



NATIONAL *Family* NEWS



Think Families, Strengthen Families, Celebrate Families

No. 49 February 2010

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

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IN THIS ISSUE...

Views & news from Families Australia: seeking policy views!

Top stories: *Child Protection Australia 2008-09*; Evaluation of the 2006 Family Law Reforms.

VIEWS & NEWS FROM FAMILIES AUSTRALIA...

Families Australia would like to wish all our readers a very happy and safe New Year

Federal election looming! Family policy consultations underway

Families Australia members are invited to give their views about national family policies they would like to see us present in the context of the 2010 Federal election. A series of teleconferences is being scheduled for February 2010. Our current areas of focus are: grandparenting/kinship care; Indigenous families and communities; work and family; disability; substance abuse; family wellbeing; child safety and wellbeing; and Forgotten Australians. So far, feedback from some members is that they would like us additionally to advocate in the areas of: the impact of ageing; support for siblings of children with a disability; step-families; support for families of prisoners; children's services; and young people leaving out-of-home care. If you would like to participate, please contact Jennifer Horsfield on 02 6273 4885 or email admin@familiesaustralia.org.au

OTHER TOP STORIES...

Child protection Australia 2008-09

21 January: This Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) publication contains comprehensive information relating to State and Territory child protection and support services and the characteristics of Australian children within the child protection system.

During 2008-09 across Australia, over 200,000 children were the subject of one or more child protection notifications; almost 33,000 children were the subject of one or more substantiations; over 35,000 children were on care and protection orders; and around 34,000 children were living in out-of-home care. More at: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10859>

Australian Social Trends, Dec 2009

10 December: The December issue of this Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) publication reveals that, over the last decade, the number of jobless families has fallen, while the number of people who live alone has been increasing. We also see that Australians are less likely to smoke than in the past, but more likely to be obese, and that many workers work non-traditional hours. More at: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4102.0?OpenDocument>

Evaluation of the 2006 Family Law Reforms

28 January: The Evaluation of the 2006 Family Law Reforms was released by the Attorney General. The evaluation was commissioned by the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department and the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) and published by the Australian Institute of Family Studies. It involves the largest ever study of Australia's family law system. As well as studies involving 12,000 Australian parents, it examines the impact of the legal changes and the new services introduced as part of the 2006 Family Law Reforms. More at: <http://www.aifs.gov.au/institute/pubs/fle/index.html>

Family Violence Inquiry monthly newsletter

The Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) is producing a monthly e-newsletter to keep stakeholders and interested individuals informed about the progress of the Family Violence Inquiry initiated in response to the 2009 report of the National Council to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children—*Time For Action*. More at: <http://www.alrc.gov.au/inquiries/current/family-violence/about.html>

Aged care packages in the community 2007-08: a statistical overview

15 October: This AIHW study provides information on the provision of three types of Australian Government funded aged care packages: Community Aged Care Packages, Extended Aged Care at Home packages, and Extended Aged Care at Home Dementia packages. These packages assist people who are eligible for residential aged care to remain in the community in their own homes. More at: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10750>

Community housing 2008-09; Public rental housing 2008-09; State owned and managed Indigenous housing 2008-09

28 January: These AIHW publications, from the Housing assistance data development series, are available at: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm>

Australia's mothers and babies 2007

10 December: This AIHW publication is the 17th report providing information on births in Australia from perinatal data collections for each state and territory. The report presents demographic, pregnancy and childbirth factors of women who gave birth in

2007 and the characteristics and outcomes of their babies. More at: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10972>

A Framework of Practice for Implementing a Kinship Care Program

7 January: This Social Policy Research Centre study aims to provide a framework to guide the implementation of statutory kinship services by the Benevolent Society. Several countries are included in the study. It references consultations with stakeholders and reviews the literature on models and tools. More at: <http://www.bensoc.org.au/uploads/documents/ImplementingAKinshipCareProgram.pdf>

Cost shifting in education: implications for government, the community sector and low-income families

4 January: This Brotherhood of St Laurence report seeks to quantify in dollars the extent to which the Victorian community service organisations, including emergency relief providers, assist disadvantaged families to meet school education expenses. More at: http://www.bsl.org.au/pdfs/Bond_Cost_shifting_in_education_2009.pdf

Volunteering grant

11 December: Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, the Hon. Jenny Macklin MP, and Senator the Hon. Ursula Stephens, Parliamentary Secretary for the Voluntary Sector, announced a grant of \$250,000 to train new volunteers and assist in accreditation of new and existing volunteers. It will help cover the costs of training, including general and mental health first aid, leadership, trauma management and working with vulnerable people courses. More at: http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/funding_boost_volunteers_11dec2009.htm

New outside school hours care providers for teenagers with disability

16 December: Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services, the Hon. Bill Shorten MP, announced 15 specialist disability child care service providers selected to provide new outside school hours care places for teenagers with disability. More at: http://www.billshorten.fahcsia.gov.au/Internet/billshorten.nsf/content/outside_school_hours_4jan10.htm

Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation, Australia, July 2008 to June 2009

8 December: This ABS publication presents information about people aged 18 years and over who are either not employed or who usually worked less than 16 hours. The data collected provides information on the potential labour force and the characteristics of that potential labour force. Data from this survey are used to obtain a better understanding of the factors that influence people to participate (more) in the labour force and the hours they work. More at: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6239.0?OpenDocument>

Job Search Experience, Australia, Jul 2009

21 December: This ABS publication presents information about the experiences of unemployed people in seeking work, in terms of the steps they have taken to find work and the difficulties they have encountered in finding work. More at: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6222.0?OpenDocument>

Family Relationships Quarterly No. 14

The latest issue of this Australian Family Relationships Clearinghouse Newsletter from the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) is available to download at: <http://www.aifs.gov.au/afrc/pubs/newsletter/newsletter14.html>

"Time to get cracking": The challenge of developing best practice in Australian sexual assault prevention education

This AIFS paper discusses a number of challenges that programs are likely to face in the effort to formulate best practice in sexual assault prevention education. The discussion is based on findings from interviews conducted with 32 prevention educators and program writers. More at: <http://www.aifs.gov.au/acssa/pubs/issue/i11.html>

Child care and early education in Australia - The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children

January: Social Policy Research Paper No. 40, *Child care and early education in Australia - The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children*, has been released. Commissioned by the Australian Government Office for Women as part of the Women's Leadership and Development Programme, it is based on data collected in Wave 1 of the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC). More at: <http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/about/publicationsarticles/research/socialpolicy/Pages/sprp40.aspx>

Extending financial services to disadvantaged Australians

28 January: Minister Jenny Macklin announced a \$7.5 million Australian Government pilot program to improve access to fair and appropriate financial products, including loans, for Australians currently excluded from mainstream banks and services. More at: http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/jm_m_ext_ser_vices28january2010.doc.htm

OPPORTUNITIES...

FaHCSIA funding rounds

FaHCSIA's Grants and Funding page is at:

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

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