

Advocate for Children and Young People

Current awareness bulletin

May 2016

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Articles and publications

CHILD PROTECTION

Substantiation decision-making and risk prediction in child protection systems

Emily Keddell

Policy Quarterly, Institute for Governance and Policy Studies (VUW), Volume 12, Issue 2, May 2016

In the last few years, predictive risk modelling has been suggested for use in the child welfare environment as an efficient means of targeting preventive resources and improving practitioner decision-making. First raised in the green paper on vulnerable children, then translated into the white paper on vulnerable children and the Children's Action Plan, and now part of the Child, Youth and Family review remit, this particular tool has provoked a barrage of opinions and wide-ranging analyses, concerning ethical implications, feasibility and data issues, possible uses and political consequences (Ministry of Social Development, 2011, 2012).

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Child abuse and neglect: a socio-legal study of mandatory reporting in Australia

Ben Mathews, Leah Bromfield, Kerryann Walsh, Graham Vimpani; Department of Social Services

March 2016

This series of reports explores national trends in the reporting of child abuse and neglect by different reporter groups in every Australian state and territory, in the context of their relevant jurisdictional legislation. Volume 7 is for the Tasmania Department of Health and Human Services.

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Implementation best practice: A rapid evidence assessment

Parenting Research Centre; Prepared for the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

May 2016

Reviews how recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse can be best implemented. To do this, the review summarises the evidence for characteristics of implementation best practice.

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Pre-employment screening: working with children checks and police checks

Child Family Community Australia; CFCA Resource Sheet

May 2016

This newly-updated resource sheet is a guide to the various child safety screening programs in each Australian state and territory. It is divided into two parts: Part A provides an overview of the types of Working With Children Checks and Police Checks that operate in Australia. Part B provides details about the requirements for working with children in Australian states and territories, as well as state/territory contact information.

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A study into the legislative - and related key policy and operational - frameworks for sharing information relating to child sexual abuse in institutional contexts

Carolyn Adams; Krista Lee-Jones; Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

May 2016

Study aims to identify aspects of information sharing frameworks that facilitate appropriate and timely information sharing between institutions and across jurisdictions to identify, prevent and respond to child sexual abuse in institutional contexts; or impede or limit such information sharing.

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DISABILITY

Access and barriers to online education for people with disabilities

Mike Kent; National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education

May 2016

The study looked at students studying through Open Universities Australia (OUA). OUA brings together 15 different independent higher education institutions to teach students fully online across a number of different fields. This diversity of institutions allowed a number of different eLearning environments, technologies and learning and teaching strategies to be canvassed. The findings of this research indicated that student with disabilities found that online study through OUA was a preferred way to access higher education. There was an unexpectedly high incidence of students with a mental illness (44 per cent of survey respondents) and medical impairments (39.2 per cent of survey respondents), with mobility impairments rounding out the top three categories (25.3 per cent of survey respondents).

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Auditor-General's report: Supporting students with disability in NSW public schools

Audit Office of New South Wales

May 2016

The Department of Education is doing a reasonable job in managing how well students with disability transition to a new school and supporting teachers to improve these students' educational outcomes, according to a report released by the NSW Auditor-General, Margaret Crawford. The level of support provided to students with disability can vary between schools. This is partly due to cultural resistance in some schools and teachers not always having the necessary skills to support children with disability.

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Family Violence and its Elimination: The Search for New Ways

Rachael Sanders, Jennifer Lehmann

Children Australia , Volume 41 , Issue 02 , June 2016, pp 85 - 89

As a significant social problem at the foreground of social and political commentary violence, and violence against women (VAW) in particular, is receiving a great deal of local and global attention (Hooker, Kaspiew, and Taft, 2016). Following years of campaigning by women's groups, there appears to be substantial will and determination to redress this social problem both here and abroad. The movement started back in the late

1960s, with Scotland being one of the countries that led the way and 'Much of this work was undertaken by women's units, equalities units, and later, community safety units.' Various efforts were made to address violence towards women and sexual abuse; and 'Undoubtedly the most high profile example of this was the development in 1992/1993 of the Zero Tolerance poster campaign by Edinburgh District Council Women's Unit' (The Scottish Government, 2005).

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Increasing men's awareness of the effects on children exposed to family and domestic violence

Dr. Peter Lucas, Dr. Romy Winter, Dr. Clarissa Hughes et al.; Salvation Army; University of Tasmania
March 2016

Investigates how to best raise men's awareness of the impact of family violence and is the final report of the Family Violence Men's Education Project undertaken by the Salvation Army and the University of Tasmania (UTAS). Data and insights arising from the literature review, focus groups and participatory events were analysed by the research team and form the basis of 35 recommendations presented in the report. These recommendations relate to Awareness Raising, Program Content and Delivery, Resourcing, and Ongoing Research.

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EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Gender and sex differences in student participation, achievement and engagement in mathematics

Sarah Buckley; Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)

Changing Minds: Discussions in neuroscience, psychology and education, Issue 1 April 2016

Research in neuroscience, psychology and education explores gender differences in achievement and learning in many different ways with different implications for educators and policymakers. This paper presents some of the literature from these three research fields. Rather than being an exhaustive review, this paper provides a brief synthesis of relevant issues when considering gender in education.

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Five challenges in Australian school education

Geoff N. Masters

Policy Insights, Issue 5 May 2016

In this paper Professor Geoff Masters discusses five significant challenges facing school education: Equipping students for the 21st Century, including by increasing reading, mathematical and scientific literacy levels; Reducing disparities between Australia's schools; Reducing the 'long tail' of underachieving students who fall behind year-level curriculum expectations; Getting all children off to a good start, by reducing the number of children who begin school with low levels of school readiness; and raising the professional status of teaching, by increasing the number of highly able school leavers entering teaching.

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Education for all; Measuring inequality of educational outcomes among 15-year-olds across 39 industrialized nations

Zlata Bruckauf and Yekaterina Chzhen, Unicef, Innocenti Working Paper No.2016-08

April 2016

Measuring inequality of learning outcomes in a way that provides meaningful benchmarks for national policy while retaining a focus on those students who are 'hard to reach' and 'hard to teach' is a challenging but vital task in the light of the global post 2015 education agenda. Drawing on PISA 2012 data and its earlier rounds, this paper explores alternative approaches to measuring educational inequality at the 'bottom-end' of educational distribution within the cross-national context.

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State of early learning in Australia report 2016

Early Learning: Everyone Benefits; Early Childhood Australia

April 2016

The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) data shows that one in five Australian children are vulnerable in key areas of development. This rate increases to two in five for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (Australian Government, 2016c). Nonetheless, there are strong examples of programs designed to support more children, and particularly vulnerable children, to access quality early learning.

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2015 student experience survey national report

Sonia Whiteley et al.; Social Research Centre

February 2016

This annual survey provides a national architecture for collecting feedback on key facets of the higher education student experience and, in doing so, obtain important data on the levels of engagement and satisfaction of current, on-shore commencing and later-year undergraduate students. Responses were received from a total of 145,382 students.

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Markets in education: 'school choice' and family capital

Proctor, H. and Aitchison, C.

2015

This paper is published as Chapter 10 in Meagher, G. and Goodwin, S. (2015) Markets, rights and power in Australian social policy (pp. 321-340). Sydney: Sydney University Press. The authors discuss how the provision of social services in Australia has changed dramatically in recent decades. Governments have expanded social provision without expanding the public sector by directly subsidising private provision, by contracting private agencies, both non-profit and for-profit, to deliver services, and through a number of other subsidies and vouchers. Private actors receive public funds to deliver social services to citizens, raising a range of important questions about financial and democratic accountability: 'who benefits', 'who suffers' and 'who decides'. The book explores these developments through rich case studies of a diverse set of social policy domains. The case studies demonstrate a range of effects of marketisation, including the impact on the experience of consumer engagement with social service systems, on the distribution of social advantage and disadvantage, and on the democratic steering of social policy.

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EMPLOYMENT

2016-17 Budget - Employment overview

Australian Government Department of Employment

May 2016

In the 2016-17 Budget the Federal Government announced it will spend more than \$750 million to help hundreds of thousands of young people get jobs. The funding will be spent on a new youth employment program, Jobs PaTH (Prepare-Trial-Hire), to assist up to 120,000 jobs seekers under 25 years. The scheme will include three phases: skills training, voluntary internships and wage subsidies for businesses.

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Willing to work: National Inquiry into employment discrimination against older Australians and Australians with disability

Australian Human Rights Commission

May 2016

A new report, Willing to Work, released by the Australian Human Rights Commission has found ongoing, elevated levels of discrimination against young Australians with a disability. Almost half of all young people with disability (aged 15-24 years) reporting a discrimination experience noted that the source of discrimination was an employer which impacted their ability to find work or maintain employment.

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Barriers and incentives to labour force participation, Australia, July 2014 to June 2015; ABS 6239.0

Australian Bureau of Statistics

May 2016

ABS publication presenting information about persons aged 18 years and over who were either not employed or who usually worked less than 35 hours per week. In respect of employed persons, the Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation topic collects data only for those working less than 35 hours, as they have the greatest potential to increase their labour force participation. The data collected provides information on the potential labour force and the characteristics of that potential labour force.

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FAMILY AND SOCIETY

Supported playgroups for parents and children: The evidence for their benefits

Joanne Commerford and Elly Robinson; Child Family Community Australia, CFCA Paper No. 40

May 2016

Supported playgroups are playgroups run by a paid facilitator that aim to support families with particular vulnerabilities or needs. Supported playgroups focus on supporting the development and wellbeing of both parents and children. Many also aim to help parents and children to transition to community (i.e., self-managed, unsupported) playgroups. This paper defines the types of supported playgroups and varying models of implementation in operation in Australia, and assesses the evaluation evidence for their benefits.

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Backing young Australians: Foundation for Young Australians 2016 election platform

Foundation for Young Australians (FYA)

May 2016

FYA is calling on the nation's leaders to commit to investing in Australia's young people, placing them at the centre of economic policy and ensuring the next generation is prepared to drive social and economic progress in Australia for decades to come. Presenting statistics and data about the future of work and skills required FYA calls for the government to equip young people with the skills needed for the New Work Order; to provide opportunities and back young people's ideas and encourage enterprise and support young people in regional areas to engage and participate.

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Involved dads benefit children's self-esteem

KidsMatter

May 2016

Recognising the important role of dads in supporting their child's self-esteem and wellbeing, KidsMatter has developed advice to help fathers to make the most of their time with their kids. The advice promotes dads having quality, fun time with their children, encouraging children to express their feelings and staying connected with their children when they are apart.

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The modern Australian family

Jennifer Baxter; Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS)

May 2016

This Australian Institute of Families (AIFS) Facts Sheet explores the different phases of family, from the families we live with as children to the families we form as we grow older. Of course family life, and life more generally, is more complex and challenging for some people in our community. In this Facts Sheet statistics are also presented relating to particular stressors facing some Australians, including recent arrivals to Australia.

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HEALTH

Young Children's Health and Wellbeing Across the Transition to School: A Critical Interpretive Synthesis

Jennifer Fane, Colin MacDougall, Gerry Redmond et al.

Children Australia, June 2016 Volume 41, Issue 02

This paper reports on the systematic search and review of the literature relating to the health and wellbeing of young children across the transition to school. It identified 56 papers (including empirical studies, reviews, commentaries, and reports) relevant to the research questions and completed an interpretive systematic review to ascertain the current state of the literature. The review employed the Critical Interpretive Synthesis (CIS) method to allow for a rigorous and systematic review of a disparate literature which stretches across several disciplines. The findings are presented in seven thematic categories: current conceptualisations of health and wellbeing, assessment and measurement, 'school readiness', service integration, transition actors, 'at risk' children, and child voice.

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Spanking and Child Outcomes: Old Controversies and New Meta-Analyses

Gershoff, Elizabeth T.; Grogan-Kaylor, Andrew

Journal of Family Psychology, April 7, 2016

Whether spanking is helpful or harmful to children continues to be the source of considerable debate among both researchers and the public. This article addresses 2 persistent issues, namely whether effect sizes for spanking are distinct from those for physical abuse, and whether effect sizes for spanking are robust to study design differences. Meta-analyses focused specifically on spanking were conducted on a total of 111 unique effect sizes representing 160,927 children. Thirteen of 17 mean effect sizes were significantly different from zero and all indicated a link between spanking and increased risk for detrimental child outcomes.

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Participatory development of MIDY (Mobile Intervention for Drinking in Young people)

Cassandra J. C. Wright; Paul M. Dietze; Belinda Crockett et al.

BMC Public Health, 2016 16:184

There are few effective strategies that respond to the widespread practice of risky single-occasion drinking in young people. Mobile phones can be used to reach large populations instantaneously, both for data collection and intervention, but this has not been studied in combination during risky drinking events. This study investigated the feasibility and acceptability of a mobile-phone delivered Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA) and brief intervention for young people during drinking events. The participatory design involved development workshops, intervention testing and evaluation with 40 young people in Melbourne, Australia. The final intervention included text message prompts to fill in mobile-based questionnaires, which measured drinks consumed, spending, location and mood, with additional questions in the initial and final questionnaire relating to plans, priorities, and adverse events. Participants received a tailored feedback SMS related to their drinking after each hourly questionnaire. Findings suggest that the intervention was considered acceptable, feasible and novel to our participants; it now requires comprehensive testing and evaluation.

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Parental supply of alcohol to Australian minors: an analysis of six nationally representative surveys spanning 15 years

Kelly, A. B., Chan, G. C., Weier, M. et al.; Centre for Youth Substance Abuse Research (CYSAR), University of Queensland

BMC Public Health, 16(1), 2016

Research paper by CYSAR staff, led by Associate Professor Adrian Kelly, investigated rates of parental supply of alcohol across six National Drug Strategy Household Surveys, spanning 1998 to 2013. The article reports a significant drop in parental supply for current alcohol use, from 21.3% in 2004 to 11.79% in 2013. Overall, there are downward trends in adolescent experimentation, quantity and frequency of alcohol use, and largest drops occurred between the years 2010 and 2013.

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Annual alcohol poll 2016: attitudes and behaviours

Galaxy Research; Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education

May 2016

Now in its seventh year, this poll of Australian attitudes and behaviours relating to alcohol found the majority of those who drink to get drunk expect to feel happy (56 per cent), and relaxed (54 per cent), with 31 per cent

of drinkers expecting to feel a sense of social belonging. Yet in reality drinkers' expectations fell well short; with only 28 per cent of drinkers feeling happy after downing alcohol, 31 per cent feeling relaxed and just 15 per cent achieving that sense of belonging. Age groups included in this statistical analysis include the 18-24 years age group.

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How many young Australians use cannabis?

Centre for Youth Substance Abuse Research (CYSAR), University of Queensland

May 2016

This technical report by CYSAR staff tracks self-reported cannabis use in young Australians aged 14 to 25 over the years 1998 to 2013, using the National Drug Strategy Household Survey data. The report finds that there has been a significant decrease in both lifetime and past year use of cannabis. Lifetime use decreased from 54.8% in 1998 to 31.1% in 2013, while past year use among young people decreased from 37.5% in 1998 to 19.1% in 2013.

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Australian burden of disease study: impact and causes of illness and death in Australia 2011

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)

May 2016

Analyses the impact of nearly 200 diseases and injuries in terms of living with illness (non-fatal burden) and premature death (fatal burden). The Australian Burden of Disease Study 2011 responds to a need for updated, comparable evidence on the health of the Australian population, to inform health policy decision making, with national estimates last published in 2007 using 2003 data. This report provides estimates of the total, non-fatal and fatal burden for the Australian population for 2011 and 2003, using DALY (disability-adjusted life year) metric for 200 diseases, as well as estimates of the burden attributable to nearly 30 risk factors.

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Australian Health Survey: Consumption of food groups from the Australian Dietary Guidelines 2011-12; AS 4364.0.55.012

Australian Bureau of Statistics

May 2016

The report shows that Australian diets are not in line with the 2013 Australian Dietary Guidelines (ADG), which recommend minimum serves for vegetables, fruit, dairy products, lean meats and alternatives, and grain-based foods. ABS Director of Health, Louise Gates said that adults and children over eight consumed an average of 2.7 serves of vegetables, rather than the 5 serves recommended by the Australian Dietary Guidelines, according to the latest results from the 2011-12 National Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey. It compares usual consumption with ADG recommendations of servings for specific age-sex groups. Additionally, it describes the contribution of food sub-groupings to the total number of serves of the five food groups as well as the most common food/beverage sources for each food group.

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Our future: A Lancet Commission on adolescent health and wellbeing

The Lancet Commission, UK

May 2016

The Lancet report brings together perspectives from public health, economics, political and social science, behavioural science and neuroscience to consider strategies to advance adolescent health and wellbeing. The researchers propose that the largest generation of adolescents and young people in human history (1.8 billion) demands more attention and action. Adolescents and young adults face unprecedented social, economic, and cultural change. The new Lancet Commission argues that there are both current threats, if inaction continues, but also tremendous unrealised opportunities not only for the health and wellbeing of young people themselves but also for the future of society and future generations.

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INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

Indigenous school attendance: Creating expectations that are 'really high' and 'highly real'

Tony Dreise, Gina Milgate, Bill Perrett, and Troy Meston; Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)
Policy Insights, Issue 4 March 2016

Issue 4 of ACER's Policy Insights series commences with a synthesis of publicly available data on school attendance by Indigenous Australians, highlighting areas of major risk. It explores Australian and international literature to develop an understanding of the risk factors and protective factors involved in strengthening school attendance. The paper then articulates a number of design principles to underpin future investment and intervention policies, and concludes with proposed guideposts which could be considered by policy-makers going forward.

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Increasing incidence of type 2 diabetes in Indigenous and non-Indigenous children in Western Australia, 1990–2012

Aveni Haynes, Rachelle Kalic, Matthew Cooper et al.

Medical Journal of Australia, 2016; 204 (8): 303

An increase in the incidence of childhood type 2 diabetes (T2D) has been reported in several populations worldwide, including Australia, with the highest risk being observed in children of Indigenous descent.¹⁻³ In Western Australia, children throughout the state who are diagnosed with T2D are managed by a single multidisciplinary team at Princess Margaret Hospital, WA's only tertiary paediatric hospital.

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health organisations: online services report - key results 2014-15

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)

May 2016

This seventh national report presents information from 278 organisations across Australia, funded by the Australian Government to provide one or more of the following health services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: primary health care, maternal and child health care, social and emotional wellbeing services, and substance-use services. These organisations participated in the 2014–15 Online Services Report data collection. Information is presented on the characteristics of these organisations, the health services and activities provided to clients and staffing levels.

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One word: Police [video]

Public Interest Advocacy Centre Ltd (PIAC)

February 2016

PIAC has recently launched a video for social media that focuses on the relationship between Aboriginal people and the police. Inspired by a US project that asked African-American boys and men about their interactions with the police, PIAC's video captures the immediate responses of a number of Aboriginal men and women to the word 'police'. Reactions from the Aboriginal participants range from fear and mistrust to friendship and gratitude - as well as almost everything in between. Overall they show the historically troubled relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the police still has a long way to go.

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National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social survey, 2014–15; ABS 4714.0

Australian Bureau of Statistics

April 2016

A recent national survey of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reveals ongoing issues with health, family breakdown and material basics affecting families, including high levels in the daily rates of smoking and alcohol consumption. One in eight Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experienced physical violence in the last 12 months, while 29 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had experienced homelessness during their lifetime. National Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples score high on cultural identity and social connections.

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Towards a Queensland action plan for vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families

Queensland Government

May 2016

Report discusses how an action plan to respond to vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families will be developed. The action plan will draw on the strengths and capabilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, communities and organisations. It will be guided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives through listening to Elders, community leaders, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and families. The action plan will draw on evidence of what works and promising models here and abroad in parenting, family and community support, and on learnings from initiatives.

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Engaging First Peoples: A review of government engagement methods for developing health policy

Alister Thorpe, Kerry Arabena, Patrick Sullivan et al.; Lowitja Institute

May 2016

Discussion paper addresses what effective engagement means and how it works in policy development and implementation. It complements a recent review of the conditions required if engagement between government and First Peoples is to be effective. The learnings from both reviews will have particular relevance for practitioners concerned with the difficulties of contributing to the achievement of equity in health and wellbeing for First Peoples in increasingly complex policy and community contexts.

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LAW AND JUSTICE

The adolescent brain: Implications for understanding young offenders

Kenny, Dianna

Judicial Officers Bulletin, Volume 28 Issue 3 Apr 2016

The following article discusses the many complex factors that influence the development of the human brain, highlighting specific aspects during adolescence, how risks to brain development and function affect the behaviour and maturity of adolescents, and implications for juveniles and those who come into contact with them in the criminal justice system.

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Juvenile reoffending: A ten-year retrospective cohort analysis

Payne, Jason; Weatherburn, Don

Australian Journal of Social Issues, Vol.50 Issue 4 2016

Criminologists and other developmental researchers have long acknowledged the importance of both continuity and change in antisocial and criminal behaviour over the life-course. To the extent that young offenders having contact with the police will persist with offending into adulthood is an important social issue with significant implications for the ongoing development and implementation of early intervention and prevention programs. Using data from New South Wales, this paper tracks a cohort of 8,797 juvenile offenders over ten years and is among the first of its kind to use multivariate techniques to examine the long-term outcomes of those who were cautioned, conferenced or convicted in that state. The study finds that just over half of all juvenile offenders were reconvicted in court of a further offence and that reconviction rates were higher for young males and Indigenous offenders than for females or non-Indigenous offenders. In concluding, this paper draws attention to the need for improved assessment and early intervention efforts that more accurately target those young people most at risk of persisting with offending into adulthood.

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Sentencing youths - overarching principles and offence-specific guidelines for sexual offences and robbery consultation

Sentencing Council UK

May 2016

The UK Sentencing Council has begun a consultation on its draft guidelines for youth sentencing. This includes general principles for sentencing a youth for any offence and offence-specific guidelines for sexual offences and robbery committed by a person under 18. The Council is not consulting on the legislation upon which youth sentencing is based.

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Consultation stage resource assessment: youths

Sentencing Council UK

May 2016

This document accompanies the consultation document and draft Sentencing Youths Overarching Principles and Offence Specific Guidelines for Sexual Offences and Robbery. It fulfils the Council's statutory duty, under section 127 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 to produce a resource assessment which considers the likely effect of its guidelines on the resources required for the provision of prison places, probation and youth justice services.

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Jury reasoning in joint and separate trials of institutional child sexual abuse: An empirical study

Professor Jane Goodman-Delahunty, Professor Annie Cossins and Natalie Martschuk

May 2016

This report forms part of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse's research program in relation to the criminal justice system's response to child sexual abuse in institutional contexts. The study investigated the extent to which joint trials with cross-admissible tendency evidence infringed defendants' rights, and the extent to which joint trials posed a risk of unfair prejudice to the defendant. The findings show that juries do not engage in reasoning that is unfairly prejudicial to the defendant nor are they overwhelmed by the number of complainants or witnesses.

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Study in prison reduces recidivism and welfare dependence: A case study from Western Australia 2005–2010

Margaret Giles; Australian Institute of Criminology; Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice no. 514

May 2016

A longitudinal study of prisoners in Western Australia reveals that correctional education is improving post-release outcomes, lowering the rate of re-incarceration and reducing the severity of any re-offending for both young and older ex-prisoners. The study also found the more classes completed successfully in prison, the less time ex-prisoners spent on unemployment benefits before gaining employment.

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MENTAL HEALTH

Suicide in Australia - key facts

ConNetica

May 2016

Brief overview of suicide and suicide prevention in Australia. Includes information about definition of suicide and suicidal behaviour; how many Australians are affected by suicide; why people suicide; suicide among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders; and young people, suicide and self-harm.

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Suicide prevention - A call to action

ConNetica; Brain and Mind Centre University of Sydney

May 2016

On 24 May 2016 leaders in suicide and mental health, led by consultancy ConNetica and the Brain and Mind Centre University of Sydney, released details on suicide across 28 Federal electorates. The impact of economic change is clearly affecting suicide rates in electorates like Canning, Capricornia, Corangamite and Cunningham. "Issues like the loss of manufacturing, the downturn in the manufacturing, resources and construction, housing affordability and the high cost of education and retraining is hitting hard" Adj Professor and ConNetica

Director, John Mendoza said. The specific information relating to 28 key electorates has been released as well as a set of information that has been prepared for selected electorates.

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Education, education, mental health: Supporting secondary schools to play a central role in early intervention mental health services

Craig Thorley; IPPR, Institute for Public Policy Research, UK
May 2016

There is a crisis affecting children and young people's mental health in England, with three children in every classroom experiencing a clinically diagnosable condition. Despite the growing number who require help, cuts to the funding of both NHS and local authority early intervention services, which can prevent emerging mental health problems from escalating further, mean that increasing numbers of children are unable to access appropriate and timely support. The report stresses that the government must find ways to overcome current barriers if schools are to fulfil their substantial potential for meeting pupils' emerging mental health needs.

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Mental health funding and the SDGs: what next and who pays?

Jessica Mackenzie and Christie Kesner; Overseas Development Institute (ODI)
May 2016

Mental disorders represent a huge cost to our health care systems and to the global economy, and affect some of the world's most vulnerable people, through stigma and lack of understanding. In 2015 the world took a huge step forward by including mental health in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which set the global agenda for the next three decades. But despite the huge burden it places on global health, it receives a fraction of the funding of other diseases. This report provides an overview of who is currently funding mental health and who isn't, but could be. It is a synthesis of research previously conducted in this field and analyses both existing and new funders. Suicide Prevention Australia contributed to the report.

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MULTICULTURALISM

Immigrant children: their experience of violence at school and community in host country

Louise Hamelin-Brabant, et al.

Children and society, Vol.30, Iss.3 May 2016 pp 241-251

Qualitative sociological study of immigrant children's life experiences of violence in schools in Quebec, Canada. Looks at the types of violence experienced by 42 first-generation immigrant children, aged 9-13 years old, and the effects of the violence. Findings included that the participants experienced racist peer violence and they subsequently developed coping strategies to maintain their wellbeing. Social implications are discussed.

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OUT OF HOME CARE

Building a better future: out-of-home care reform in Western Australia

The Minister for Child Protection (WA)

April 2016

This five-year Reform Plan provides the roadmap to improve the out-of-home care system to better meet the needs of children in out-of-home care in WA. The Plan will implement significant changes to the out-of-home care system in Western Australia. The Reform Plan includes a summary of the feedback received in the Out-of-Home Care Reform Legislative Amendments Consultation Paper, and the Department's response and intended directions.

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Transition to Independent Living Allowance

Department of Social Services

May 2016

The Department has published a new information kit and step-by-step guides on the Transition to Independent Living Allowance. The Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA) is a payment of up to \$1,500 to help eligible young people cover some basic costs as they leave out-of-home care.

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PARTICIPATION

Why research 'by' children?: rethinking the assumptions underlying the facilitation of children as researchers

Kim Chae-Young

Children and society, Vol.30, Iss.3 May 2016 pp 230-240

Examines the role of children in undertaking research, where children are facilitated to conduct research as the primary investigators. Notes advantages and problems of this type of research and calls for greater awareness of the underlying assumptions of both adults and children in designing and carrying out research into children's issues in this way.

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POVERTY AND HOMELESSNESS

Fairness for children: a league table of inequality in child well-being in rich countries

John Hudson; Stefan Kuhner; UNICEF

April 2016

This report card presents an overview of inequalities in child well-being in 41 countries of the European Union (EU) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). It focuses on 'bottom-end inequality' - the gap between children at the bottom and those in the middle - and addresses the question 'how far behind are children being allowed to fall?' in income, education, health and life satisfaction.

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Out of reach: Economic and Social Impact Survey (ESIS) 2016

Salvation Army

May 2016

The Economic and Social Impact Survey (ESIS) 2016 is the fifth consecutive national report by the Salvation Army. The survey explores the levels of deprivation and disadvantage experienced by those who access Emergency Relief (ER) services. The key findings of this 2016 report paint a picture of entrenched poverty and results indicated that a large proportion of these individuals and families struggled to make ends meet and experienced poverty and multiple levels of deprivation. One in two respondents cut down on basic necessities, and 43 per cent had gone without meals.

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SEXUALITY

State sponsored homophobia report 2016

Aengus Carroll; ILGA - International lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex association

May 2016

Every year, ILGA publishes its State Sponsored Homophobia report, a world survey of sexual orientation laws. First published in 2006, the publication is a fundamental resource in the hands of human rights defenders, civil society organisations, governmental and UN agencies, allies and media interested in accessing the core information on legislation affecting people on the basis of their sexual orientation. The report's author, Aengus Carroll, told news.com.au that in terms of sexual orientation laws Australia was still behind many countries it otherwise regards as peers such as the US, UK and New Zealand.

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TECHNOLOGY AND ONLINE SAFETY

Children and young people's exposure to pornography

Child Family Community Australia; Australian Institute of Family Studies

May 2016

Research indicates that children and young people are accessing pornography at increasing rates with boys aged 14-17 years being the most frequent underage consumers of pornographic material. The current senate inquiry into the effects of pornography on children comes as a growing number of parents, children, teachers, psychologists and other professionals working with children and young people voice concerns about the ease of access to pornography online, and the proliferation of increasingly violent pornographic content.

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Online communication, social media and adolescent wellbeing: A systematic narrative review

Paul Best; Roger Manktelow; Brian Taylor

Children and Youth Services Review, 41 (2014) 27–36

A systematic narrative review of research published between January 2003 and April 2013, retrieved using rigorous searching on eight bibliographic databases. Results were then subject to review using a quality appraisal tool and a narrative synthesis methodology. A theoretical framework was developed for the synthesis using concepts from mental health and communication studies literature. The review has revealed contradictory evidence while revealing an absence of robust causal research regarding the impact of social media on mental wellbeing of young people. Online technologies are increasingly being used for health and social care purposes, but further research is required to give confidence that these are appropriately designed to promote the mental health care and support of young people.

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Dear Diary: Teens Reflect on Their Weekly Online Risk Experiences

Pamela Wisniewski; Heng Xu; Mary Beth Rosson et al.

Proceedings of the 2016 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, Pages 3919-3930

In this study, 68 teens spend two months reflecting on their weekly online experiences and report 207 separate risk events involving information breaches, online harassment, sexual solicitations, and exposure to explicit content. The researchers conducted a structured, qualitative analysis to characterize the salient dimensions of their risk experiences, such as severity, level of agency, coping strategies, and whether the teens felt like the situation had been resolved. Overall, findings indicated that teens can potentially benefit from lower risk online situations, which allow them to develop crucial interpersonal skills, such as boundary setting, conflict resolution, and empathy.

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Media multitasking in adolescence

Matthew S. Cain; Julia A. Leonard; John D. E. Gabrieli et al.

Psychonomic Bulletin & Review, published online 17 May 2016

Media use has been on the rise in adolescents overall, and in particular, the amount of media multitasking - multiple media consumed simultaneously, such as having a text message conversation while watching TV - has been increasing. In adults, heavy media multitasking has been linked with poorer performance on a number of laboratory measures of cognition, but no relationship has yet been established between media-multitasking behavior and real-world outcomes. Examining individual differences across a group of adolescents, researchers found that more frequent media multitasking in daily life was associated with poorer performance on statewide standardized achievement tests of math and English in the classroom, poorer performance on behavioral measures of executive function (working memory capacity) in the laboratory, and traits of greater impulsivity and lesser growth mindset.

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Internet use and electronic gaming by children and adolescents with emotional and behavioural problems in Australia – results from the second Child and Adolescent Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing

Wavne Rikkers; David Lawrence; Jennifer Hafekost; Stephen R. Zubrick

BMC Public Health, published online 13 May 2016

Concerns have been raised of a potential connection between excessive online activity outside the academic realm and increased levels of psychological distress in young people. Young Minds Matter: the second Australian Child and Adolescent Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing provides estimates of the prevalence of online activity and allows an exploration of associations between this activity, a range of mental disorders, socio-demographic characteristics and risk taking behaviour. The results of this study show links between problem behaviours associated with Internet use and electronic gaming, and mental disorders and risk-taking behaviour in young people.

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Is it gambling or a game?

Marissa Dickins and Anna Thomas; Australian Gambling Research Centre (AGRC) Discussion Paper No. 5
April 2016

Simulated gambling games mimic the characteristics of gambling games but do not provide an opportunity to stake, win or lose real-world money. People who play simulated gambling games are more likely to gamble commercially and report gambling problems. The convergence of gambling and gaming alongside an increase in advertising has led to increased exposure to, and possible normalisation of, gambling. It is the conclusion of this paper that strengthening and standardising classification of games, and adding advisory warnings, would provide more protections to users.

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VIOLENCE

A right to the night: Australian girls on their safety in public places

Plan International Australia and Our Watch
May 2016

The nationwide survey by Plan International Australia and Our Watch reveals one third (30 percent) of young Australian women aged 15-19 report avoiding public places after dark, with approximately 23 percent believing it's not safe to travel alone on public transport.

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A platform for action: report from the national roundtable on responding to violence against culturally and linguistically diverse women and their children

National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children; Department of Social Services
May 2016

The report outlines the discussions from the first national roundtable on responding to violence against culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) women and their children. It reflects key insights provided by participants at the roundtable as a platform for action by governments, business, communities and individuals. It also provides input to the Council of Australian Government's agenda to reduce violence against women and their children. The roundtable was held in Sydney on 7 August 2015 and was an initiative under the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022 (the National Plan).

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Forthcoming conferences and events

This list is cumulative

New events added since the last issue of What's New are highlighted in orange

JUNE 2016		
6-7 June	Sydney NSW	Network of Alcohol and other Drugs Agencies (NADA) Conference

6-10 June	Melbourne Vic	Second Biennial International Childhood Trauma Conference
9-10 June	Edinburgh, Scotland	NSPCC Scotland Conference 'Rebuilding Childhood'
13-15 June	Edinburgh Scotland	Centre for Research on Families and Relationships : Unequal families and relationships conference
22 June	Sydney	Family Comes First: Implementing Family Intervention in Juvenile Justice
23-24 June	Adelaide SA	DOHaD of Australia and New Zealand 2016 Annual Conference; Shaping our Future
29 June	Sydney	Research to Action Conference: National Disability Services (NDS) and the Centre for Disability Research and Policy (CDRP)
JULY 2016		
2-3 July	Perth WA	Aboriginal Health Conference - the youth of today, the elders of tomorrow
5-7 July	Sheffield, UK	Children's Media Conference - CMC 2016
6-8 July	Melbourne Vic	14th Australian Institute of Family Studies conference : Research to results: Using evidence to improve outcomes for families. *Note: Early bird registrations close 16 May
12-13 July	Canberra ACT	Community and Stakeholder Engagement in the Australian Public Sector: Spreading Collaboration, Engagement and Cultivating Sustainability
13 July	Sydney	Emerging Health Policy Research Conference
13-14 July	Brisbane Qld	Challenging the mental illness violence nexus : Griffith University Violence Research and Prevention Program
13-15 July	Adelaide SA	Student Wellbeing and Prevention of Violence Conference
18 July	Sydney	Violence in the media: the stories and the science : ACCM and Macquarie Child and Families Research Centre
19-20 July	Melbourne Vic	Youth Work Conference 2016 : Youth Work and non-formal education: evidencing outcomes for young people
19-22 July	Sydney NSW	ACSPRI Social Science Methodology Conference
19-23 July	Sydney NSW	22nd World Meeting of the International Society for Research on Aggression (ISRA)
24-27 July	Canberra ACT	National Suicide Prevention Conference
28-29 July	Melbourne Vic	Teaching and Supporting Students with Special Needs
AUGUST 2016		
2-3 August	Melbourne Vic	FUTUREgen16 Conference: Creating a Future that Works for Young

		People
4-5 August	Cairns Qld	Early Years Conference: Today's Children, Tomorrow's Future
8-9 August	Melbourne Vic	2016 Victims and Justice National Conference
15-17 August	Sydney NSW	ACWA 2016 – Pathways to Protection and Permanency: Getting it Right for Children, Young People and Families
19 August	Sydney NSW	The Mental Health and Wellbeing of Young People : Generation Next
21-22 August	Sydney NSW	Girls and Education National Conference
25-26 August	Melbourne Vic	Boys and Education National Conference
30-31 August	Sydney NSW	Universal design conference; from the Margins to the Mainstream
SEPTEMBER 2016		
2-3 September	Sydney	Practising Positive Education: A Healthy Digital Diet Conference 2016
8-10 September	Melbourne Vic	Early Childhood Intervention Australia Conference
13-15 September	Brisbane Qld	From evidence to practice: the Second Australasian Youth Justice Conference
26-28 September	Melbourne Vic	International Marcé Society Biennial Scientific Conference 2016 - Frontiers in Perinatal Mental Health - looking to the future
29-30 September	Singapore	International Family Law Conference 2016: The Future of Family Justice: International and Multi-Disciplinary Pathways
OCTOBER 2016		
5-6 October	Melbourne Vic	Australasian Implementation Conference
5-8 October	Darwin NT	Early Childhood Australia national conference
10-14 October	Melbourne Vic	eResearch Australasia 2016
11 October	London UK	Children's mental health and wellbeing - integrating services, improving provision and the role of schools
16-22 October	National	Anti-Poverty Week
17-19 October	Cairns Qld	World Federation for Mental Health International Conference 2016
25-27 October	Canberra ACT	National Longitudinal Data Conference 2016 : Wellbeing over the life course
NOVEMBER 2016		
7-9 November	Ghent, Belgium	Child in the City Conference 2016
8-10 November	Melbourne Vic	Lowitja Institute International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference

15-18 November	Auckland NZ	International Indigenous Research Conference
17-18 November	Sydney	Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) National Conference
28 November - 1 December	Fitzroy Vic	Cities and successful stories: The Australian Sociological Association Conference
29 November - 2 December	Hobart Tas	ANZSOC 2016 : Horizons Criminology

If you have a query about any of the content please contact Barbara Glass at:
 Email: barbara.glass@acyp.nsw.gov.au or Ph. 9286 7294