

# DoCS Research to Practice Update

*A regular update for staff on the latest national and international research*

Issue 12, April 2007

## Research Publications – What's New!

### Research to practice

*The Research to Practice Program provides an essential link between the latest research and DoCS staff.*

*As part of this important initiative, the Research to Practice Update encompasses a broad range of research publications and resources to reflect the diversity of DoCS staff.*

*If you have any comments or suggestions about how we could improve this Update to make it more useful or relevant to your work, please email the Research to Practice Team at:*

- [researchtopractice@community.nsw.gov.au](mailto:researchtopractice@community.nsw.gov.au), or
- 'Research to Practice' on the internal email.

Produced by  
The Research to Practice Team  
Centre for Parenting & Research  
NSW Department of Community Services  
4–6 Cavill Avenue  
ASHFIELD NSW 2131  
DX 21212 Ashfield  
Ph 02 9716 2644  
Fax 02 9716 2788  
[researchtopractice@community.nsw.gov.au](mailto:researchtopractice@community.nsw.gov.au)



### DoCS

#### Outcomes for children and young people in kinship care

This research to practice note provides a succinct summary of "Outcomes for Children and Young People in Kinship Care: an issues paper". The paper outlines what the literature says about kinship care, how these placements work, and how they compare with unrelated foster care placements.

This article can be accessed on the DoCS internet at:  
[http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/documents/researchnotes\\_kinshipcare.pdf](http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/documents/researchnotes_kinshipcare.pdf)

### Early Intervention and Prevention Research

#### Variation in community intervention programmes and consequences for children and families: the example of Sure Start Local Programmes

Melhuish, E., Belsky, J., Anning, A., Ball, M., Barnes, J., Romaniuk, H. & Leyland, A. (2007) *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* (Online Early Articles).  
doi:10.1111/j.1469-7610.2007.01705.x

Sure Start Local Programmes (SSLPs) was established by the UK government to reduce social exclusion through improving the well-being of children aged 0-3 years and their families in disadvantaged communities. This article reports on a national evaluation which examined the links between variation in program implementation and effectiveness. It concludes that overall proficiency and specific aspects of implementation may influence effectiveness.

<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/j.1469-7610.2007.01705.x>

Closing the gap? The effectiveness of referred access family support services.

Sanders, R. & Roach, G. (2007) *Child & Family Social Work* 12 (2), pages 161-171

This paper presents findings from a study of the effectiveness of family support services provided through two family centres run by a voluntary agency in partnership with a South Wales local authority. It evaluates the effectiveness of family support services by looking at both the family views and a number of measurable outcomes in terms of reported changes in family functioning and the well-being of children and parents. The reasons for lack of improvement in some areas are discussed, emphasizing the importance of monitoring the impact of using the service and incorporating a focus on the quality of the nature of the relationship between the worker and the service user.

<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/j.1365-2206.2006.00455.x>

## JOURNAL ARTICLES

### Randomised clinical trial of a group parent education programme for Australian Indigenous families.

Turner, K., Richards, M. & Sanders, M. (2007) *Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health* 43, pages 243-251

This research assesses the impact and cultural appropriateness of a parenting program tailored for Indigenous families. The program is an adaptation of the evidence-based Triple P - Positive Parenting Program, which was informed by extensive community consultation, and aims to take into consideration the cultural values, aspirations, and needs of Indigenous people in Australia. A positive finding was that this culturally tailored program appeared to break down some of the obstacles Indigenous families face in accessing mainstream services.

Contact DoCS Library for ways to access this article

### Multi-level influences on the practice of inter-agency collaboration in child welfare and substance abuse treatment

Smith, B. & Mogro-Wilson, C. (2007). *Children and Youth Services Review* 29 (5), pages 545-556.

The main argument of this paper is that inter-agency collaboration in child welfare and substance abuse treatment is encouraged and sometimes required, but rarely adequately achieved. This study addresses inter-agency collaboration as a practice of frontline staff and seeks to illuminate organizational conditions and staff characteristics that can promote or hinder collaborative practice in everyday settings. The findings have implications for efforts to promote inter-agency collaboration and other innovative practices.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/>

### Exploring the disclosure of child sexual abuse with alleged victims and their parents

Hershkowitz, I., Lanes, O. & Lamb, M. (2007). *Child Abuse and Neglect* 31 (2), pages 111-123

The goal of this study was to examine how children disclosed sexual abuse by alleged perpetrators who were not family members. The children's willingness to disclose abuse to their parents promptly and spontaneously decreased when they expected negative reactions, especially when the abuse was more serious. The findings provide insight into the factors that affect the willingness of alleged abuse victims to disclose abuse by extra-familial alleged perpetrators.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/>

### Improving credibility assessment in child sexual abuse allegations: The role of the NICHD investigative interview protocol

Hershkowitz, I., Fisher, S., Lamb, M. & Horowitz, D. (2007). *Child Abuse and Neglect* 31 (2), pages 99-110

The study was designed to explore whether the credibility of children's statements regarding their alleged experiences of child sexual abuse could be assessed in a more valid and reliable way when investigative interviews were conducted using the NICHD protocol rather than in an unstructured manner.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/>

## DoCS Library

For information regarding these articles and resources please contact the DoCS library on:

- [DOCS.Library@community.nsw.gov.au](mailto:DOCS.Library@community.nsw.gov.au) or,
- Fax (02) 9716 2085.

**Maternal discourse, attachment-related risk, and current risk factors: Associations with maternal parenting behaviour during foster care visits**

Schoppe-Sullivan, S., Mangelsdorf, S., Haight, W., Black, J., Szewczyk-Sokolowski, M., Giorgio, G. & Tata, L. (2007). *Journal of Applied and Developmental Psychology* 28 (2) (March-April), pages 149-165.

This study examined relations among mothers' discourse about experiences in their families of origin and with child protective services, attachment-related and current risk factors, and the quality of mothers' parenting behaviour with their young children during supervised visits. Results revealed that mothers who discussed their experiences in a coherent and flexible manner and expressed affection for their children in their discourse were more supportive of their children's socio-emotional functioning during visits.

[www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com)

**Self-perceptions of fulfilling the foster caregiver role: A preliminary analysis**

Cole, S. & Eamon, M. (2007). *Children and Youth Services Review* 29 (5), pages 655-671

This study identified items measuring foster caregivers' perceptions of fulfilling their foster caregiver role and the factors associated with those perceptions. The pool of perspective participants included active foster care providers in the State of Illinois, U.S.. Child welfare agency and practice implications are drawn from the analysis.

[www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com)

**A Model for Life-Story Work: Facilitating the Construction of Personal Narrative for Foster Children**

Cook-Cottone, C. & Beek, M (2007) *Child and Adolescent Mental Health* (Online Early Articles).

Life-story work is the construction, or reconstruction, of an individual's life-story and involves the integration of the individual's internal processes (cognitive, emotional, and biological) as well as the relationships and values within the family, community, and culture in which the child has developed. This article identifies the gap between research and practice and argues that life-story work is critical in the lives of foster children for giving the child a sense of permanence.

<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1475-3588.2007.00446.x>

## REPORTS

**Careers at the coal-face? Community services in South Australia: workforce development**

Carson, E., Maher, C., & King, P. (2007). University of South Australia Social Policy Research Group and SACOSS

This project profiles the community services workforce in South Australia and provides a detailed analysis of critical issues currently affecting the workforce in non-government community services agencies. Findings from the literature and the key informant consultations were consistent in highlighting that the community services sector is one of the fastest growing in Australia, and in South Australia, the sector is experiencing great levels of change.

<http://www.unisa.edu.au/hawkeinstitute/sprg/documents/Carson%20Coalface%20Full%20Report.pdf>

**Report on Government Services 2007**

Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision, Productivity Commission.

This Review aims to inform parliaments, governments, service providers and the clients of services about overall performance and reforms in service provision so as to promote ongoing performance improvement. It contains a section on community services, which includes children's services and protection and support services.

<http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs/2007/index.html>

**Report on Government Services 2007 - Indigenous Compendium (April 2007)**

Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision, Productivity Commission.

This report contains all the Indigenous data from the 'Report on Government Services 2007'. This report has an important long-term objective, which is to inform Australian governments about whether policy programs and interventions are achieving positive outcomes for Indigenous people. This aims to work as a tool to help guide where further work is needed.

<http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs/compendium2007/index.html>

## Contact the Research to Practice Team

Cate Thomas 02 9716 2728  
Manager, Practice Research  
Email:  
cate.thomas@community.nsw.gov.au

Kate Flannery 02 9716 2642  
Senior Research Officer  
Email:  
kate.flannery@community.nsw.gov.au

Kate Furst 02 9716 2586  
Acting Principal Research Officer  
Email: kate.furst@community.nsw.gov.au

Hyllus Munro 02 9716 2381  
Senior Research Officer (Aboriginal)  
Email:  
hyllus.munro@community.nsw.gov.au

Neriman Osman 02 9716 2571  
Senior Research Officer  
Email:  
neriman.osman@community.nsw.gov.au

Yvette Zurek 02 9716 2684  
Research Officer  
Email:  
yvette.zurek@community.nsw.gov.au

## Statistics on drug use in Australia 2006

Drug statistics series no. 18, April 2007. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

This report provides a comprehensive summary of major drug use in Australia, with references to sources of more detailed information. It also serves as the 'companion document' to the National Drug Strategy 2004-2009. The report presents data on patterns of drug use, international comparisons, drugs and health, special population groups, and crime and law enforcement. It also includes information on treatment services.

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/phe/soduia06/soduia06.pdf>

## RESOURCES

### Let the Children Play: Nature's answer to early learning

Lessons in Learning Series, 2006. Early Childhood Learning Knowledge Centre

Play is believed to take an important role in enhancing every aspect of children's development and learning. This resource outlines the importance of children's play, as well as offering some ideas on encouraging and facilitating play. It contains links to additional resources and reading.

<http://www.ccl-cca.ca/CCL/Reports/LessonsInLearning/LinL20061010LearninPlay.htm?Language=EN>

## Disclaimer

This Update has been compiled by DoCS' Centre for Parenting and Research as part of the Research to Practice Program. It has been developed to facilitate access to research publications and resources.

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