



Families Australia, the national, independent, peak organisation promoting the interests of families, publishes *National Family News* on the first week of each month (except January). *NFN* contains information about the latest major developments in national family policy, services and research from across government and the non-government sectors. Back issues can be viewed at: www.familiesaustralia.org.au

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Views & news from Families Australia: child protection, tax cuts

Top stories: men's health, NAIDOC week, children

VIEWS & NEWS FROM FAMILIES AUSTRALIA...

Child protection plan consultations underway

June: The recent tragic spate of child abuse and neglect cases has thrown into stark relief the urgent need for the finalisation of the National Child Protection Framework. The past month has seen the start of an intensive round of consultations on the basis of the discussion paper released in May 2008 by the Hon. Jenny Macklin MP, the Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, entitled *Australia's children: safe and well. A national framework for protecting Australia's children*. In June, four Expert Workshops were held for over 70 community and research sector representatives on the following topics: improving responses to Indigenous children; attracting and retaining the right workforce and improving child protection systems; improving responses for children in care and young people leaving care; and stronger prevention and better collaboration between services. Families Australia was closely involved in these processes. Consultations between State/Territory and FaHCSIA officials are also underway. More at:

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/06/25/2285053.htm>

<http://canberra.yourguide.com.au/news/local/news/general/experts-declare-national-crisis-of-child-neglect/800730.aspx>

Families Australia views on Federal Government tax cuts for families

30 June: Families Australia has welcomed the Federal Government's tax cuts effective from 1 July 2008, yet has called on Government to ensure that benefits also reach the most vulnerable families and individuals. More at:

http://news.sbs.com.au/worldnewsaustralia/index.php?type=category&a=working_families_39better_off_in_new_financial_year39_550587

<http://www.cch.com.au/au/News/ShowNews.aspx?ID=26214&Type=F&TopicIDNews=5&CategoryIDNews=0&ui=28200>

TOP STORIES...

Developing a Men's Health Policy for Australia: Setting the scene

8 June: The Australian Government is developing a National Men's Health Policy. The Policy will focus on reducing barriers men experience in accessing health services,

tackling widespread reticence amongst men to seek treatment, improving male-friendly health services and raising awareness of preventable health problems that affect men. This paper outlines why the Government is developing a National Men's Health Policy and what the Government wants the Policy to achieve, and provides information on the consultation process. More at:

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-mens-policy>

NAIDOC WEEK 2008

June: NAIDOC celebrates the survival of Indigenous culture and the Indigenous contribution to modern Australia. NAIDOC Week celebrations for 2008 will be held from 6 to 13 July. The aim of the 2008 national theme *Advance Australia Fair?* is to encourage people to reflect on the Australian principle of a 'Fair go' and to consider the inequalities still experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. More at: http://www.naidoc.org.au/media_releases/mr2008/20080502.aspx

Indigenous women's representation in a new national Indigenous representative body

June: There is renewed momentum towards the establishment of a new national representative body for Indigenous Australia that gives due representation to diverse voices in order to be more sustainable than earlier models. This paper from the Indigenous Law Centre asserts that there is a strong argument to be made for Indigenous women's representation in any new national representative body. More at: http://www.ilc.unsw.edu.au/news_&_events/documents/Megan%20Davis%20Article%20ILB%20v7n04.pdf

Sustainable options for Australia's new national Indigenous representative body

4 June: In this speech to the Native Title Conference 2008, Tom Calma, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, argues that a national Indigenous representative body has to be a fundamental component of the Indigenous policy landscape if it is to make lasting progress in improving the conditions of Indigenous people and their communities. More at:

http://www.hreoc.gov.au/about/media/speeches/social_justice/2008/20080604_representative_body.html

Enhancing family and relationship service accessibility and delivery to culturally and linguistically diverse families in Australia

June: The aims of this Australian Family Relationships Clearinghouse paper are to identify the key issues, challenges and needs of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) families when accessing and using family relationship services, as well as the needs of service providers and practitioners when they deliver services to culturally and linguistically diverse clients. The paper also aims to use the identified concerns of CALD families and service providers and practitioners to make practice, procedure and policy recommendations. More at: <http://www.aifs.gov.au/afrc/pubs/issues/issues3.html>

Family Characteristics and Transitions, Australia, 2006-07

6 June: This Australian Bureau of Statistics publication presents results from the 2006-07 Family Characteristics and Transitions Survey and compares them to results from the 2003 and 1997 Family Characteristics Surveys, providing information about changing patterns of family and household composition in contemporary Australia. Information on family transitions such as relationship history, relationship expectations,

children born and fertility expectations is also presented in this publication. More at: <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/mf/4442.0?OpenDocument>

Children's sense of safety: children's experiences of childhood in contemporary Australia

June: This research report is the third in a series of studies undertaken by the Australian Childhood Foundation, Child Abuse Research Australia and Quantum that seek the views of children and young people about their experiences of childhood in Australia today. It specifically seeks further to explore children's sense of safety. A national representative sample of 600 children and young people aged between 10 and 14 years across Australia completed an online survey in April 2007. More at: <http://www.childhood.org.au/downloads/Childrens%20sense%20of%20safety%202008.pdf>

Growing Up In Australia: The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children

June: This report from the Australian Institute of Family Studies, the third in a series, focuses on early trends emerging from a second wave of data collection, as well as recent research findings and dissemination activities completed in the past year. In particular, it examines breastfeeding and return-to-work patterns. More at: <http://www.aifs.gov.au/growingup/pubs/ar/annualreport2006-07.html>

Linking SAAP, child protection and juvenile justice data collections: a feasibility study

13 June: This report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare investigates the feasibility and usefulness of linking the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program, child protection and juvenile justice data collections. More at: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10597>

Australian community sector survey 2008

June: The ACOSS Australian Community Sector Survey 2008 Report (ACSS) presents the findings of the 2008 Australian Community Sector Survey. The report provides information on service use, income, expenditure and workforce issues for the community services and welfare sector. The ACSS is the only annual survey that covers the non-profit community services and welfare sector. More at: http://www.acoss.org.au/upload/publications/papers/4420_Paper%20154%20ACSS%202008.pdf

LIFE Awards

June: The LIFE Awards are presented at a national, annual event that acknowledges the vital work that is being undertaken in the prevention of suicide across Australia. The LIFE Awards are held in conjunction with World Suicide Prevention Day, 10 September. The theme for this year is *Think Globally, Plan Nationally, Act Locally*. Nominations close 22 August. More at: <http://www.suicidepreventionaust.org/Awards.aspx>

Evaluation of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy

June: The Stronger Families and Communities Strategy (SFCS) 2000-2004 was designed to help build family and community capacity to deal with challenges and take advantage of opportunities, with a special focus on those at risk of social, economic and geographic isolation. The evaluation conducted by the Centre for Applied Social Research, RMIT University, produced: an overall final report; issues papers addressing

key principles; case study reports of particular projects, funding initiatives or targeted regions; and newsletters. More at: <http://www.rmit.edu.au/casr/sfcse>

Disability support and services in Australia

16 June: This background note from the Parliamentary Library Information and Research Services provides an overview of government provided disability support services in Australia, including background on Commonwealth, State and Territory responsibilities, legislation and funding. It provides links to some key national and international organisations in the disability area. More at:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/BN/2007-08/DisabilitySupportServicesAustralia.htm>

The nature and impact of caring for family members with a disability in Australia

June: This report from the Australian Institute of Family Studies examines the impact upon families of providing care for a family member with a disability and is based on the findings of the Families Caring for a Person with a Disability Study (FCPDS) that was conducted in 2006. The sample for the FCPDS consisted of 1,002 primary carers receiving Carer Payment or Carer Allowance. The aims of this report are: to examine the effect of caring on family and social relationships; to document the social, emotional, physical and financial impact on families of caring for a person with a disability; and to examine the effect of caring on labour force status. More at:

<http://www.aifs.gov.au/institute/pubs/resreport16/main.html>

Part time employment: the Australian experience

12 June: This paper from the Productivity Commission provides a comparison of part-time work in Australia and overseas and possible reasons for our relatively high reliance on this form of work. The paper also presents an assessment of the changing role of part-time work in Australia and identifies groups that are availing themselves of part-time work and industries that have higher proportions of part-time workers, and how these have been changing over time. More at:

<http://www.pc.gov.au/research/staffworkingpaper/part-time-employment>

Australia's Health 2008

24 June: Australia's Health 2008 is the 11th biennial health report of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. It is the nation's premier source of statistics and informed commentary on: patterns and determinants of health and illness; health across the life stages; the supply and use of health services; expenditure and workforce; and health sector performance. More at:

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10585>

Residential aged care in Australia 2006-07: a statistical overview

12 June: This report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare provides comprehensive statistical information on residential aged care homes and their residents. The report contains information on the capacity of residential aged care homes, their residents and resident characteristics, levels of dependency among residents and admissions and separations. More at:

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10589>

The role of families in preventing alcohol-related harm among young people

June: This report from the Drug Info Clearinghouse argues for the provision of resources, guidance and appropriate referrals to help parents focus on factors that

reduce the likelihood of young people engaging in risk-taking behaviour, thereby preventing and minimising alcohol-related harm among this age group. More at: http://druginfo.adf.org.au/downloads/Prevention_Research_Quarterly/IP_08Jun_youngpeople.pdf

Mental health services in Australia: interim report

19 June: The Senate Community Affairs Committee tabled an interim report into mental health services in Australia. The report outlines the committee's work to date and provides a broad summary of the themes arising in the evidence received. More at: http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/clac_ctte/mental_health/interim_report/index.htm

A good house is hard to find: housing affordability in Australia

16 June: This report from the Senate Select Committee on Housing Affordability in Australia sets out the facts, analyses the causes and discusses some remedies. More at: http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/hsaf_ctte/report/index.htm

10th Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference, Families Through Life

9-11 July: This national event offers a forum for extensive debate on a wide range of family issues of relevance to researchers, policy makers and practitioners. It provides a platform for researchers to report findings from their family-related research and to contribute to ongoing discussions and provide policy input. More at: <http://www.aifsconference08.com/>

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