

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

Is all contact between children in care and their birth parents 'good' contact?

This paper reviews the evidence for and against contact between children in care and their birth families. It also considers the circumstances in which contact may be beneficial and those in which contact is most likely to be harmful.

The focus of the paper is on contact in long-term care, predominantly foster care, where a decision has been made for the child to remain living away from the birth family in the long-term.

View it online at:
www.community.nsw.gov.au

Assessment of parenting capacity

This review explores national and international literature about the assessment of parenting capacity. It identifies approaches for improving the assessment of parenting capacity, such as adopting a strengths-based approach and improving worker decision-making processes.

An overview of a range of tools used in undertaking parenting capacity assessment is also provided.

View it online at:
www.community.nsw.gov.au

National – other agencies

Early childhood and the lifecourse approach: Policy Brief

This publication is the first in a series of Policy Briefs being developed by the Victorian Centre for Community Child Health.

This Policy Brief explores the issues that impact on the health, development and well-being of children and therefore their life course. These issues are addressed from ecological and economic perspectives.

This resource is available online at:
www.rch.org.au/ccch/pub/index.cfm?doc_id=714

childprotect e-discussion list

This discussion list has been developed by the National Child Protection Clearinghouse at the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS).

It aims to provide a forum for scholarly discussion of child maltreatment and child protection research, policy and practice issues.

Details of how to subscribe are available online at:
www.aifs.gov.au/nch/dlist.html

Sowing the seeds of innovation in child protection

This paper was presented at the 10th Australasian Child Abuse and Neglect Conference by Professor Dorothy Scott, Director of the Australian Centre for Child Protection, University of South Australia.

Useful links

The Raising Children website

This website is a government-funded resource that gives parents the power to make informed choices about how they raise their kids.

The website has been developed by the Raising Children Network which is a consortium of three leading early childhood agencies: Smart Population Foundation, the Centre for Community Child Health and the Victorian Parenting Centre.

Due for release on 17 May, the site will include a comprehensive range of quality-assured information for parents of children birth to eight years.

www.raisingchildren.net.au

The paper discusses the challenges associated with the transfer of innovation across different cultural contexts and across different legal and service systems, within the context of child abuse and neglect.

A copy of the paper is available online at: www.nzfvc.org.nz/accan/speakers/scott.shtml

International

Understanding and working with neglect: Research and Practice Briefings

This publication, developed by Research in Practice UK, discusses the issues surrounding neglect cases. The causes of neglect are explored, as are the effects on children's development.

The publication also provides an overview of a range of intervention strategies.

This publication is available online at: www.rip.org.uk/publications/researchbriefings.asp

Firm Foundations: A practical guide to organisational support for the use of research evidence

This handbook has also been developed by Research in Practice, UK. It is designed to help those with the responsibility for planning how to improve the quality of practice in their agency and put in place the skills, facilities and culture to support evidence-based practice.

This handbook and supporting materials can be viewed online at: www.rip.org.uk/publications/handbooks.asp

Parenting and Children's Resilience in Disadvantaged Communities

This research summary is based on questionnaires, discussion groups and interviews held with parents, children and young people in four

Glasgow neighbourhoods characterised by high levels of social disadvantage.

The report includes a summary of the research findings and some discussion about policy implications.

A copy of the report is available online at: www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/0096.asp

The participation of children and young people in developing social care

This practice guide was developed by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) in the UK. The online guide offers quick and easy access to practice knowledge about involving children and young people in developing social care. It covers key research findings; ideas from practice; details of relevant legislation, guidance and standards; and links to further information.

The practice guide can be viewed online at: <http://www.scie.org.uk/practiceguide06/>

Risk and Safety Assessment in Child Welfare: Instrument Comparisons

The assessment of risk is a critical part of child welfare agency work. Most states in the US formalise the process of assessing risk by using some type of structured decision-making process or tool.

Undertaken by the Bay Area Social Services Consortium, this literature review describes current approaches to risk and safety assessment, instruments used to assess risk, and summarises research findings regarding these instruments' validity, reliability, outcomes, and use with children and families from different cultural backgrounds.

A copy of the executive summary is available online at: http://cssr.berkeley.edu/bassc/public/risk_summ.pdf

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Email your questions & ideas to:
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New initiatives

Child Trauma Academy

Founded by Dr Bruce Perry, the Child Trauma Academy is a not-for-profit organization based in the US. It focuses on education, service delivery and program consultation in the areas of child maltreatment.

Among the many resources, the website contains a number of free online courses, including:

- *The Amazing Human Brain and Child Development*
- *Surviving Childhood: An Introduction to the Impact of Trauma*
- *The Cost of Caring: Secondary Traumatic Stress and the Impact of Working with High Risk Children and Families*
- *Bonding and Attachment in Maltreated Children*

These courses are available online at: www.childtraumaacademy.com

Best Practice Bibliographies

Developed by the Children and Family Research Center, University of Illinois, the bibliographies are part of an ongoing project of the Center.

Currently there are over fifty bibliographies available on various child welfare topics.

A searchable list of bibliographies are available online at: <http://cfcwww.social.uiuc.edu/respract/bestpracbibs.htm>

New books

The May 2006 *Current Awareness Bulletin* lists a number of relevant books, and can be viewed online on DoCS' intranet.

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.

The content contained within these publications is provided for your information only and should not be seen as a directive or endorsement by DoCS.