

# Literature highlights

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## Parental substance abuse

**A gendered invitation? (2005).** Pollock, S., Agllias, K., & Stuble, A. *Women Against Violence—An Australian Feminist Journal*, 18, 65–71.

Family counsellors working with parents who have issues with drug and alcohol use most often work with mothers. This study of 41 family counsellors and coordinators examined their experiences with families where drug and alcohol use was an influence. The article considers gender issues in drug and alcohol counselling. It discusses the gendered nature of knowledge, the gendered nature of intervention, women's drug and alcohol use, and access to appropriate drug and alcohol services.

**But the parent is trying ...: The dilemmas workers face when children are at risk from parental substance use. (2005).** Cousins, C. *Child Abuse Prevention Newsletter*, 13(1), 3–6. [www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/newsletters/nl2005/summer.html#cc](http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/newsletters/nl2005/summer.html#cc)

The difficulties experienced by drug and alcohol workers whose clients are also parents are highlighted in this article. The article outlines the extent of the problem and some of the factors associated with these particular parents that may prevent workers from successfully identifying children at risk. It discusses the difficulties for workers in developing sufficient awareness of the needs of children, and in judging whether or not adequate parenting is being given. It concludes with a discussion of the emotional responses from workers that may interfere with effective service delivery to parents.

**Child protection practice with families affected by parental substance use. (2004).** Hallgrimsdottir, E., Healy, K., & Foulds, H. *Children Australia*, 29(3), 11–15.

This paper reports on a study of child protection practice in a non-government child protection organisation in inner Sydney. The purpose of the study was to explore workers' perceptions of critical issues in child protection and family support work in families affected by parental substance use. The findings raise issues about prevalence of substance use issues in child protection work, the risks posed to workers in this domain of practice, and the importance of improved cooperation amongst agencies involved with these families

affected by parental substance use. Future research directions for improving child protection and family support practice with families affected by parental substance use are considered. (Journal abstract)

**Drug use in the family: Impacts and implications for children. (2006).** Dawe, S., Frye, S., Best, D., et al. Canberra, ACT: Australian National Council on Drugs. [www.ancd.org.au/publications/pdf/rp13\\_drug\\_use\\_in\\_family.pdf](http://www.ancd.org.au/publications/pdf/rp13_drug_use_in_family.pdf)

The impact of parental substance misuse, specifically alcohol and illicit drug use, on children aged between two and 12 years is examined. The report contains a review of the literature on prevalence of substance misuse in families, and analyses the National Drug Strategy Household Survey and National Health Survey, the Longitudinal Study on Women's Health, the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children, and specialist population databases. Use of alcohol and other drugs in households with dependent children was found to be high, with high rates of binge drinking in particular. While parental substance misuse can affect many aspects of a child's life, it is generally difficult to disentangle the effects of parental substance use from broader social and economic factors that contribute to and maintain the misuse of either drugs or alcohol. A separate chapter investigates the effects of parental substance misuse on Indigenous children.

**Drugs and the aftermath, children who live with substance use: Early intervention in utero to permanency planning. (2004).** Berry, K., & Moore, K. In *Knowledge into action! Effective practice for child and family services: Proceedings of the 2004 Conference of the Association of Children's Welfare Agencies*. Haymarket, NSW: Association of Children's Welfare Agencies. Online only. [www.acwa.asn.au/Conf2004/acwa2004papers/26\\_kerry\\_kay.pdf](http://www.acwa.asn.au/Conf2004/acwa2004papers/26_kerry_kay.pdf)

Substance abuse is one of the main reasons for the increasing number of children entering the child protection system in Australia. This paper presents a background to the issue of children living with substance abuse and discusses several case studies. It looks at challenges for child welfare workers, considers the experience of substance dependent parents, the unborn child, and the infant of parental drug abuse, implications for developing attachment, and the short-term and long-term effects on children of maternal substance

dependence. It discusses building resilience through early intervention, and the Substance Use in Pregnancy and Parenting service model.

***Dual diagnosis support kit: Working with families affected by both mental illness and substance misuse.* (2005). New South Wales. Department of Community Services. Ashfield, NSW: Department of Community Services. [www.community.nsw.gov.au/DOCS/STANDARD/PC\\_100864.html](http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/DOCS/STANDARD/PC_100864.html)**

Dual diagnosis is a term used to describe when a person is affected by both mental illness and substance misuse. The NSW Department of Community Services has developed this kit to help workers and families where there is parental dual diagnosis. The books and resources in the kit are intended to help workers, carers and parents introduce the issues of parental dual diagnosis, and explore concerns that children or family members may have. It provides positive strategies for coping with dual diagnosis, as well as contacts for help and support. These resources are not intended to replace the professional assessment or health care provided by qualified health professionals.

***Families and heavy drinking: Impacts on children's wellbeing.* (2006). Girling, M., Huakau, J., Casswell, S., et al. Wellington, NZ: Families Commission. [www.nzfamilies.org.nz/download/blueskies-shore.pdf](http://www.nzfamilies.org.nz/download/blueskies-shore.pdf)**

What are the social costs for children and young people of heavy parental or caregiver alcohol use in New Zealand? This literature review explores this topic in the NZ and international research and identifies research gaps. It examines the impacts of alcohol use on health, behavioural issues and problems, educational performance, and early onset and heavy alcohol use by offspring. Factors that affect these impacts include parental conflict, violence against children, parental absence, living standards, and parental control and supervision.

***Grandparents raising grandchildren because of alcohol and other drug issues.* (2007). Baldock, E. *Family Matters*, 76, 70–75.**

In 2003, there were 22,500 families in Australia in which grandparents were raising grandchildren. Many of these are due to substance abuse problems by the children's parents. This article explores the issues faced by these grandparents, which include health- and ageing-related issues, impacts on family relationships, legal and custody problems, social isolation, lifestyle upheaval, physical and emotional stress, and financial hardship and disadvantage. The children and their parents are also affected. In response, the article outlines the policy and service recommendations of the Canberra Mothercraft Society, which include early intervention and government financial assistance.

***Parental alcohol misuse and the impact on children.* (2006). New South Wales. Department of Community Services. Ashfield, NSW: Centre for Parenting and Research, NSW Department of Community Services.**

**Online only. [www.community.nsw.gov.au/docswr/\\_assets/main/documents/research\\_alcohol\\_misuse.pdf](http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/docswr/_assets/main/documents/research_alcohol_misuse.pdf)**

An overview of the impact of parental misuse of alcohol and its effect on children is given in this research note, with information on strategies to assist and support affected children and families. The paper includes information on assessment issues that may be encountered by social workers working with parents who misuse alcohol, and a discussion of a range of interventions.

***Parental drug use: A recent phenomenon.* (2004). Patton, N. St Kilda South, Vic: Mirabel Foundation. [www.mirabelfoundation.com/downloads/Parental\\_Drug\\_Use\\_A\\_Recent\\_Phenomenon.pdf](http://www.mirabelfoundation.com/downloads/Parental_Drug_Use_A_Recent_Phenomenon.pdf)**

The emergence of illicit drug use by parents and the development of kinship care as the preferred option for out-of-home care are discussed in this paper. The paper examines how parental drug use has changed the face of child welfare in Australia, and provides a summary of drug use from the early 1990s to the present day. It looks at past child welfare practices, from the beginning of white settlement, and discusses the growth of kinship care. The paper argues that greater resources should be provided to support this growing form of out-of-home care.

***Parents with complicated lives: Do child protection services help or hinder?* (2006). Baker, J., Miles, D., & Thorpe, R. In *Working together for families: CROCCS 4th International Conference, Mackay, Queensland, 4–6 August 2006: Papers.* Mackay, Qld: Centre for Research on Community and Children's Services. Online only. [www.croccs.org.au/downloads/2006\\_conf\\_papers/BakerMilesThorpe-Parents%20with%20complicated%20lives.%20Do%20child%20protection%20services%20help%20or%20hinder.pdf](http://www.croccs.org.au/downloads/2006_conf_papers/BakerMilesThorpe-Parents%20with%20complicated%20lives.%20Do%20child%20protection%20services%20help%20or%20hinder.pdf)**

A research project to gather the views of parents who have been involved with child protection services about those services is outlined. The paper discusses the need for a study focusing on the experiences of service users whose lives are characterised by compound difficulties, and refers to findings in the literature about the intersection of child protection with multiple difficulties relating to violence, disability and problematic substance use. There is a clear lack of information about how parents with complicated lives and their children experience the interventions of child protection authorities. The research project will explore how people with complicated lives interpret the interventions and what they consider to be most helpful and appropriate to their circumstances.

***The Nobody's Clients Project: Identifying and addressing the needs of children with substance dependent parents: Summary report.* (2004). Gruenert, S., Ratnam, S., & Tsantefski, M. Melbourne, Vic.: Odyssey House Victoria. [www.odyssey.org.au/institute/projects/summary.pdf](http://www.odyssey.org.au/institute/projects/summary.pdf)**

The Nobody's Clients Project was a prevention and early intervention program for Melbourne children aged between

4 and 13 years whose parents were in treatment for drug or alcohol dependency. This summary of the project report provides an overview of the background, methodology, key findings and recommendations of the project, and includes case studies of two participant families.

**The Parents Under Pressure program. (2004). Harnett, P. H., Dawe, S., & Rendalls, V. *Child Abuse Prevention Newsletter*, 12(1), 9–13. [www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/newsletters/nl2004/winter.html](http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/newsletters/nl2004/winter.html)**

The Parents Under Pressure program was developed to address the multiple needs of high-risk families. This article explains the philosophy, structure and content of the program, its theoretical influences, how it developed, and what is known about its effectiveness. A case example of a high-risk family is also presented.

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## Intermarriages

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**Aboriginal couples at the 2001 Census. (2002). Birrell, B., & Hirst, J. *People and Place*, 10(3), 23–28. <http://elecpress.monash.edu.au/pnp/cart/download/free.php?paper=21>**

One important indicator of the integration of Aborigines into non-Aboriginal Australian society is the level of couple intermix. Analysis of the 2001 census shows that a majority of couples with an Aboriginal partner are intermixed, that this majority is increasing in both metropolitan and non-metropolitan locations, and that intermix is widening the economic base of Aboriginal families. (Journal abstract)

**Aboriginal intermarriage and economic status in western New South Wales. (2002). Peterson, N., & Taylor, J. *People and Place*, 10(4), 11–16. <http://elecpress.monash.edu.au/pnp/cart/download/free.php?paper=32>**

The strength of the Aboriginal domain in western New South Wales is suggested by the fact that 94% of children from intermarriages are classified by their parents as Aboriginal. Census data also indicate that people in mixed marriages in this area are economically better off especially in regard to housing, than those in marriages where both partners are Indigenous. This raises questions about possible transformation of the Aboriginal domestic moral economy and the place of sharing within it. (Journal abstract)

***Christian–Muslim intermarriage in Australia: Identity, social cohesion or cultural fragmentation.* (2003). Ata, A. W. Melbourne, Vic.: David Lovell Publishing.**

Intermarriage is the best indicator of whether a group is fully integrated into the mainstream community, the author argues. He discusses the dynamics of Christian–Muslim interfaith marriages, cross-religious misunderstandings, demographic characteristics, forces behind Christian–Muslim marriages, adjustment and complications of interfaith marriages, attitudes to discrimination and attitudes to children, including questions of identity and sharing responsibilities.

**Cross-cultural marriage education and counselling: Exploring the challenges. (2000). Petrovic, A. *Threshold*, 65, 16–17, 27.**

Issues that are important in marriage education and counselling with different cultural groups are canvassed in this article. The author identifies some possible issues for migrants and refugees, stressing the need to remember that the theme of loss is invariably present. Discussion includes cultural bias, power imbalance between practitioner and client, crosscultural marriages, and power imbalance within a relationship.

**Immigration and racial/ ethnic relations in the United States. (2005). Bean, F. D., Brown, S. K., & Lee, J. *People and Place*, 13(1), 1–13.**

Over the past few decades the inflow of overseas migrants has transformed the United States from a largely biracial society to a multi-ethnic society. This paper explores the implications of this diversity via indicators of racial/ ethnic markers, including intermarriage and residential segregation. On the basis of this review the article concludes that the inter-relations between racial/ ethnic groups in the United States are improving. (Journal abstract)

**Intermarriage in Australia: Patterns by ancestry, gender and generation. (2004). Khoo, S. E. *People and Place*, 12(2), 35–44.**

Ancestry data from the 2001 Census allow us to explore intermarriage patterns among people of different ethnic backgrounds in Australia, including: people born overseas (the first generation), their Australian-born children (the second generation), and their Australian-born grandchildren and so on (termed here the third generation plus). While rates of intermarriage vary sharply among the second generation, by the third generation most people are marrying outside their own ancestry groups. For example, second-generation people reporting Greek ancestry are very likely to marry others of a similar ancestry, but the third generation is not. Most groups of Asian ancestry have not been in Australia long enough to produce a large third generation of marriageable age, but people reporting Indian and Chinese ancestry show a similar pattern to the Greeks: strong in-marriage in the second generation followed by strong out-marriage in the third-plus generation. (Journal abstract)

**Mixed marriages in Australia. (2005). *Threshold*, 84, 5–7.**

The marriage patterns of Australians born overseas and second generation Australians are examined in this article. The article analyses the marriage patterns of these two groups according to ethnic origin, and looks at the incidence of intermarriage within birthplace group, and of mixed marriages; that is, marriage between people of different birthplace groups.

***Mixed matches: Interracial marriage in Australia.* (2002). Owen, J. D. Sydney, NSW: University of New South Wales Press.**

While there is no lack of research undertaken on intermarriage between men and women of different ethnic origins in post-war Australia, few publications have been able to provide what is provided in this publication—a deep understanding by the author of what can happen between individual persons, and in particular families, when interracial marriages occur. This book begins with a discussion of the history of interracial marriage from the days of early European settlement through to contemporary Australia. At its core are interviews with more than 100 mixed-race couples from all over the country, and many of their adult or near-adult children. The couples describe their experiences and emotions, and how they have adjusted or learned to accept the differences between them.

**Out-marriage and the survival of ethnic communities in Australia. (2000). Birrell, B., & Healy, E. *People and Place*, 8(3), 37–46. [http://elecpress.monash.edu.au/pnp/free/pnpv8n3/v8n3\\_5BirrHealy.pdf](http://elecpress.monash.edu.au/pnp/free/pnpv8n3/v8n3_5BirrHealy.pdf)**

Marriage Registry data covering the years 1996 to 1998 for second-generation Australians show that only a small minority choose partners who originate from the same country. This implies that there is little prospect of ethnic communities being reproduced across successive generations. The main exception concerns people from the Middle East. There is not sufficient evidence at this time to judge whether second generation persons of Asian origin will follow the Middle Eastern pattern. (Journal abstract)

**Researching Moslem–Christian marriages: Extrapolating from mixed-faith couples towards the practices of ‘convivencia’. (2005). Ata, A., & Furlong, M. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, 26(4), 200–209.**

Moslem–Christian marriage can be seen as a kind of “testing place” for examining and appreciating the practices of difference. This article offers a summary from a recent local research project which investigated these relationships (Ata, 2003). The empirical data from the study was “milled” for its potential to inform practice, a process that generated four themes that practitioners may find useful in their attempts to design practice approaches that are sensitive to alternative anthropologies. Beginning from the contention that the otherness of those for whom we work can be a mirror for our own cultural and practice assumptions, we extrapolate from these themes to practice with other examples of diversity. It is argued that our efforts to practise with diverse populations will be unengaging, even colonising, unless we are able to de-naturalise our own positions. (Journal abstract)

**The globalisation of marriage. (2000). Cahill, D. *Threshold*, 65, 14–15.**

The author discusses changing attitudes to crosscultural marriages, referring to the research literature and identifying different fundamental paradigms therein. Changes reflected in the research literature in relation to separation rates in intermarried couples are also discussed, and reference is made to the effects of globalisation. The author concludes

that intermarriage is a multi-layered phenomenon with a broad typology which renders generalisations, both past and current, increasingly problematic.

**The I do’s and don’ts of intercultural marriage. (2005). Kahlenberg, R. R. *Threshold*, 84, 11–13.**

Spouses in intercultural marriages can be faced with additional challenges in their relationship that derive from cultural differences. This article discusses some aspects of intercultural marriages, and offers suggestions for dealing with specific difficulties arising from differing cultural attitudes towards child rearing, in-laws, religion, and other issues.

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## Prisoners and their families

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**Arresting moments: Identifying risks for women and their children from the time of police arrest. (2001). Lilburn, S. *Alternative Law Journal*, 26(3), 115–118.**

Recent research in South Australia, documented in the report *Taken In: When Women with Dependent Children are Taken into Custody: Implications for Justice and Welfare* (Women’s Legal Service. Adelaide Institute of TAFE, Adelaide, 2000) indicates that the distinctive circumstances of women with dependent children are not adequately recognised by current procedures in the criminal legal system. This article describes some of this research, focusing on experiences of police arrest practices in order to illustrate how inadequate and inconsistent practices can result in women and their children being subject to unjust, extraneous, and even illegal treatment. It is stated that recognition of women’s obligations as carers of children through the better coordination of services, and in the provision of adequate training and resources for personnel, could improve the experiences of women and their children.

**Children of Prisoners Project: Steering Committee’s report to the Justice Cabinet Committee. (2005). South Australian Attorney-General’s Department. Adelaide, SA: Justice Strategy Division, Attorney General’s Department. Online only. [www.justice.sa.gov.au/publications/publications/Children\\_of\\_Prisoners\\_Report.pdf](http://www.justice.sa.gov.au/publications/publications/Children_of_Prisoners_Report.pdf)**

The report presents the major findings of an examination into the needs of children affected by parental incarceration to determine ways in which service provision could be improved. As part of the project, two separate surveys were undertaken: the Parents in Prison Survey and the Carers of Children Who Have a Parent in Prison Survey. In total, 106 parents in prison and 28 carers of children affected by parental incarceration were surveyed. The parents surveyed had a total number of 256 children between them. Half of the children in the study were aged seven years or under. Nearly one-third of the parents surveyed identified that during their childhood, a parent or significant other was imprisoned. Many reported drug and mental health problems prior to their incarceration. The significant emotional and financial burden placed upon grandparents was one of the recurring

themes to emerge. The report contains an action plan that reflects the findings of the project's consultations, surveys, case studies and available literature on the topic. Key areas identified for focus included the need for research and data collection on the parenting responsibilities of prisoners; greater awareness of the impact of parental incarceration on children by all those involved in the key contact points along the criminal justice system; more understanding in the community to help reduce the shame and stigma often experienced by children affected by parental incarceration; more opportunities for children to have contact with their imprisoned parent; and the continued delivery and expansion of parenting programs to enable parents in prison to develop the necessary parenting skills.

**Children of prisoners: A growing public health problem. (2004). Quilty, S., Levy, M. H., Howard, K., et al. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 28(4), 339–343.**

This study aimed to estimate the number and proportion of children in New South Wales affected by parental incarceration, and to describe the health impact of punitive incarceration on the children of prisoners. The article concludes that the number of children that have experienced parental incarceration is significant in NSW and across Australia. Indigenous children are much more likely to experience parental incarceration than non-Indigenous children. It suggests that children of prisoners are at high risk of negative health outcomes, and are themselves at an increased risk of offending later in life. The needs of these children must be recognised and policies introduced to reduce the adversities they face. The social, politico-legal and economic conditions that are contributing to the continuing rise in incarceration rates must be recognised, and measures must be taken to reduce this trend. (Journal abstract, edited)

**Children: Unintended victims of legal process. A review of policies and legislation affecting children with incarcerated parents. (2006). Hannon, T. Melbourne, Vic.: Flat Out Inc. and Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders. Online only. [www.vacro.org.au/Children\\_Unintended\\_Victims/PDFs/Discussion\\_Paper.pdf](http://www.vacro.org.au/Children_Unintended_Victims/PDFs/Discussion_Paper.pdf)**

The aim of this research was to trace the experiences of children with a primary carer in prison, through a series of interviews with involved adults including sentenced mothers, arresting police officers, mothers' solicitors, sentencing magistrates or judges, and interim carers. There are no policies or laws in place to protect children in Victoria when their primary carer is arrested and imprisoned, other than the Corrections policy for the small number of children eligible to reside with their mothers in prison. This discussion paper examines ways to improve these children's lives and to reduce the costs to the community, through implementing policies and processes that take account of the existence of these children and their needs.

**Discussion paper on the impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children when their fathers are incarcerated. (2001). Queensland. Commission for Children and Young People, & Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board. Brisbane, Qld: Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian. Online only. [www.ccyptcg.qld.gov.au/pdf/publications/papers/discussion\\_paper\\_sml.pdf](http://www.ccyptcg.qld.gov.au/pdf/publications/papers/discussion_paper_sml.pdf)**

Given the history of Indigenous people, in terms of dislocation and cultural fragmentation, the questions of how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males learn to be men and learn how to father are particularly problematic ones. Incarceration adds another dimension, serving to further fragment Indigenous families and communities, and affecting the male role-models available for Indigenous children. The aim of this paper is to provide a starting point for public discussion about the impact of the incarceration of fathers on Indigenous children, and issues to be considered when developing effective parenting programs for these men.

**Families affected by the imprisonment of a parent: Towards restorative practices. (2001). Healy, K., Foley, D., & Walsh, K. *Children Australia*, 26(1), 12–19.**

Over the past decade, imprisonment rates in Australia have substantially increased. As imprisonment rates rise, so too do the number of families affected by the imprisonment of a parent. Yet the needs of parents in prison and their families have received little attention in social policies and service-delivery practices. As the specific issues faced by parents in prison and their families cross many areas of government and community services responsibility, they all too easily slip from policy agendas. This paper outlines the challenges to, and potential for, restorative practices with families affected by the imprisonment of a parent. It draws on recent research undertaken by the authors into the family support needs of parents in prison and their families. (Journal abstract)

**Families of prisoners: Literature review on issues and difficulties. (2003). Woodward, R. Canberra, ACT: Department of Family and Community Services. Online only. [www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/vIA/occasional\\_papers/\\$file/OP10\\_1203.pdf](http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/vIA/occasional_papers/$file/OP10_1203.pdf)**

Focusing on literature over the past ten years, this literature review identifies issues and difficulties for families of prisoners in Australia, especially those issues affecting prisoners' children and the children's caregivers. It includes studies, reports, commissions, census data and program documentation from within the areas of human services, criminology, child welfare, Indigenous perspectives and youth affairs. Some relevant literature from the United Kingdom and United States is also covered.

**Finding fathers: Locating inmate fathers in a discussion of human rights. (2004). Naumenko, K. *Human Rights Defender*, 13(1), 26–28.**

Few studies have been done on the effects of the imprisonment of parents on their children or on the

parental rights of imprisoned fathers. This paper discusses the known consequences of parental imprisonment on children, including: loss of economic, scholastic and social opportunities; the benefits of recent initiatives for family integration and the lack of extension of these to male carers; and at changing the experience of prisoners through addressing the principles of imprisonment.

**Forgotten families: The impacts of imprisonment. (2001). Cunningham, A. *Family Matters*, 59, 35–38. [www.aifs.gov.au/institute/pubs/fm2001/fm59/ac.pdf](http://www.aifs.gov.au/institute/pubs/fm2001/fm59/ac.pdf)**

It is widely acknowledged that children and parents are affected by family separation in many ways. When the circumstances of the separation are traumatic, impacts can be intensified and need to be addressed sensitively to minimise any long-term negative effects. This article explores what happens when a family is separated as the result of the incarceration of a parent.

***Men and Family Relationships Project: Final report. (2002). McNally, J. Melbourne, Vic.: Jesuit Social Services.***

This report summarises the evaluation of the Me and My Family program developed by Jesuit Social Services under the Men and Family Relationships Initiative. The Me and My Family program sought to assist male prisoners, as an example of marginalised men, with family relationship issues through group counselling; training workshops for staff from family relationships services were also conducted as part of the program. This evaluation report discusses the rationale, objectives and features of the program and presents findings on the program's effectiveness. A program manual is also available.

**Sector profile: The Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (VACRO). (2007). *Developing Practice: The Child, Youth and Family Work Journal*, 18, 32–35.**

The Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (VACRO) is the only community agency in Victoria working solely with prisoners and their families. This article describes its history and current functions. VACRO conducts research into the needs of offenders' families, publishes guides and self-help manuals, provides intensive support to help with prisoners' transition from custody to community life, focusing on reducing recidivism and breaking cycles of intergenerational crime.

**The health and wellbeing of women in prison: Issues impacting on health and wellbeing. (2003). Australia. Office of the Status of Women. Health and Wellbeing Section. *Focus on Women: Key Issues Affecting Women*, 8, 1–12.**

This paper examines health and wellbeing issues of female prisoners. It is based on the World Health Organization's definition of health as: "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity". Health issues consistently raised in the literature on female offenders include drug and alcohol use, physical and sexual abuse, mental and physical conditions, and self-harming behaviour. The consequences of these health and wellbeing issues extend beyond time spent in prison. Women also experience significant difficulties after release. Social and economic disadvantage compound the impact of imprisonment on women's health and wellbeing. This paper provides an overview of the extent and impact of these issues among women in Australian prisons.

***Women in prison: A report by the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland. (2006). Queensland. Anti-Discrimination Commission. Brisbane, Qld: Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland. Online only. [www.adcq.qld.gov.au/Project-WIP/WIPreport\\_contents.htm](http://www.adcq.qld.gov.au/Project-WIP/WIPreport_contents.htm)***

This report is the result of a major review conducted by the Commission to research and consult on the treatment of women in Queensland prisons on the basis of gender, race and disability. Information was gathered through submissions, meetings and round table discussions with stakeholders. The review examined some of the basic components of the correctional system to see how the system as a whole deals with the special needs of women prisoners, including women from minority groups, such as women with a disability, Indigenous women, young women aged under 18 years, culturally and linguistically diverse women, women with dependent children, and transgender women. The report makes 68 recommendations. The main issues are: legitimate concerns that classification instruments and procedures may result in over-classification of women prisoners; children's needs are inadequately addressed; mental health issues are often ignored; and Indigenous women are especially at risk of discrimination in prison. (The Queensland Department of Corrective Services published a response to this report in March 2006—available at [www.dcs.qld.gov.au](http://www.dcs.qld.gov.au))