

DoCS Research to Practice Update

A monthly update on the latest national and international research

Issue 1, October 2005

Research Publications – What's New!

News

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

As part of this important initiative, the popular Research to Practice Update will now encompass a broader 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 on: researchtopractice@community.nsw.gov.au

DoCS publications

Trends in the Number of Children and Young People in Out-of-Home Care - Occasional Paper

This paper provides an overview of recent trends in the number of children and young people in Out-of-Home Care (OoHC) in New South Wales.

Key findings include:

- of the 10,337 children and young people in out-of-home care on 30 June 2004, more were in family/kinship care (46.8%) than any other type of care, an increasing trend since 1997
- 26.1% of the children and young people in OoHC in June 2004 were Indigenous, most of whom were in family/kinship care (62.3%)
- the number of children and young people *entering* care has been decreasing since 1999, while the number in care has been increasing
- most children *in* care are between the ages of four and 14 years. The number in care between these ages has shown some increase in recent years.

To view a copy of the complete paper, please visit DoCS' internet.

Other State governments

Protecting Children White Paper

This paper outlines the Victorian Government's plans for the child, youth and family sector. It was developed by the Victorian Department of Human Services' Office for Children, builds on existing reforms, to provide a clear road-map for ongoing policy, system and practice change.

The paper is available online at www.office-for-children.vic.gov.au

Other States cont.

SA Children's Protection (Keeping Them Safe) Amendment Bill 2005

The Bill is the legislative response to the *Keeping Them Safe* program.

Keeping Them Safe is a \$210 million, five year child protection reform program.

Keeping Them Safe will direct changes in the following priority areas:

- support to children, young people and families
- effective and appropriate interventions
- reforming work practices and culture
- collaborative relationships
- improved accountability.

For more information about the Bill, visit

www.familiesandcommunities.sa.gov.au/Default.aspx?tabid=120

National – other agencies

The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples 2005

Released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, this report brings together information about the health and welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

This report is available online at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10172>

Building Resilience - The Benevolent Society's approach to working with vulnerable children and families

This report describes the practical experiences of child and family workers in our children's services.

Building Resilience cont.

It provides an overview of their evidence-based approach to service delivery and a step-by-step

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Useful Links

Australian Institute of Family Studies
www.aifs.gov.au

Commission for Children and Young People
www.kids.nsw.gov.au

Families First
www.familiesfirst.nsw.gov.au

Research in Practice
www.rip.org.uk

What Works for Children?
www.whatworksforchildren.org.uk

breakdown of the phases of their work with a family. It also discusses what both experience and evaluative data have shown works most effectively to promote positive outcomes for children and families.

The Starting Out with Scarba project: Facilitating children's participation in child protection processes

The Benevolent Society has released a report which discusses a small action-research project that was undertaken to examine some of the issues and obstacles facing practitioners as they seek to involve children in child protection decision-making processes. The study was undertaken in collaboration with the Social Justice and Social Change Research Centre at the University of Western Sydney.

These reports are available online at www.bensoc.org.au.

Strategies for Gain - the evidence on strategies to improve the health and wellbeing of Victorian children

This report has been written by the Centre for Health Service Development, University of Wollongong as part of the Department of Human Services (DHS) Victoria's *Children's Health and Wellbeing Policy Flagship* project.

Its purpose is to guide and structure the Department's efforts to support and improve the health, development, learning and wellbeing of Victorian children. The project will assist DHS in determining strategic investments for improving the health and wellbeing of Victorian children.

This report is available online at <http://www.uow.edu.au/commerce/chsd/2005otherpubs.html>

Ask the Children - Education

This publication has been developed by the Commission for Children and Young People's as part of their Ask the Children series of information resources.

It provides the perspective from children and young people on how to

improve their educational experience.

Copies are available free-of-charge in hard copy or it can be downloaded at www.kids.nsw.gov.au/ask/Educational.html

International

Sure Start Plus National Evaluation: Final Report

Sure Start Plus is a pilot program which aims to reduce the risk of long-term social exclusion associated with teenage pregnancy through coordinated support to pregnant teenagers under 18 years and teenage parents.

This report, which presents the findings of the national evaluation, is available online at:

www.dfes.gov.uk/teenagepregnancy/dsp_content.cfm?pageid=234

Other Sure Start evaluation reports are available online at www.ness.bbk.ac.uk/

What does the research say about the QUAD child care principles?

The Human Early Learning Partnership at the University of British Columbia has produced this report. It provides a summary of what the relevant research studies tell us about quality, universally inclusive, accessible child care that facilitates early child development.

This report is available online at www.earlylearning.ubc.ca

Refocusing Children's Services Towards Prevention: lessons from the literature

This Dartington Social Research Unit has written this literature review to support local authorities in refocusing children's services so that they improve prevention strategies and are well placed to implement legislation and guidance emerging from the Green Paper *Every Child Matters*.

This report is available online at www.dartington.org.uk/pages/publications.shtml

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Email your questions & ideas to:

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- *externally at researchtopractice@community.nsw.gov.au*

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Measuring and Understanding Social Services Outputs

This paper, developed by the Personal Social Services Research Unit in the UK, reports on an initial scoping and development exercise designed to inform the development of new measures of personal social services output and productivity.

This paper is available online at www.pssru.ac.uk/list.php?type=unpublished

Multisystemic Therapy for Social, Emotional and Behavioural Problems in Youth Aged 10 - 17

This review was prepared by The Cochrane Collaboration and reports on the results of eight randomised controlled trials of Multisystemic Therapy (MST) conducted in the USA, Canada and Norway.

The review is available online at www.cochrane.org/reviews/en/ab004797.html

Newly Commissioned or Collaborative Research Projects

Permanency Planning Literature Review

The University of New South Wales School of Social Work has been commissioned to undertake a review of the literature around Permanency Planning.

The review will be available to staff in October 2005.

Human Services and Parents with a Disability: Working Cooperatively in the Best Interests of the Child

This project is being undertaken by the University of Sydney. It will use a critical ethnographic approach to look in-depth and prospectively at the communicative process in which DoCS workers and parents with a disability engage to negotiate support for the family.

The report will be available in January 2006.

Inclusion of Young Children with Disabilities in Mainstream Early Childhood Services

Also being undertaken by the University of Sydney, this project will examine best practice in inclusion of children with disabilities into early childhood services.

The report will be available in January 2006.

New Initiatives

Every Child is Important Program

The Australian Childhood Foundation has launched the Every Child is Important Program which aims to promote parenting confidence, knowledge and access to support. The Program comprises parenting seminars, resource materials and the www.kidscount.com.au website.

For more information and a copy of the Every Child is Important booklet, visit www.childhood.org.au/resources/parenting.asp.

WA Department for Community Development - www.community.wa.gov.au

Promoting Strong Indigenous Communities Directory

Developed by the WA Department of Community Development, the Directory provides information about initiatives, projects and programs that strengthen communities and families to ultimately keep women and children safe.

The Directory is available online at www.community.wa.gov.au/Communities/Indigenous/PSIC

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.