



NATIONAL *Family* NEWS



Think Families, Strengthen Families, Celebrate Families

No. 46 October 2009

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: Families Australia Oration.

Top stories: *Voices from the campfires: Establishing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation; Work, Life and Family Balance; Better Dealings with Government* Discussion Paper.

## VIEWS & NEWS FROM FAMILIES AUSTRALIA...

### **'Responding to disasters: how can we better assist families and communities?'** ***Families Australia National Oration, 19 October 2009***

Families Australia is delighted to announce that the second Families Australia National Oration will be delivered by Ms Christine Nixon APM, Chair, Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority, on the evening of **Monday 19 October 2009 in the Mural Hall at Parliament House, Canberra**. Drawing on her many years of eminent community and public service in the police force, in community organisations and, currently, with the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority, Ms Nixon will reflect on issues facing communities and families, particularly when they face disasters and other emergencies. How can communities and families function best under stressful conditions? What should governments, services and individuals do to support them better? How should governments and services go about delivering interventions more effectively in community and family life? For more information, please contact Families Australia on 02 6273 4885.

## TOP STORIES...

### ***Voices from the campfires: Establishing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation***

29 September: This report into the establishment of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation is the culmination of four months of consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It recommends that the new Foundation: focus on funding grassroots healing initiatives and health promotion, education and

skills training in the prevention and treatment of trauma; and build an evidence base through the evaluation and documentation of best practice in healing. More at: <http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/about/news/2009/Pages/HealingFoundation.aspx>

### **Work, Life and Family Balance**

24 September: This issue of *Australian Social Trends* from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) addresses issues of work-life balance for parents. More at: <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4102.0Main+Features50Sep+2009>

### **Better Dealings with Government**

14 September: Minister for Human Services, Chris Bowen MP, has announced the release of the Industry Discussion Paper, *Better Dealings with Government: Innovation in Payments and Information Services*, which is designed to engage industry on better ways of delivering government payment and information services. The closing date for the submission of responses is 30 October 2009. More at: <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/dhs/publications/discussion.html>

### **Accommodation Choices for Older Australians and their Families**

28 September: This publication from the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs aims to provide older Australians and their families with practical advice and options relating to a large range of issues concerning accommodation choices. The guide includes help for families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as help for Indigenous Australians. More at: [http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/seniors/pubs/accom\\_choices/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/seniors/pubs/accom_choices/Pages/default.aspx)

### **Housing Ministers' Conference Communiqué**

25 September: Australian Housing Ministers have issued a communiqué following their meeting. More at: [http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/tp\\_jm\\_housing\\_mins\\_conf\\_25september2009.doc.htm](http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/tp_jm_housing_mins_conf_25september2009.doc.htm)

### **Health expenditure Australia 2007-08**

30 September: This Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) publication examines expenditure on different types of health goods and services in the decade to 2007-08. It describes funding by the Australian and State governments, private health insurance and individuals, compares health expenditures in the different states and territories and compares Australia's spending with other countries. More at: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10954>

### **'Human Rights in Child Protection' Conference**

The Family Inclusion Network's (FIN) 2009 National Gathering will be held at the Australian Catholic University, Canberra, on Thursday 26 and Friday 27 November. The theme for this year's National Gathering is 'Human Rights in Child Protection'. FIN promotes the needs of parents, children and families who are involved in the child protection system. More at: [http://www.finact.com.au/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=34&Itemid=54](http://www.finact.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=34&Itemid=54)

### **Child Protection Survey**

This NAPCAN survey closes on 2 November. To complete the survey, go to: [www.preventingchildabuse.com.au](http://www.preventingchildabuse.com.au)

### **2009 National Survey of Volunteering Issues**

Volunteering Australia invites all volunteers and not for profit organisations that involve volunteers, as well as business organisations that have employee volunteering programs, to participate in the 2009 National Survey of Volunteering Issues. The survey closes on 30 October and is at:

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=nbfcT1LZQj5VIGBuTORGbQ\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=nbfcT1LZQj5VIGBuTORGbQ_3d_3d)

### **National Volunteer Week 2010**

The theme for National Volunteer Week, 10-16 May 2010, is *Volunteering: Now, more than ever*. More at:

[http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/html/s02\\_article/article\\_view.asp?id=3884&nav\\_cat\\_id=&nav\\_top\\_id=&entry\\_id=3881&entrytype=newsP&cookie=y](http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/html/s02_article/article_view.asp?id=3884&nav_cat_id=&nav_top_id=&entry_id=3881&entrytype=newsP&cookie=y)

### **\$2 million for Foodbank Australia**

29 September: Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, the Hon. Jenny Macklin MP, announced a grant of \$2 million over two years to enable Foodbank to provide food and grocery supplies to not-for-profit organisations that support individuals and families in need across Australia. More at: [http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/foodbank\\_29sept09.htm](http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/foodbank_29sept09.htm)

### **Towards national indicators of safety and quality in health care**

29 September: This AIHW report sets out recommendations for a set of 55 national indicators of safety and quality in health care. The report concludes the National Indicators Project, a major project funded by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) and undertaken by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) in close consultation with the Commission and a wide range of clinical and other stakeholders. More at:

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10792>

### **Pension changes**

20 September: Significant changes have been made to Australian pensions, as part of the Australian Government's Secure and Sustainable Pension Reform. The changes affect people receiving the Age Pension, Disability Support Pension, Wife Pension, Widow B Pension, Carer Payment, Service Pension or Income Support Supplement. More at: [http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/seniors/payments/Pages/pension\\_changes.aspx](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/seniors/payments/Pages/pension_changes.aspx)

### **Autism services expanded**

22 September: The Hon. Bill Shorten MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services, and the Hon. Jenny Macklin MP, Minister for Families Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, jointly announced changes to the Helping Children with Autism package. The changes will increase the number of service providers and allow families more time to use the \$12,000 over two years available under this package. More at:

[http://www.billshorten.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/billshorten.nsf/content/autism\\_services\\_22sept09.htm](http://www.billshorten.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/billshorten.nsf/content/autism_services_22sept09.htm)

### **Indigenous remains to be returned from Netherlands**

28 September: The remains of five Indigenous Australians will be repatriated from the Leiden University Medical Center (LUMC) in the Netherlands. More at: [http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/indigenous\\_remains\\_28sept09.htm](http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/indigenous_remains_28sept09.htm)

## **OPPORTUNITIES...**

### **FaHCSIA funding rounds**

FaHCSIA's Grants and Funding page is at:

<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/grantsfunding/currentfunding/Pages/default.aspx>

### **Advocacy project on smart meters, energy affordability, and social justice**

October: Participants are sought for focus groups for this research project, which is being carried out by the Social Justice Initiative (University of Melbourne), with funding from the Consumer Advocacy Panel. The goal of this project is to understand how changes to electricity prices associated with the forthcoming introduction of 'Smart Meters' might affect consumers, particularly people living in public housing, pensioners, people with a health-related energy need and low-income families. Focus groups will be held in Sydney on Monday 12 and Tuesday 13 October and in Brisbane during the third week of October. More at:

[http://www.communitynews.infoxchange.net.au/news/detail.chtml?filename\\_num=294187](http://www.communitynews.infoxchange.net.au/news/detail.chtml?filename_num=294187)

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