

DoCS Research to Practice Update

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

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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, or
- 'Research to Practice' on the internal email.

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DoCS Research

Outcomes for Children and Young People in Kinship Care: an issues paper

Marina Paxman, Centre for Parenting and Research, DoCS.

This issues paper outlines what the literature tells us about kinship care, how these placements work and how they compare with unrelated foster care placements. The focus is on the research evidence on outcomes for children in statutory care, in particular the child welfare goals of well-being, permanency and safety. The purpose of this paper is to inform future directions in research, policy and practice in out-of-home care.

This paper is available on the DoCS website at: http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/html/news_publications/research_practice.htm

Early Intervention and Prevention Research

Early Intervention and the Sensitivities of 'Vulnerable' Families

Goodfellow, J. (2006). *Developing Practice: the child, youth and family work journal*, 17 (Summer), pages 32-39.

This article explores the findings of a small research project which gained insights into the experiences of socially vulnerable parents who participated in an early intervention program situated in mainstream child care services in New South Wales. It also describes the Parents' Stories Project within understandings about vulnerability and risk.

This article is available from the DoCS Library

Linking to Learn and Learning to Link: Building Integrated Systems of School - Based Support for Children and Families in a Disadvantaged Community

Mission Australia (2007). Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice and Governance, Griffith University.

This paper is drawn from the 'Pathways to Prevention Project' with the aim of implementing and evaluating changed institutional practices within primary schools and welfare agency Mission Australia to enhance children's school performance and behaviour. It aims to provide information to influence policy, and hence outcomes for children.

This paper can be viewed online at: http://www.gu.edu.au/centre/kceljag/pathways/linking_to_learn.pdf

Effect of Early Childhood Adversity on Child Health

Flaherty, E. G., Thompson, R., Litrownik, A. J., Theodore, A., English, D. J., Black, M. M., Wike, T., W. L., Runyan, D. K., Dubowitz, H. (2006), *Archives of Paediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, V.160 (12) pages 1232-1301.

The article reports on the effect of child abuse and other household dysfunction on child health outcomes. Data from the Longitudinal Study of Child Abuse and Neglect was examined. The study discusses the prevalence of adverse childhood exposures and its relationship on child health. The findings suggest that a relationship between adverse childhood experiences and negative health indicators begin early in childhood.

The implication on early intervention to prevent long-term medical consequences is discussed.

This article is available from the DoCS library

Parenting quality: Confirmation of a higher-order latent construct with mothers of Head Start children

Hubbs-Tait, L., Page, M. C., Huey, E. L., Starost H-J, McDonald Culp, A., Culp R. E., Harper, M. E. 2006, *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* 21 (4), pages 491-506.

This article reports on a study about parenting quality conducted with mothers of children enrolled in Head Start. This program promotes school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social and other services to enrolled children and families. This article discusses a high order latent construct of parenting quality that includes five components (1) moral and cognitive reflectivity, (2) psychosocial maturity (3) psychological distress (4) demographic protection and (5) parenting attitudes and beliefs, which extend beyond ecological and process models. Implications for policy and practice are discussed.

This article can be viewed online at: www.sciencedirect.com

Predicting the effectiveness of the Home-Start parenting support program

Asscher, J. Hermans, J. Deković, M. & Reitz, E. (2007) *Children and Youth Services Review*, 29, (2), February, pages 247-263.

This study examines predictive effects of participant's

characteristics, program characteristics, and their interaction, on changes in parenting behaviour of mothers who participated in the Home-Start parenting support program in the Netherlands.

This article can be viewed online at: www.sciencedirect.com

Children of mothers at psychosocial risk of growing up: A follow up at the age of 16

Wadsby, M., Göran Svedin, C., Sydsjö, G., (2007) *Journal of Adolescence* 30 (1), pages 147-164.

This study focuses on the long-term outcome of children whose mothers during pregnancy were identified as being in psychosocial risk, i.e. had drug/alcohol, mental health and/or particular social problems of relevance for their coming motherhood. The 16-year follow-up assessed the children's emotional/behavioural problems, self-esteem, life events, and academic grades. The group with the most negative outcomes were boys. Teenagers in foster care placements had less positive outlooks and problems than teenagers who lived at home. The study raises the importance of very early intervention for children of psychosocial risk mothers to prevent the development of future problems.

This article can be viewed online at: www.sciencedirect.com

Community-based parenting programmes: an exploration of the interplay between environmental and organizational factors in a Webster Stratton project

Bell, M (2007) *British Journal of Social Work* 37 (1), pages 55-72.

This article identifies and explores the particular strategies of community based parenting programs. Specifically, it explores ways in which the inter-professional

delivery of six parenting programs from a community base can succeed in including both families in high and low need. The community base promoted opportunities for a more inclusive, participative approach which was experienced as helpful by families with different levels of need, suggesting that parenting programs can be both preventive and restorative.

This article can be viewed online at: <http://bjsw.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/full/37/1/55>

Research Reports

Young People Who Sexually Abuse: Key Issues

Boyd, C. Australian Institute of Family Studies- Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault (ACSSA) No.3 December 2006.

This report examines current research and practice about understanding and responding to young people who have committed acts of sexual abuse. It includes numbers and statistics, as well as information about common indicators. This report also considers sibling sexual abuse. It explores implications for treatment and child protection.

This report is available at: <http://www.aifs.gov.au/acssa/pubs/wrap/w3.html>

Growing Up in Australia: The longitudinal study of Australian Children

Published by the Australian Institute of Family Studies January 2007.

This report is based on a longitudinal study, with the aim to provide evidence based information to better understand children's development in Australia's current social, economic and cultural

environment. This is part of the Australian Government's Stronger Families and Communities initiative.

This report is available at: <http://www.aifs.gov.au/growingup/publications/annualreport2005-06.html>

Child Protection Australia 2005 - 2006

Child Welfare Series Number 40, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare: Canberra, January 2007.

This report provides comprehensive information on state and territory child protection and support services. The report contains data for 2005-06, with trend data on child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, children on care and protection orders and children in out-of-home care.

This report is available at: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10383>

Behind closed doors: The impact of domestic violence on children

Unicef, Child Protection Program Division, United States. January 2007.

This report explores the challenges and risks that children who live with and are aware of violence in the home may face, focusing on the impacts on children who witness a parent or caregiver being subjected to violence. It highlights the specific needs of the child and implications for practice and policy.

This report is available online at: <http://www.unicef.com.au/documents/BehindClosedDoors.pdf>

Journal Articles

A child's-eye view of parent methamphetamine abuse: Implications for helping foster families to succeed

Haight, W. Ostler, T. Black, J. Sheridan, B. & Kingery, L. (2007) *Children and Youth Services*, 29, (1), January, pages 1-15.

This report focuses on the experiences and perspectives of children aged 7-14 years, in the United States, who were involved with the public child welfare system because of their parents' methamphetamine abuse. Implications for facilitating the adjustment of children to foster care and beyond are discussed including information about the contexts in which children have been reared and children's understanding of those contexts.

This article is available at: www.sciencedirect.com

A family affair? Kinship care and parental substance misuse: some dilemmas explored

Kroll, B. (2007) *Child & Family Social Work* 12 (1 - February), pages 84-93.

This paper examines some of the issues that can arise with family placements where substance misuse has been an issue, particularly in view of the part that substance misuse may play within the wider family system, the impact of parental drug and alcohol use on attachment and child development, and the complex dynamics that can ensue. Drawing on themes emerging from parental substance misuse literature and kinship care research, some practice dilemmas are explored.

This article can be accessed at: <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1365-2206.2006.00448.x>

Research on placement moves: Seeking the perspective of foster children

Unrau, Y. (2007) *Children and Youth Services Review*, 29 (1), January, pages 122-137.

This paper examines research studies investigating one particular aspect of child welfare service, i.e. placement moves, or the event of moving from one placement to another by children living in out-of-home care. The main purpose of this paper is to examine which standpoints are used to frame existing research findings about placement moves and, in particular, to what extent the perspective of foster children is included.

This article is available on line at: www.sciencedirect.com

Relationship between type of placement and competencies and problem behaviour of adolescents in long-term foster care

Marinkovic, J. & Backovic, D. (2007) *Children and Youth Services Review* 29 (2), February, pages 216-225. This study explores the impact of placement type on competence and problem behaviour of adolescents in long-term foster care. Competencies and problem behaviour were assessed with Youth Self-Report (YSR), which assesses competencies and behaviour problems for ages 11-18. Placement type had significant main effect on competency in activities. Adolescents living in foster homes scored lower on this scale and the study considers explanations for this.

This study is available online at: www.sciencedirect.com/

DoCS Library

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

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

Domestic violence and child protection: exploring the role of perpetrator risk assessments

Humphreys, C. (2006) *Child & Family Social Work* (Online Early Articles, December 2006).

This article explores the issue of severity in relation to domestic violence and child protection. The author engages firstly with the changing discourses on domestic violence and severity and then focuses on a particular aspect of risk assessment, namely, domestic violence assessments used by police and their potential role at different stages in domestic violence and child protection intervention. It identifies previous gaps and resulting assessment frameworks available which explore both risk and protective factors.

This article can be viewed online at: <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1365-2206.2006.00464.x>

Kinship foster parents' perceptions of factors that promote or inhibit successful fostering

Coakley, T. Cuddeback, G. Buehler, C. & Cox, M (2007) *Children and Youth Services Review*, 29 (1), January, pages 92-109.

This research article is based on interviews conducted with kinship foster parents in the United States to explore their perceptions with regard to the familial factors and parenting beliefs that promote or inhibit successful fostering. The article aims to offer a better understanding of these outlooks to inform child welfare practice and policy.

This article can be viewed online at: www.sciencedirect.com

Teenage parenthood among child welfare clients: A Swedish national cohort study of prevalence and odds

Vinnerljung B., Franzen, E., Danielsson, M., (2007) *Journal of Adolescence*, 30, (1) February, pages 97-116.

This study assesses the prevalence of teenage parenthood among nearly 50,000 former child welfare clients of both sexes with varying experiences of child welfare interventions. It also examines the odds of child welfare clients becoming a parent during teenage years, compared to peers with similar socio-economic and demographic backgrounds. The analysis describes outcomes for different subgroups within the child welfare client population.

This article can be viewed online at: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/>

Maternal Depression and Violence Exposure: Double Jeopardy for Child School Functioning

Silverstein, M., Augustyn, M., Cabral, H., Zuckerman B., (2007) *Pediatrics*, pages e792 - e800.

This study aims to determine the impact of violence exposure on the relationship between maternal depression and childhood cognitive performance and behaviour. The study measured differences in gender and racial groups. It concludes with a discussion on violence and its effect on maternal depression and children's school functioning and behaviour. It highlights that research and intervention planning for children affected by maternal depression should consider violence exposure.

This article is available online at: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/T>

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Children's experiences of violence: Some have much more than others

Leventhal, J. (2007) *Child Abuse & Neglect 31 (1)*, January, pages 3-6.

This article looks at the different types of violence children experience, and the occurrence of multiple forms of violence. It argues that while any single type of violence experienced by a child has the potential of adverse consequences, what may be more important is knowing how many and what different types of violence the child has experienced. The use of a cumulative risk model over a single risk model is promoted.

This article is available online at:
www.sciencedirect.com

Resources

Crystal Methamphetamine Use in New South Wales

Briefing Paper No. 19/2006 by Talina Drabsch. Parliament of New South Wales.

This paper provides an overview of crystal methamphetamine, including what it is, how many people use it, and why. In addition, it identifies its effects, including the health and social implications as well as links between crystal methamphetamine use and violence.

This paper is available online at:
www.parliament.nsw.gov.au

Children's Mental Health: Facts for Policymakers

Fact sheet publication- 11/2006 by National Centre for Children in Poverty (NCCP) New York.

This fact sheet outlines the widespread problems in children's mental health, the need for services and effective public policy strategies to enhance mental health for children, youth, and their families.

This fact sheet is available on line at: http://www.nccp.org/pub_ucr06b.html

New Books

Attachment Handbook for Foster Care and Adoption

Schofield, G. & Beek, M (2006).
Produced by BAAF Adoption and Fostering: London.

This book reflects on attachment theory and traces the pathways of secure and insecure patterns from birth to adulthood, exploring the impact of past experiences of abuse, neglect and separation on children's behaviour in foster and adoptive families. This is followed by an explanation of dimensions of parenting associated with helping a child feel secure in a family and the community.

Attachment for Foster care and adoption: A training programme

Schofield, G. & Beek, M. (2006).
Produced by BAAF Adoption and Fostering: London.

This training program accompanies the above handbook. It provides a framework for understanding the thinking and behaviours of children in care and for helping children settle in their family placements.

Contact the DoCS library for information on how to access these books.

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