



Families Australia, a 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

Please distribute throughout your networks

IN THIS ISSUE...

Views & news from Families Australia: National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children

Top stories: Extra help for young people in out-of-home care; Family Support Program; *A healthier future for all Australians.*

VIEWS & NEWS FROM FAMILIES AUSTRALIA...

National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children

Families Australia has continued to work closely with the 63-member Coalition of Organisations Committed to the Safety and Wellbeing of Australia's Children to advocate for the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children. It is now expected that COAG will announce the Framework in April 2009. In January 2009, the Coalition made public calls for Federal and State/Territory Governments to announce a package of initiatives valued at least \$500 million for child protection and safety over the first three years of the Framework. More information: www.familiesaustralia.org.au

TOP STORIES...

Extra help for young people in out-of-home care

17 February: Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services, the Hon. Bill Shorten MP, and the Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, the Hon. Jenny Macklin MP, announced extra help for young people in out-of-home care. More at:

http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/billshorten.nsf/content/extra_help_17feb09.htm

Family Support Program

16 February: The Hon Jenny Macklin MP announced the establishment of the Family Support Program, an initiative designed to improve outcomes for children and families by improving the Australian Government's ability to provide services to them. The Family Support Program brings together eight existing family, children and parenting programs that all share a common interest in supporting Australian families, parents and children. More at:

http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/family/family_support_program.htm

A healthier future for all Australians - interim report

December 2008: This interim report contains the proposed reform directions as recommended by the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission, the body established in February 2008 to develop a long-term health reform plan for a modern Australia. More at:

<http://www.nhhrc.org.au/internet/nhhrc/publishing.nsf/Content/interim-report-december-2008>

Younger people with disability in residential aged care program

16 February: This report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) summarises the characteristics of people who were 'on the books' during 2007-08 and the Younger People With Disability in Residential Aged Care services they received. More at: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10730>

Adoptions Australia 2007-08

6 February: Since the early 1970s, there has been a 22-fold decrease in the number of adoptions in Australia, according to this AIHW report. More at: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10682>

Australia's refugee and humanitarian program: community views on current challenges and future directions

January: This report from the Refugee Council of Australia explores themes including Australia's resettlement program in the context of global refugee needs and past national intakes; future planning of the Refugee and Humanitarian Program; funding and planning of settlement services; and conditions in some of the major source countries for refugees. More at:

http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/docs/resources/submissions/2009-10_intakesub.pdf

People and community at the heart of systems and bureaucracy: South Australia's social inclusion initiative

This report by Monsignor David Cappo, South Australia's Commissioner for Social Inclusion, considers the Social Inclusion Initiative which has become the bedrock of South Australia's approach to delivering public value to the most marginalised people through joined-up government. More at: <http://www.socialinclusion.sa.gov.au/>

Chronic disease and participation in work

11 February: With the Australian population ageing and experiencing increasing rates of some risk factors such as obesity, chronic disease prevalence is on the rise. For this AIHW report, the 2004-05 National Health Survey has been used to assess the association between selected chronic diseases and workforce participation and absenteeism from work. The report also includes an estimate of the loss to the workforce due to death from selected chronic diseases. More at: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10442>

Homeless Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in SAAP 2006-07

12 February: This AIHW report takes a closer look at Indigenous Supported Accommodation Assistance Program clients including the reasons why they seek

support, what they needed and received while supported, and what their outcomes were. More at: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10522>

Tips for claiming donations to emergency relief funds

10 February: This advice from the Australian Taxation Office is designed to ensure those donating to help the victims of the Victorian bushfires and Northern Queensland floods can do so with minimum fuss. It outlines the method of claiming up to \$10 per person for donations where no receipt is issued, e.g. bucket donations. For this and other crisis-related policy announcements, visit the ATO's media site: <http://www.ato.gov.au/newsroom.asp?placement=001/001/001/001>

Improving low-SES school students' access to higher education

February: Starting this year, the University of Sydney's Social Inclusion Project will seek to increase the capacity and desire of school students from low SES backgrounds to participate in higher education. More at:

http://cmslive.curriculum.edu.au/leader/improving_low-ses_school_students_access_to_higher_education_26507.html?issueID=11710

Exploring the factors associated with youths' educational outcomes: the role of locus of control and parental socio-economic background

January: This paper from the Centre for Economics Policy Research explores the association between youths' perception of control (i.e. locus of control) and three educational outcomes: (i) Year 12 completion, (ii) whether youth obtained an Equivalent National Tertiary Entrance Rank (ENTER) score, and (iii) the actual ENTER score. More at: <http://cepr.anu.edu.au/pdf/DP598.pdf>

Implementation of the Children's Services National Minimum Data Set: a feasibility study

2 March: This report from AIHW examines the feasibility of implementing the Children's Services National Minimum Data Set (CSNMDS), a nationally agreed set of administrative data items that aims to provide answers to some of the key policy questions in relation to child care and preschool services in Australia. It found that to date, most states and territories have not incorporated the CSNMDS data items into their collections, due largely to cost and feasibility issues. The objective of establishing a collection that is comprehensive and national in coverage remains to be achieved.

More at: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10743>

New Autism website

24 February: The Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) website, launched as part of the \$190 million Helping Children with Autism package, aims to benefit parents, carers and professionals with information, online resources and interactive functions. Included will be 'impartial, evidence-based information about ASD and early intervention treatments available to children with ASD'. Find the website at:

http://raisingchildren.net.au/children_with_autism/children_with_autism_landing.html

\$396 million for remote Indigenous housing in NSW

5 March: Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, the Hon Jenny Macklin MP, announced that remote Indigenous communities in New South Wales will benefit from a \$396 million investment in housing over the next ten

years to improve living standards for families and children. The NSW share of the Remote Indigenous Housing National Partnership will fund the construction of new houses and major upgrades to existing houses and ensure the reliable and consistent management and maintenance of housing. More at:

http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/indigenous_housing_5mar09.htm

Grants for NT Indigenous communities

4 March: Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, the Hon Jenny Macklin MP, announced \$10 million of grants for NT Indigenous communities. A new community store and a transport service for remote Indigenous communities are among 20 successful applicants to share in almost \$10 million in funding from the Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA).

http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/grants_nt_comm_04mar09.htm

Multicultural Mental Health

19 February: Multicultural Mental Health Australia (MMHA) has received \$2.7 million in funding from the Department of Health and Ageing to continue enhancing the mental health and wellbeing of Australia's culturally diverse communities. More at:

www.mmha.org.au

Healing foundation for stolen generations

13 February: Professor Lowitja O'Donoghue and Mr Gregory Phillips have been appointed to establish a Foundation to address trauma and healing in Indigenous communities. The Foundation will be established to provide practical and innovative healing services, as well as training and research. More at:

http://www.pm.gov.au/media/Release/2009/media_release_0812.cfm

Communities for children

16 February: An additional \$1.6 million was this week allocated to all Communities for Children activities, to aid continuation of services to the end of June 2009. A new model, called the Family Support Program, will take its place from July this year. The program will improve the Australian Government's capacity to work collaboratively.

More at:

http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/community_child_health_16feb09.htm

Third Sector News

This publication, from the Office of Senator Ursula Stephens, aims to keep the community sector fully informed of the latest developments within the sector. More at:

<http://thirdsector.ursulastephens.com/default.asp?active=104&v=49>

Is the media part of the Aboriginal health problem, and part of the solution?

This article in *Inside Story* analyses media coverage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues and advocates for more balanced and positive reporting as a way of influencing public and political processes. More at:

<http://inside.org.au/part-of-the-aboriginal-health-problem/>

Workplace flexibility

Aequus Partners recently launched a new website dedicated to workplace flexibility. This site will be regularly updated with free information and articles about workplace flexibility. More at: www.workplaceflexibility.com.au

If you no longer wish to receive *National Family News*, please send an email to admin@familiesaustralia.org.au to unsubscribe.

To reproduce any NFN materials for internal publications, please go to www.familiesaustralia.org.au and click on 'National Family News'.