



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](http://www.familiesaustralia.org.au)

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## IN THIS ISSUE...

Views & news from Families Australia: Forgotten Australians: Senate report 2009; Families Australia Board members honoured.

Top stories: *Picture of Australia's Children 2009; Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2009; Carer payments changes passed by Parliament; National evaluation of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy.*

## VIEWS & NEWS FROM FAMILIES AUSTRALIA...

### ***Forgotten Australians: Senate report 2009***

25 June: The Senate Community Affairs References Committee tabled its report, *Lost Innocents and Forgotten Australians Revisited: Report on the progress with the implementation of the recommendations of the Lost Innocents and Forgotten Australians Reports*. Families Australia has worked closely with the national peak, the Alliance for Forgotten Australians, for over two years now. More at: [http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/clac\\_ctte/recs\\_lost\\_innocents\\_forgotten\\_aust\\_rpts/report/index.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/clac_ctte/recs_lost_innocents_forgotten_aust_rpts/report/index.htm)

### ***Families Australia Board members honoured***

We congratulate Families Australia Board members, Bev Orr OAM (Australian Foster Care Association) and Anne McLeish OAM (Grandparents Australia), who were recognised in the 2009 Queen's Birthday Honours list. Bev was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for service to the community, particularly children, through foster care and child protection; Anne was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for service to the community through Grandparents Australia.

## TOP STORIES...

### ***A picture of Australia's children 2009***

17 June: This Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) report delivers the latest information on how, as a nation, we are faring according to key indicators of child health, development and wellbeing. Death rates among children have fallen

dramatically, and most children are physically active and meet minimum standards for reading and numeracy. However, rates of severe disability and diabetes are on the rise. Too many children are overweight or obese or at risk of homelessness, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children fare worse on most key indicators. More at: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10704>

### ***Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2009***

2 July: This Productivity Commission report draws on extensive evidence to identify the areas where government policies will have the greatest impact. Over time, the report measures the effects of those policies — and reveals where more effort is required. More at: <http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/indigenous/keyindicators2009>

### ***Community Investment Program***

16 June: Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, the Hon. Jenny Macklin MP, announced funding of \$19.4 million for a range of community-based projects under the new Community Investment Program. More at: [http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/communities/progserv/community\\_investment/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/communities/progserv/community_investment/Pages/default.aspx)

### ***Carer Supplement and Carer Payment (child)***

17 June: Minister Jenny Macklin and the Hon. Chris Bowen MP, Minister for Financial Services, Superannuation and Corporate Law and Minister for Human Services, announced that a Carer Supplement will replace one-off bonuses and that more carers of children with profound disability will receive Carer Payment (child). More at: [http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/carersupplement\\_17jun09.htm](http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/carersupplement_17jun09.htm).

### ***2009 NAIDOC - Honouring Our Elders, Nurturing Our Youth***

5 July: Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Jenny Macklin, today welcomed the start of the National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week with an announcement of \$1.5 million for NAIDOC activities across Australia. More at: [http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/naidoc\\_05july09.htm](http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/naidoc_05july09.htm)

### ***National evaluation (2004–2008) of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy 2004–2009***

June: This evaluation was undertaken over four years by a consortium comprising the Social Policy Research Centre at the University of New South Wales, supported by the Australian Institute of Family Studies. It covers three of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy initiatives—Communities for Children, Invest to Grow and Local Answers. More at:

<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/about/publicationsarticles/research/occasional/Pages/ops-ops24.aspx>

### ***Engaging hard-to-reach families and children***

June: This report documents one of three themed studies undertaken as part of the national evaluation (2004–2008) of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy (SFCS) 2004–2009. The study explores how Communities for Children, Invest to Grow and Local Answers projects and activities have engaged clients who may be considered

hard-to-reach. More at:

<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/about/publicationsarticles/research/occasional/Pages/ops-ops26.aspx>

### **Indigenous families and children: coordination and provision of services**

June: This report examines service provision, service coordination and Indigenous families and children in Communities for Children sites, identifies factors that facilitate or hinder service provision and outcomes and considers sustainability issues. More at: <http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/about/publicationsarticles/research/occasional/Pages/ops-ops23.aspx>

### **Stronger Families in Australia study: the impact of Communities for Children**

June: This report presents the results of the evaluation of the short-run impacts of the Communities for Children initiative on child, family and community outcomes. More at: <http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/about/publicationsarticles/research/occasional/Pages/ops-ops25.aspx>

### **Further Measures to Improve Disability Rights**

25 June: The Attorney-General, the Hon Robert McClelland MP, and Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services, the Hon Bill Shorten MP, welcomed the passage of the Disability Discrimination and Other Human Rights Legislation Amendment Bill 2008 through Parliament. The Bill aims to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Australia's anti-discrimination system and to clarify the obligation of employers, service providers and other parties to remove discriminatory barriers for people with disabilities. More at: [http://www.attorneygeneral.gov.au/www/ministers/RobertMc.nsf/Page/MediaReleases\\_2009\\_SecondQuarter\\_25June2009-FurtherMeasurestoImproveDisabilityRights](http://www.attorneygeneral.gov.au/www/ministers/RobertMc.nsf/Page/MediaReleases_2009_SecondQuarter_25June2009-FurtherMeasurestoImproveDisabilityRights) and <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/comlaw/management.nsf/lookupindexpagesbyid/IP200839554?OpenDocument>

### **Not-for-profit Organisations, Australia, 2006-07 (Re-Issue)**

12 June: This Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) publication is a re-release, as an error in the application of the estimation methodology has been identified in the initial release. This re-release presents updated estimates based on the application of the improved estimation methodology. Contains information about not-for-profit organisations in Australia, including number of organisations, employment, volunteers, income, expenses, operating surplus before tax and industry value added, broken down by type of not-for-profit organisation. More at: [http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/8106.0Main+Features12006-07%20\(Re-Issue\)?OpenDocument](http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/8106.0Main+Features12006-07%20(Re-Issue)?OpenDocument)

### **Education and Training Matters**

22 June: The fifth newsletter of the National Centre for Education and Training Statistics (NCETS) at the ABS highlights some recent developments and current NCETS projects. More at: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4211.0?OpenDocument>

### **Early Childhood Education Conference speech**

29 June: The Hon Bill Shorten MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services and Parliamentary Secretary for Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction,

addressed the 2009 Early Childhood Education Conference. More at: [http://www.billshorten.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/billshorten.nsf/content/bs\\_s\\_earlychildhoodconf\\_29may09.htm](http://www.billshorten.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/billshorten.nsf/content/bs_s_earlychildhoodconf_29may09.htm)

### **Australian Women's Leadership Symposium speech**

17 June: The Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP, Minister for Housing and Minister for the Status of Women, addressed the 2009 Australian Women's Leadership Symposium. More at: [http://www.tanyaplibersek.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/tanyaplibersek.nsf/content/women\\_leadership\\_17june09.htm](http://www.tanyaplibersek.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/tanyaplibersek.nsf/content/women_leadership_17june09.htm)

### **Patron and Ambassador for People with Disability**

16 June: Thérèse Rein will be the official Patron of International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD) and the National Disability Awards in 2009. Paralympian, Kurt Fearnley will become the 2009 Ambassador for People with Disability. More at: [http://www.billshorten.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/billshorten.nsf/content/rein\\_fearnley\\_16june2009.htm](http://www.billshorten.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/billshorten.nsf/content/rein_fearnley_16june2009.htm)

### **Breastfeeding and infants' time use**

This paper from the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) analyses infants' time use according to breastfeeding status in order to help inform the debate about how breastfeeding leads to improved child outcomes. The analysis uses data from the first wave (2004) of Growing Up in Australia: The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC). More at: <http://www.aifs.gov.au/institute/pubs/rp43/rp43.html#abstract>

### **ATO News Service**

The Australian Taxation Office offers a free Non Profit News Service which keeps NFP administrators or advisers abreast with ATO developments. Updates can be sent daily, weekly or monthly. To subscribe, go to: <http://www.ato.gov.au/nonprofit/content.asp?doc=/content/34577.htm&mnu=44615&mfp=001/004>

### **Reported Gambling Problems in the Indigenous and Total Australian Population**

1 July: This study by Gambling Research Australia (an initiative of the Ministerial Council on Gambling) investigates factors that correlate with gambling-related problems among the Indigenous population. There are significant variations between states and territories in the percentage of Indigenous people reporting gambling related problems for themselves or their family and social networks. More at: <http://www.gamblingresearch.org.au/CA256DB1001771FB/page/Listing-Home+Page+News-Indigenous+gambling+report+released+29+June+2009?OpenDocument&1=Home~&2=~&3=~&REFUNID=~>

### **Arts in aging**

June, USA: The National Endowment for the Arts' *Arts in Aging* project links a number of studies, articles and best practice models that discuss the benefits of arts education and types of arts programs available in the United States for older people. More at: <http://apo.org.au/website/arts-aging>

### ***Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index***

30 June: In response to the Harmer Review, the Australian Government has funded the ABS to produce a new index that more specifically reflects changes in the living costs of pensioners and other households receiving income support from the government. The Government has indicated that it will use this index, to be known as the Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index (PBLCI), to index base pension rates where it is higher than the CPI. The ABS will publish the PBLCI on a quarterly basis commencing on 24 August 2009. This Information Paper from the ABS provides an overview of the new index, including how it is calculated and its relationship to the CPI. More at: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6466.0?OpenDocument>

### ***Relative Needs index study, South Australia and New South Wales***

26 June: This AIHW publication investigates rationing of dental care on the basis of patients' overall experience, including reported symptoms and psychosocial impact of the oral problems, and aims to advise on rationing both emergency and general dental care as one step in reforming public dental care. More at: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10712>

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