was appointed on 8 March 2005 to inquire into and report on the provision of mental health services in Australia. The Committee prepared two reports. The first report, *A national approach to mental health – from crisis to community*, was tabled in the Senate on 30 March 2006 and the second and final report was tabled in the Senate on 28 April. Both reports are available at:

http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/mentalhealth_ctte/index.htm

Average Australian households worth \$468,000

27 April: A new publication released by the ABS has found the mean (average) wealth of an Australian household in 2003-2004 was \$468,000. Other findings include:

- Owner-occupied dwellings were the main form of asset held by Australian households, and mortgages were the main form of liability
- 70% of households owned their own home outright or with a mortgage. The average value of their home was \$355,000
- Nearly 20% of households owned property other than their own home, including holiday homes and residential and non-residential property for rent
- Balances in superannuation funds were the largest financial asset held by households
- On average, households in the lowest 10% of the income distribution had higher levels of wealth and expenditure than households with slightly higher incomes.

The full report is available at: <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6554.02003-04?OpenDocument>

The Health and Welfare of Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander People

28 April: The Summary Booklet 2005, produced by the ABS, provides a summarised statistical overview, largely at the national level, of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and welfare. Among the topics included are: maternal and child health; risk factors; ill health; disability and ageing; mortality; and access to, and use of, services. The booklet is available at:

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4704.0.55.002?OpenDocument>

