



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

Speech by the Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

23 November: The Australian Government Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, the Hon. Mal Brough MP, delivered a speech to the ACOSS National Congress which, among other things, refers to an Australian Government proposal to introduce provisions to allow for a proportion of welfare payments to be diverted to directly pay for children's needs in certain cases. More at: <http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/minister3.nsf/content/23nov06.htm>

Changes to Baby Bonus for under 18 year olds

12 November: The Australian Government Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, the Hon. Mal Brough MP, announced that, from 1 January 2007, mothers under 18 years of age will be paid the Baby Bonus by instalments. More at: http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/Minister3.nsf/content/baby_bonus_12nov06.htm

Work and Family Awards 2007 – Community Sector Award

November. Nominations are now open for the 2007 Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) and Business Council of Australia (BCA) National Work and Family Awards. The Awards give high level national recognition to organisations that accommodate employees' work-life needs through flexible working arrangements and provide an opportunity for organisations to promote their achievements in creating a flexible, family friendly work environment. A new 'Community Sector Award' has been introduced for 2007 (at Families Australia's suggestion) to recognise the achievements in the sector in developing flexible working arrangements. Nominations for the 2007 Awards close on Thursday 1 February 2007. More at: <http://www.workplace.gov.au/workplace/Category/SchemesInitiatives/WorkFamily/2007ACCIBCAWorkandFamilyAwards.htm>

Evaluation of the Commonwealth Disability Strategy

8 November: The report on the evaluation of the Commonwealth Disability Strategy (CDS) which is aimed at improving employment opportunities and outcomes for people with disability is now available. The evaluation was conducted by Erebus International during 2005-06. More at: http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/disabilities/cds_evaluation.htm

Child Care Service Handbook 2006 - 2007

2 November: The Child Care Service Handbook has been developed as a guide to assist services with the administration of the Child Care Benefit and the Child Care Support Program. More at: http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/content/service_handbooks_workbooks.htm

My Life as a Budget Item: Disability, budget priorities and poverty in Tasmania

November: This report, by Anglicare Tasmania, describes research which explores the circumstances of the working age population of people with disabilities living on low incomes in Tasmania during 2005-06. It involved collating information about the daily lives of 48 people reliant on the Disability Support Pension and 20 carers in order to explore the relationship between disability and poverty. It investigates how this might impact on access to support services, and details unmet needs and gaps in service provision. More at: <http://www.anglicare-tas.org.au/pdfs/BudgetItem%20qk.pdf>

Australian Government Access Card

November: The Consumer and Privacy Taskforce is an independent group, established by the Australian Government Minister for Human Services, the Hon. Joe Hockey MP, to address consumer and privacy issues relating to the development of the Access Card. Headed by Professor Allan Fells, the Taskforce is meeting with organisations and the community and is seeking submissions in regard to the access card. More at: http://www.accesscard.gov.au/consumer_privacy_task_force.html

Divorces Australia 2005

2 November: This electronic publication by the Australian Bureau of Statistics provides information on divorces granted in Australia in 2005. More at:

<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/3307.0.55.001Main+Features12005?OpenDocument>

The Impact of Young Motherhood on Education, Employment and Marriage

November: This paper, published by the Social Policy and Research Centre (SPRC) at the University of New South Wales, assesses the impact of young motherhood on education, employment and marriage in the Australian environment using data from the Australian Longitudinal Study of Women's Health. More at:

<http://www.sprc.unsw.edu.au/dp/DP148.pdf>

Young people and their parents: Supporting families through changes that occur in adolescence

8 November: This briefing paper from the Australian Family Relationships Clearinghouse explores the changes that young people and their families experience during the adolescent period, and ways that practitioners can help facilitate or strengthen bonds between the two. More at:

<http://www.aifs.gov.au/afrc/pubs/briefing/briefing1.html>

Cutting the Red Tape: AIHW Report

14 November: The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has reported on administrative and reporting requirements of community service agencies which deliver multiple programs and are funded through sources such as local, State, Territory and Australian governments, public fundraising and corporate donations. More at:

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10378>

Hilda Survey Research Conference 2007

November: Submissions of papers are now being sought for the 2007 HILDA Survey Research Conference, being held on the 19-20 July 2007, at the University of Melbourne. The aim of the conference is to provide a forum for the discussion of research based on the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey. Attendance at the conference is open to all persons interested in the HILDA Survey and longitudinal survey research. More at:

<http://www.melbourneinstitute.com/hilda/conf2007.html>

The 'growing up' of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children: a literature review

November: This literature review, Number 15 in the Occasional Papers Series produced by the Australian Government Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, was commissioned as part of 'Footprints in Time - The Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children', to consolidate what is already known about Indigenous children, and to highlight what information is missing. It considers the data available for understanding the care giving environment of Indigenous children, and child-specific topics such as early childhood, the school years and pathways outside of school. More at:

<http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/research/ops-ops15.htm>

Early Childhood Education: Pathways to quality and equity for all children

15 November: This paper by Dr Alison Elliott and published by Australian Council for Educational Research calls for a coherent, long-term national action plan and timeline to develop and implement an integrated, well-funded, regulated and managed system of early childhood education and care with clear goals, priorities and outcomes. The review describes the current provision of early childhood services in Australia and examines relevant policy. It also provides an overview of the early childhood education research, in Australia and internationally, and uses this body of work to identify and illuminate the central issues. More at: <http://www.acer.edu.au/research/reports/AER.html>

National Community Services Data Dictionary: Version 4

23 November: The 'National community services data dictionary' is the authoritative source of community services data definitions used where national consistency is required. The dictionary is designed to improve the comparability of data across the community services sector. It is also designed to make data collection activities more efficient by reducing duplication of effort in the field, and more effective by ensuring that information to be collected is appropriate for its purpose. More at:

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10243>

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

2006-07 Women's Leadership and Development Program Grants

11 November: The Australian Government, through the Office for Women, invites applications from eligible national, State and Territory based women's organisations to undertake projects that build their capacity to improve the status of women in Australia. Up to \$25,000 per project is available for projects that strengthen the organisation's effectiveness and increase its capacity to contribute to the development of public policy. Applications close on 15 December 2006. More at:

http://www.ofw.facsia.gov.au/leadership_development/womens_development_programme/wdp_06-07.html

FAMILIES AUSTRALIA LATEST NEWS

New Website

The new Families Australia website is up and running at www.familiesaustralia.org.au. It contains Families Australia's policy statements, submissions, publications and many useful links.

Grandparenting

Families Australia has recently been examining grandparenting issues. We ran an Expert Forum on 'Grandparenting: present and future' at The Australian National University on 24 October 2006; this was preceded by a focus group for grandparents in Canberra. The report will be available for comment shortly at www.familiesaustralia.org.au and will also be emailed to all recipients of *National Family News*.

'Family'

The Summer 2006 edition of Families Australia's new look magazine, *Family*, will be sent to all members in late November-early December 2006. It will also be on our website. Copies can also be obtained by contacting the Families Australia office (phone: 02 6273 4885).

Diary Dates: National Families Week and the National Family Wellbeing Symposium

National Family Week will be celebrated between 13 and 19 May 2007. The theme will be 'families investing in time together'. More information about how to get involved in the Week will be provided in early 2007.

The National Family Wellbeing Symposium, hosted by Families Australia in conjunction with the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, will be held at The Australian National University, Canberra, on 20-21 June 2007. More information will be provided in early 2007.

★ As this is the last edition of National Family News for 2006, all of us at Families Australia wish our readers a happy holiday season and New Year. NFN will return in February 2007.

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