

RESEARCH PROGRAM

The Family Law Act (1975) requires the Australian Institute of Family Studies to conduct and coordinate research to further understanding of the factors affecting family and marital stability in Australia.

Over the year, the Institute's research activities have followed the principles established in the *Research Plan 2002-2005* which was approved by the Board in July 2002. These principles are as follows.

The research conducted will:

- be founded on an understanding of the latest theoretical and methodological advances in the area;
- produce outcomes which will inform family policies and other policies likely to impact directly on family wellbeing; and
- provide opportunities for Institute leadership in family research as well as collaboration with government departments, other leading research organisations, and individual researchers.

The process of development of a new research project will:

- involve discussion with a comprehensive range of stakeholders across policy, service-delivery and research communities; and
- be considered in the context of resource availability, and other research activities and developments in the Institute.

Selected topics for research will:

- be consistent with the Institute's charter and overall strategic plan;
- be of critical and far-reaching concern for families in Australia today and in the foreseeable future;
- be current or emerging policy issues, and amenable to change through policy initiatives; and
- together aim for coherence and an overall balance across the areas of family functioning of concern to the Institute.

The Institute will undertake quality assurance through seeking external review of project proposals by those with expertise in the relevant domains from both a policy and a research perspective.

The Institute's research is organised into three broad programs:

- Children and Parenting Program
- Family and Marriage Program
- Family and Society Program

In addition, the Research Program is responsible for undertaking ongoing demographic trends analysis.

The Institute is also undertaking major contract research projects which are compatible with the objectives of the research program:

- Longitudinal Study of Australian Children
- Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault
- National Child Protection Clearinghouse
- Stronger Families Learning Exchange

RESEARCH OVERVIEW

The year 2003-2004 marked the mid-point of the Institute's *Research Plan 2002-2005* and, as such, was a busy period during which considerable progress was made on projects commenced in the previous year. In addition, a number of new initiatives, collaborative projects and contracts were entered into during the year.

The Institute's research continued to be disseminated widely in a range of formats, and feedback from stakeholders and customers, including Commonwealth and state governments, has been very encouraging.

Research progress, under the categories, styles and themes established in the Research Plan, is discussed below. This is followed by detailed information on each program and project.

Structure of the research program

As shown in Table 3.1, the Research Program is structured into three core areas – Children and Parenting, Family and Marriage, and Family and Society. The Program is

Table 3.1 Structure of the Australian Institute of Family Studies Research Program 2003-2004

Program A	Program B	Program C	Contract research
<i>Children & Parenting</i> <i>(ongoing projects)</i>	<i>Family & Marriage</i> <i>(ongoing projects)</i>	<i>Family & Society</i> <i>(ongoing projects)</i>	Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC)
Australian Temperament Project (ATP)	Family Transitions Analysis	Families, Social Capital and Citizenship	Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault (ACSSA)
Child Care Choices	Families in the Asian Region	Family and Work Decisions	National Child Protection Clearinghouse (NCPC)
Child Care in Cultural Context	Fertility Decision Making Project	Family Relationships and Work Circumstances (joint with Program B)	Stronger Families Learning Exchange (SFLEX)
Children and Family Life	The Case for Marriage in Australia	Ageing and Inter-generational Exchanges within Families	
Follow-up Study of Children Conceived through Donor Insemination	Family Relationships and Work Circumstances (joint with Program C)	Parents on Low Income Study	
ATP/Crime Prevention Victoria (CPV)	Family Law Monitoring and Evaluation	Australians Working Together (AWT)	
ATP/Transport Accident Commission	Caring for Children after Parental Separation	Parenting Payment Activity Requirement Evaluation Study	
	Understanding Contact Disputes		
	Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA)		

Demographic Trends Analysis

also responsible for monitoring and analysing social and demographic trends – research that tracks changes in family forms, patterns and behaviours, and places these within the wider context of social, economic and demographic change. The Research Program also incorporates four major contract projects with the Australian Government.

Categories of research

The three types of research envisaged in the Research Plan – core, contract and collaborative – have been undertaken over the year.

Core research

Core research is funded entirely from the appropriation and focuses on specific research topics identified in the Institute's Research Plan. Core research projects undertaken in 2003-2004 included the Australian Temperament Project; Children and Family Life; Child Care in Cultural Context; Caring for Children after Parental Separation; Family and Work Decisions; and ongoing monitoring and analysis of demographic trends and family law.

Contract research

Contract research is undertaken when it accords closely with the Institute's goals and priorities and continued to be an important part of the Research Program. Major contracted research undertaken for the Australian Government Department Family and Community Services included: the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children; the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault; the National Child Protection Clearinghouse; and the Stronger Families Learning Exchange. Other significant contracted research that flows from core research projects includes: work with the Victorian Transport Accident Commission (TAC) and the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria (RACV) to investigate factors that contributed to differing patterns of driver behaviour among young people of 19-20 years; work with Crime Prevention Victoria on pathways to antisocial behaviour; and work with the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing on parental influences on adolescent alcohol use.

Collaborative research

Collaborative research – a key objective of the National Research Priorities – is seen by the Institute as a valuable means of maximising the use of Institute resources, drawing on a broad range of expertise, and ensuring that research is relevant to a range of stakeholders and the wider research community. During the year the Institute continued to work collaboratively with a range of government departments, institutions and universities on the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children, the Fertility Decision Making Study, the Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) longitudinal survey, the follow-up of children born by donor insemination, and relationship education and marriage outcomes project. A new collaborative project between the Institute and the University of Sydney Faculty of Law aims to gain insight into the prevalence of disputes between separated parents about child contact. The Child Care Choices collaborative project with Macquarie and Charles Sturt Universities and the NSW Department of Community Services has been extended to 2008, and funded to gather an additional sample and data about Indigenous children's early years experiences and outcomes. And the Efficacy of Early Childhood Interventions Project was undertaken with the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research for the Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services.

Research methods

Research activities during the year have reflected the range of research designs and types identified in the Research Plan as being appropriate for the Institute.

Longitudinal and cross-sectional studies

The Research Plan recognises the need for both longitudinal and cross-sectional studies. The Institute's commitment to longitudinal research is evident in the central role it continued to play in three major longitudinal studies – the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children, the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey, and the ongoing Australian Temperament Project. In 2003-2004 the Child Care Choices Study was funded for a further eight years of longitudinal data collection.

Quantitative and qualitative methods

The emphasis of Institute research has been on quantitative research that provides estimates and analyses that can be generalised to the Australian population. However, qualitative studies were used where appropriate to explore in more depth issues related to the quantitative studies. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in the Caring for Children after Parental Separation Project, the Family and Work Decisions Survey, and the Australians Working Together Evaluation.

Primary and secondary data

The Research Plan identifies primary and secondary research as central to the Institute's research agenda.

Primary research involves the collection of new data, not available elsewhere, that enables the Institute to address questions that would not otherwise be possible. During the year a great deal of time and resources were spent designing and collecting new sets of data. Primary data projects included the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children; the Family and Work Decisions Survey; Australians Working Together Evaluation; Children and Family Life; Child Care Choices; Fertility Decision Making Project; and Caring for Children after Parental Separation.

The Institute also conducts secondary analyses of existing data. Over the year, Institute studies have drawn on the data collected in the first wave of the HILDA survey. Other research has involved using Australian Bureau of Statistics data: the 2001 Census, the 1997 Time Use Survey, the 1998-1999 Household Expenditure Survey, the 1996 National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing, the 1997 Family Survey, and a range of ABS Labour Force Surveys.

Research themes

Three broad research themes were identified in the Research Plan. These themes – diversity, change, and interactions between families and broader social institutions – continued to unite the research undertaken across the program areas.

Diversity

The theme of diversity, whether of family form, socio-economic background, geographic location, or cultural background, continued to be evident in many of the projects.

Studies that specifically recognised the diversity of families in Australia included Child Care in Cultural Context, Caring for Children after Parental Separation, and the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children – designed to collect detailed information on children and their families across all family types, locations and backgrounds. Similarly, the HILDA survey covers this broad spectrum. Work has progressed throughout the year on a book planned for release in the coming financial year, entitled *Diversity and Change in Australian Families: Statistical Profiles*. This forthcoming book will provide a broad overview of family diversity in Australia.

Family change

Family change is the second research theme identified in the Research Plan. The longitudinal studies in which the Institute is involved are concerned with the nature and predictors of the transitions in family life experienced by individuals across the life course.

Other studies focused on changing societal trends including research on the changing patterns of employment among lone and couple mothers, changes in family forms, changing patterns of fertility, changing patterns of partnering, and the changing experiences of family stability among children. The book on diversity and change (mentioned above) also incorporates the theme of change.

Family interactions with broader social institutions

Several Institute projects examine the links between family patterns and wider social institutions, the third research theme identified in the Research Plan. For example, the Fertility Decision Making Project, commissioned by the Australian Government Office of the Status of Women, explores the way in which wider social changes and other institutional and economic changes impact on fertility behaviour; the Family and Work Decisions Survey, conducted in partnership with the Department of Family and Community Services, looked at interactions between family forms, economic influences, the labour market and the income support system; the Child Care Choices Study, in collaboration with Macquarie University and Charles Sturt University, examined links between families and the child care system; and the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children, funded by the Department of Family and Community Services, continued to collect information on families' use of a wide range of family supports and services.

Policy-relevant research

All Institute research aims to be policy relevant, and particular attention has been given to this during the reporting year. Stakeholder consultations and presentations improved this aspect of the research program.

Research on Caring for Children after Parental Separation has a direct relevance for a range of policy debates, as does the Fertility Decision Making Project. Research in the area of work and family aims to support the Australian Government's policy focus on these issues – for example, the Family and Work Decisions Survey explores the links between understanding of income support system and workforce participation. Work in the Australian Temperament Project on crime prevention and driver behaviour among young people has direct relevance for policy development.

By working in partnership with Government, the Institute continued to ensure that the issues addressed in the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children are of direct concern for the development of policy. Research work in the National Child Protection Clearinghouse, the action research projects of the Stronger Families Learning Exchange, and the newly established Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault all have very direct and applied research priorities.

Quality management and ethics approvals

All research publications are subject to wide internal and expert external review, and stakeholder consultation improves the relevance of the research undertaken and ensures that the questions addressed are the key questions. Research articles in the Institute's journal *Family Matters* are subject to full peer review prior to acceptance for publication. The journal is classified by the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) as a fully refereed journal.

In 2003-2004 the Ethics Committee reviewed several components of the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children as well as other research projects as conforming to the relevant ethics requirements (see Ethics Committee in Chapter 2 of this Annual Report).

The Committee considered and approved the following for the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children: questionnaires for the first stage of the study; inclusion of observational measures in the study; inclusion of some families from the first stage in marketing and promotional campaigns of the study; final questionnaires for Wave 1 of the study; and validation of the Early Development Index as a nested study.

The Caring for Children after Parental Separation project sought and gained approval for the final interview schedule. A new study, the Australians Working Together (AWT) Parenting Payment Activity Requirement Evaluation study, was also reviewed and granted ethics approval.

No complaints were received from study participants regarding ethics aspects of Institute research during 2003-2004.

Dissemination

As well as conducting research, a key role of the Institute as identified in its Strategic Plan is to ensure that the research is disseminated widely and effectively in various formats to a range of stakeholders. During the year dissemination activities were undertaken through published articles in the Institute's journal *Family Matters*, academic journals, conference presentations, media reports and interviews, submissions to Parliamentary Inquiries, and reports for agencies that contracted research. As mentioned earlier, feedback from stakeholders and customers, including federal and state governments, has been encouraging.

Part of the dissemination strategy is to ensure that research is made available to the full range of stakeholders. The journal *Family Matters* plays a key role in addressing many of these audiences. In addition, the Institute's Research Papers series is directed more specifically at research and policy audiences. Research is also disseminated by reporting research results widely in the media through interviews with print, television and radio journalists. Presentations at both national and international research and policy conferences have been a further part of the dissemination strategy.

Details of these various forms of dissemination are provided in descriptions of program areas and research projects in the following sections.

National research priorities

The Prime Minister announced Australia's first set of National Research Priorities in December 2002. These provide a vision of how research can contribute to Australia's

future prosperity and wellbeing; enhance the quality and impact of Institute research by building critical mass in priority areas, and promote collaboration between research organisations and with industry.

The National Research Priorities covered “An Environmentally Sustainable Australia”, “Promoting and Maintaining Good Health”, “Frontier Technologies for Building and Transforming Australian Industries”, and “Safeguarding Australia”, and a total of 17 goals. Along with other Australian Government research and scientific agencies, the Institute is a designated research performing and funding body to which the Priorities apply. Such bodies are required to submit an annual Implementation Plan to the Chief Scientist, and to report against the plan in both their Annual Reports and in an annual progress report to a Standing Committee chaired by the Chief Scientist, which reports to Government.

In developing the first set of priorities, a stronger emphasis was given to science and technology than to the social sciences and humanities. Along with others in the social science research community, the Institute contributed to the enhancement and refinement of the National Research Priorities framework to incorporate new goals.

The Institute’s 2003-2004 Implementation Plan identified nine existing Institute programs as being relevant to the “Promoting and Maintaining Good Health” priority, and three as being relevant to the domestic law and order goals of the “Safeguarding Australia” priority. The Plan also identified the extent to which the Institute was engaged in collaborative research. During the course of the year, five new projects relevant to the Priorities were added to the Research Program.

The inclusion of social science and humanities goals in the 2004-2005 Implementation Plans sees almost half of the Institute’s current projects falling under the priority areas.

Broad involvement in policy processes

Parliamentary submissions

During the year the Institute’s research staff prepared a number of cross-program submissions to Parliamentary Inquiries. These are shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Parliamentary submissions 2003-2004

Child protection

Tomison, A.M. (2004), *Current Issues in Child Protection Policy and Practice: Informing the Northern Territory’s Child Protection Review*, NT Department of Health and Community Services, Darwin.

Parenting after separation (written submission)

Smyth, B. and Wolcott, I. (2003), *Inquiry into Child Custody Arrangements in the Event of Family Separation*, House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs, Canberra.

Parenting after separation (oral submission)

Sanson, A. and Smyth, B. (2003), *Inquiry into Child Custody Arrangements in the Event of Family Separation*, House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs, Canberra.

Children in institutional care

Tomison, A.M. and Duffie, J. (2003), *Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care*, Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee, Canberra.

Consultations

The Institute maintains a consultative role with individual, government and non-government bodies. Staff conduct these consultations, either individually or as members of planning or advisory teams, to inform others of the Institute's research and research findings, and to provide advice on existing family research or on formulating research in areas not well covered by existing data. Such consultation is an indication of the Institute's involvement in the policy process.

In 2003-2004, consultation covering many broad issues took place between all Institute research programs and representatives of various international and national organisations or bodies (Table 3.3).

Visitors

In 2003-2004, a number of academics and representatives of government and non-government bodies from within and outside Australia met with Institute researchers to exchange ideas on a range of issues of relevance to each of the Institute's research programs. These visits provide the opportunity for the Institute to learn of the work of other researchers, share its own research findings, and help meet its objective of achieving and maintaining its place as a centre of excellence for research on family wellbeing (Table 3.3).

Representation at conferences and meetings

In addition to conference and workshop papers presented by staff (listed under the research projects in this chapter), Institute staff were invited to participate and share their expertise at workshops organised by government and non-government bodies, and universities. Similarly, staff attended and represented the Institute at various conferences as part of their staff development and training program (Table 3.3).

Representation on expert panels

A number of Institute researchers were invited to share their expertise on Steering Committees, expert panels, and government Reference Groups. These include (to mention a few): ABS Family Statistics User Advisory Group; ABS General Social Survey Reference Group; ABS Social Capital Advisory Group; External Reference Group for the Project Management and Family Dynamics Teams for HILDA; Reference Group for the FaCS Project on Community Strengths Indicators and Measures; Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC) Steering Committee; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's Picture of Australia's Children Advisory Group; and the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) Steering Committee (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3 Consultations, visitors and representation

	Total No.
Consultations	139
Visitors to the Institute	50
Institute representation at conferences and meetings	11
Institute representation on expert panels	41

Note: Detailed listings are available on the Institute's website.

Summary

In summary, 2003-2004 has proved a very productive year for the Research Program of the Institute. Considerable progress has been made in implementing the new projects envisaged in the *Research Plan 2002-2005* and a number of new research contracts were signed.

Better project management has assisted with meeting timelines, but there is still room for improvement in establishing realistic publication targets. The Institute recognises the constant need to monitor and anticipate the research needs of policy makers and others and to engage in active stakeholder consultations, and is constantly seeking to identify better mechanisms for stakeholder consultations and feedback.

PROGRAM A CHILDREN AND PARENTING

The Children and Parenting Program focuses on ways in which changes within the family, such as family structure and parental work and family responsibilities, and changes outside the family, such as community supports, affect children's interactions with their caregivers, their broader social world, and their development and wellbeing. This knowledge can provide a basis for policy frameworks and services that can best support parents and children.

Australian Temperament Project

(Core project)

The longitudinal *Australian Temperament Project* (ATP) aims to follow young people's psychosocial development from infancy into adulthood, and to investigate the contribution of personal, familial and broader environmental factors to their adjustment and wellbeing. Commencing in 1983, at a child age of four to eight months, 13 waves of data have been collected by mail surveys over the first 20 years of life.

The Institute has housed and taken the lead in the project since 2000. It manages the study in collaboration with researchers from the University of Melbourne and the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne. The project seeks to promote understanding of the ways in which children's development can be enhanced within the context of their families, and to identify developmental pathways and key transition points at which changes may occur, thereby providing information which can inform prevention and intervention initiatives.

Some of the issues investigated are: (a) the contribution of an individual's temperament style, together with his/her family characteristics and wider environmental influences, to adjustment and wellbeing; (b) pathways to positive developmental outcomes (for example, satisfying interpersonal relationships, social competence, civic mindedness and social responsibility); (c) the emergence of problems in childhood (such as aggression, hyperactivity and anxiety) and links between these types of problems and later adjustment difficulties in adolescence and early adulthood (such as antisocial behaviour, substance use and depression); and (d) the transition to adulthood (pathways to educational and occupational participation, and the commencement of intimate relationships and parenthood).

During 2003-2004, statistical analyses and reporting of the 13th data wave, collected when participants were aged 19-20 years, were undertaken. These will form the foundation of a forthcoming report examining a broad range of indicators of, and influences on, young adult adjustment and wellbeing. Statistical analyses and reports of findings from the entire longitudinal ATP dataset were also completed and used in a number of publications and presentations.

The ongoing collaboration with the Centre for Mental Health Research, Australian National University Canberra, investigating genetic influences on mental health outcomes, continued. The genetic data, collected in 1999, continued to be used – for example, to investigate connections between DNA profiles, family environmental characteristics, and the incidence of depression.

The dissemination activities undertaken during the past year include conference and workshop presentations, and publications in national and international journals. The ATP website attracted a growing number of hits and downloads. As well, continuing media interest in the study led to numerous interviews with radio and print journalists. The annual newsletters for ATP participants and parents were distributed in December 2003.

Planning commenced for a new ATP sub-study, the *Generation 2* study. This sub-study aims to investigate issues such as the factors which assist young people to become capable and competent parents, the intergenerational continuation of problems, and the role of grandparents in providing support and assistance for young families. The sub-study will be able to make use of the information already collected over the course of the young adults' lifetime to investigate the ways in which they meet the challenges of parenthood. A concept brief has been prepared which outlines the issues to be investigated and the data collection methodology proposed.

Publications

da Silva, L., Sanson, A., Smart, D., and Toumbourou, J. (2004), "Civic responsibility among Australian adolescents: testing two competing models", *Journal of Community Psychology*, vol. 32, pp. 229-255.

Sanson, A., Hemphill, S. and Smart, D. (2004), "Connections between temperament and social development: A review", *Social Development*, vol. 13, pp. 142-170.

Smart, D., Vassallo, S., Sanson, A., Richardson, N., Dussuyer, I., McKendry, W., Toumbourou, J., Prior, M. and Oberklaid, F. (2003), *Patterns and precursors of adolescent antisocial behaviour Second Report: Executive Summary*, Crime Prevention Victoria.

Smart, D., Letcher, P. and Sanson, A. (2003), "Year 2003 ATP newsletters for Young Adults", Australian Institute of Studies, Melbourne.

Smart, D., Letcher, P. and Sanson, A. (2003), "Year 2003 ATP newsletters for Parents", Australian Institute of Studies, Melbourne.

Stockwell, T.R., Toumbourou, J., Letcher, P., Smart, D., Sanson, A. and Bond, L. (2004), "Risk and protection factors for different intensities of adolescent substance use: When does the Prevention Paradox apply?", *Drug and Alcohol Review*, vol. 23, pp. 67-77.

Presentations

"Pathways to antisocial behaviour: Findings from an Australian longitudinal study", Keynote address at the Parent Child 2004: Family Futures – Changing Families, Changing Work conference, London, 17-18 June 2004 (A. Sanson, D. Smart and ATP Team).

"An overview of the Australian Temperament Project", Presentation at the A21 Human Potential Project Meeting, Melbourne, 25-26 May 2004 (D. Smart).

Representation at workshops, conferences and external committees.

Member, Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) Steering Committee, Australian Council for Educational Research (A. Sanson).

Member, Research Advisory Group, The Victorian Parenting Centre (A. Sanson).

Member, Psychosocial Technical Advisory Group, Christian Children's Fund (A. Sanson).

External reviewer, *Journal of Family Studies*, La Trobe University (D. Smart).

Member, Project Advisory Panel for LSAY project, Australian Council for Educational Research (D. Smart).

Member, Reference Group for Development of a Drug Prevention Monitoring and Data Collection Strategy project, Victorian Premier's Drug Prevention Council (D. Smart).

Child Care Choices

(Collaborative project)

A consortium involving Macquarie University's Institute of Early Childhood and the Department of Psychology, Charles Sturt University's School of Teacher Education, and the Australian Institute of Family Studies received an Australian Research Council Linkage grant in 2002-2004 to conduct a longitudinal study designed to investigate the use of multiple and changeable care and the impact of such care on children, families and care providers. The New South Wales Department of Community Services is an Industry partner on this project. The ARC-funded *Child Care Choices Study* was initially established to follow 689 children aged less than three years over a three-year period.

The collaboration was successful in obtaining an additional two million dollars from the New South Wales Department of Community Services to extend the timeframe for data collection. This offers a unique opportunity to examine systematically the relationship between aspects of child care and children's developmental progress from birth to the transition to school and into the early years of primary school.

The second wave of data collection was completed and analysis of the data sets and dissemination of the findings is ongoing. The project has gained strong interest from the media, policy makers, practitioners and the public.

The new funding from the New South Wales Department of Community Services will also be used to gather an additional sample and data about Indigenous children's early years experiences and outcomes prior to, during the transition to and upon entry to the primary school years of education. The multiple aspects of *The Child Care Choices of Indigenous Families Research Project* will provide data for analysis each year, longitudinal data, qualitative and quantitative perspectives. These data will be used to consider aspects of the Indigenous experiences as being similar or different to the general population.

Publications

Bowes, J., Harrison, L., Sanson, A., Wise, S., Ungerer, J., Watson, J., and Simpson, T. (in press), "Families and child care arrangements: Findings from the Child Care Choices study", *Proceedings of the Health, Work and Families Forum*, Australian National University, Canberra, 25-26 August 2003.

http://nceph.anu.edu.au/Health_For_Life/publications/final_colour.pdf

Presentations

"Parental stress and division of labour associated with arranging and managing child care", Paper presented at the 10th Annual Conference of Australian Research in Early Childhood, Melbourne, 21-23 January 2004 (J. Bowes, L. Harrison, A. Sanson, S. Wise, J. Ungerer, J. Watson and T. Simpson).

"Understanding multiple and changeable child care arrangements involving family day care". Invited paper presented at the 4th National Family Day Care Conference, Sydney, 10-13 September 2003. (S. Wise, L. Harrison T. Simpson, A. Sanson, J. Bowes, J. Ungerer, & J. Watson).

"Families and child care arrangements: Findings from the Child Care Choices study". Paper presented at the *Health, Work and Families Forum*. Canberra: Australian National University, 25-26 August, 2003 (J. Bowes, L. Harrison, A. Sanson, S. Wise, J. Ungerer, J. Watson and T. Simpson (2003).

"Multiple child care, temperament and behaviour in the first three years", Poster presented at the Conference of the Australian Psychological Society, Perth, 2-5 October 2003 (J. Cohen, J. Bowes, J. Ungerer, J. Watson, A. Sanson, S. Wise, L. Harrison and T. Simpson).

Child Care in Cultural Context

(Core research)

Cross-culturally, parents are known to differ in their beliefs about children, child rearing and the importance of children achieving different developmental tasks and goals. In Australia today, a substantial number of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds using child care services are exposed to two sets of cultural influences; the culture of the country of origin, and the culture of the host nation.

The *Child Care in Cultural Context* study focuses on the match between parents cultural values, beliefs about children, and core practices, and those of child care services, and the impact on children when child-related features of home and child care environments diverge. The value that parents from different cultural groups place on various characteristics of child care, and the functions they expect child care services to provide, are also examined.

This study continued to inform government and other stakeholders by contributing towards better understanding and good quality practices in child care environments.

Presentations

“Choice of family day care and children’s experience of home-child care continuity”, Keynote paper presented at the 4th National Family Day Care Conference, Sydney, 10-13 September 2003 (S. Wise).

“Predictors of parenting among an ethnically diverse sample of mothers in Australia”, Paper presented at the Australasian Human Development Association (AHDA) Conference, Auckland, New Zealand, 6-9 July 2003 (L. da Silva and S. Wise).

“Variation in parenting in three cultures: How much is there and what are the reasons? Results from the Child Care in Cultural Context study”, Poster presented at the Australasian Human Development Association (AHDA) Conference, Auckland, New Zealand, 6-9 July 2003 (K. Hand and L. da Silva).

Children and Family Life

(Core research)

This study examines the family life, development and wellbeing of Victorian primary school aged children (aged 5-12 years) growing up in intact couple, single-parent and step-parent families. It aims to provide data about how these families are functioning, and the development and adjustment of children.

A description of differences on child outcomes and risk and protective factors will be provided across family types. Data will also be used to test hypothesised relationships between risk and protective factors and child outcomes within different family types, and to clarify the relative importance of family structure, intra-familial processes and external supports on child functioning.

During the year, data were collected from approximately one thousand households with children of primary school age on inter-parental relationships, parent-child relationships, parental characteristics, family functioning and family transitions, as well as measures on children’s adjustment and the interaction of families with the broader society. It is hoped that this rich database will add to the knowledge on factors influencing how contemporary Australian families function and the impact of family life on children, and provide an important foundation for policy direction.

Presentations

Guest presenter, Oz Child Board Planning Day, Melbourne, 14 November 2003 (J. Duffie).

“What is a family today?” Seminar presented to practitioners working in children’s services and interested members of the general public, City of Boroondara, 26 March 2004 (L. Qu, R. Weston and J. Duffie).

Representation at workshops, conferences and external committees

Invited participant, A picture of Australia’s Children, Novotel Darling Harbour, Sydney, 16 March 2004 (S. Wise).

Invited participant, National Workshop *Framework for Family-School Partnerships*, Old Parliament House, Canberra, May 2004 (J. Duffie).

Invited participant, Parenting Information in Australia: A National Workshop, Melbourne, 28-29 April 2004 (J. Duffie).

Invited participant, National forum of stakeholders in early childhood education conducted by the Australian Education Union in Melbourne, 21 October 2003 (J. Duffie).

Participation in Workshop on Child health inequalities prior to 35th National Public Health Association of Australia Annual Conference, Brisbane, 28 September 2003 (J. Duffie).

Member, Parentline Steering Committee (J. Duffie).

Member, International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development (ISSBD) Organising Committee, ISSBD06 International Biennial Meeting (J. Duffie).

Adviser, Centre for Community Child Health, Royal Children’s Hospital Melbourne and City of Moonee Valley in relation to the Platforms Project in the City of Moonee Valley (J. Duffie).

Follow-up Study of Children Conceived through Donor Insemination

(Collaborative project)

The Institute is seeking information about children conceived using donor insemination technology and their families. Initial recruitment was carried out by Professor Gabor Kovacs from Monash Medical School, Box Hill Hospital. Instruments from the Institute’s *Children and Family Life Study* are being used to enable comparisons of “donor insemination” children and children growing up in other family arrangements on key child wellbeing and family characteristic variables. A central research question for this study is the extent to which “openness” about children’s conception contributes to child and family wellbeing.

Efficacy of Early Childhood Interventions Project

(Collaborative contract project)

In conjunction with the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, the Institute has undertaken research for the Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services to assist decision-making in relation to investing in early childhood interventions in Australia.

The main objective was to evaluate methodologies for producing cost-benefit analyses of early childhood interventions. Information on the various types of interventions conducted in Australia and overseas was gathered along with information on the size of effects from such interventions. The appropriateness of existing methodologies for calculating the rate of investment for early childhood interventions was evaluated. This work should support the development of informed policy making in this arena.

ATP / CPV

(Contract research)

The Australian Temperament Project's (ATP's) collaborative project with Crime Prevention Victoria (CPV) is drawing to a close. A draft of the Third Report has been completed and is under review. The Third Report focuses on six key issues: (a) the continuity of antisocial behaviour into young adulthood; (b) connections between antisocial behaviour and victimisation in young adulthood; (c) relationships between antisocial behaviour and motivations to comply with the law, including attitudes towards the criminal justice system and civic mindedness; (d) concordance between self reports of offending and official records; (e) connections between adolescent substance use and antisocial behaviour; and (f) pathways to adolescent antisocial behaviour among low-risk children. The report will be released in the first half of the next financial year. Numerous dissemination activities have been undertaken to stakeholders, policy makers, practitioners and the research community.

Publication

Smart, D., Vassallo, S., Sanson, A., Richardson, N., Dussuyer, I., McKendry, W. Toumbourou, J., Prior, M. and Oberklaid, F. (2003), *Patterns and precursors of adolescent antisocial behaviour Second Report: Executive Summary*, Crime Prevention Victoria.

Presentations

"Patterns and precursors of adolescent antisocial behaviour", Presentation to CPV Workshop on *How to Put Findings into Practice for Early Intervention and Prevention*, Melbourne, 21 June 2004 (D. Smart, S. Vassallo, A. Sanson and I. Dussuyer).

"Patterns and precursors of adolescent antisocial behaviour", Presentation at the CPV Workshop on *How to Put Findings into Practice for Early Intervention and Prevention*, Melbourne, 18 June 2004 (D. Smart, S. Vassallo, A. Sanson and I. Dussuyer).

"Patterns and precursors of adolescent antisocial behaviour", Presentation to the Western Division of the Schools Focused Youth Service, Melbourne, 20 April 2004 (D. Smart, S. Vassallo, A. Sanson and I. Dussuyer).

"Patterns and precursors of adolescent antisocial behaviour", Presentation at the Victorian Safe Communities Network meeting, Melbourne, 18 February 2004 (D. Smart, S. Vassallo, A. Sanson and I. Dussuyer).

"Changing pathways: how at-risk children avoid becoming antisocial adolescents", Paper presented at the Australian and New Zealand Society of Criminologists Conference, Sydney, 1 October 2003 (N. Richardson, S. Vassallo, D. Smart, A. Sanson and I. Dussuyer).

"Patterns and precursors of adolescent antisocial behaviour: Report 2", inaugural Ministerial Crime Prevention Lecture presented at the launch of the AIFS-CPV Second Report, Melbourne, 22 October 2003 (A. Sanson, D. Smart, S. Vassallo, N. Richardson, I. Dussuyer and W. McKendry).

"Patterns and precursors of adolescent antisocial behaviour", Victorian Department of Health School-based Youth Services Unit, Melbourne, 9 October 2003 (D. Smart, S. Vassallo, A. Sanson and I. Dussuyer).

"The connections between victimisation and antisocial behaviour", Australian and New Zealand Society of Criminology Conference, Sydney, 2 October 2003 (I. Dussuyer, N. Richardson, D. Smart, and A. Sanson).

"Changing pathways: how at-risk children avoid becoming antisocial adolescents", Presentation at the Swinburne University Psychology Department Colloquium, Melbourne, 24 September 2003 (D. Smart, S. Vassallo, A. Sanson and I. Dussuyer).

Representation at workshops, conferences and external committees.

Member, Crime Prevention Victoria Research Advisory Council (A. Sanson).

ATP/TAC/RACV*(Contract research)*

The Australian Temperament Project's (ATP's) collaborative project with the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) and the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria (RACV) is nearing completion. A report of findings on (a) learner driver experiences, current driving behaviour, and history of crash involvement, (b) the individual, family and peer factors that contribute to risky driving behaviour, and (c) the overlap between risky driving and other problem behaviours, has been completed and is under review. The report will be released in the first half of the next financial year, at which time dissemination activities will commence. A six-month extension to the project has been negotiated to undertake further reporting and dissemination of the findings.

Parenting influences on adolescent alcohol use*(Contract research)*

A short-term contract has been negotiated with the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing to undertake a literature review of Australian and international research concerning parenting influences on adolescent alcohol use, identifying implications for policy and practice and noting gaps in the research. This project will produce a report in the first half of the next financial year.

PROGRAM B FAMILY AND MARRIAGE

The Family and Marriage program focuses on three broad themes – family trends and transitions, positive family relationships, and family law. Transitions include young people leaving home, and couple and family formation, dissolution and re-formation. Particular attention is given to factors that help explain diverse pathways (including the strengthening of relationships in their early stages), the way these pathways are negotiated, and their impact on family members. Central to this work is the evaluation of the impact on families of the *Family Law Act 1975*, particularly in relation to amendments. Trends are examined at societal, family, and individual levels.

FAMILY TRENDS AND TRANSITIONS

The Family and Marriage Program analyses broad trends in patterns of leaving home, couple and family formation, family stability, and family dissolution and re-formation, along with associated values, attitudes and beliefs. As well as providing a better understanding of society's core values, the monitoring and analysis of these trends are important for policy development.

Family transitions analysis

(Ongoing core project)

In the past year analyses of trends in family formation, transitions, and dissolution have generated a number of publications and presentations, particularly in the domains of partnering and premarital cohabitation. In addition, researchers have played an important role in interpreting broad trends in family transitions through publications, paper presentations and media interviews. This work is undertaken with the Institute's Demographic Trends Analysis unit, which has been preparing summaries of these trends for the Institute's online database *Family Facts and Figures*.

Research staff also participated in advisory or reference groups established by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to assist in the development of their surveys and presentation of findings.

Publications

Weston, R., Qu, L., and Soriano, G. (2003), "Australia's ageing yet diverse population", *Family Matters*, no. 66, Spring/Summer, pp. 6-13.

de Vaus, D., Qu, L. and Weston, R. (2003), "Premarital cohabitation and subsequent marital stability", *Family Matters*, no. 65, Winter, pp. 34-39.

Presentations

"Changing trends in the way family groups are formed", Paper presented at the Celebrants in 2004: A New Era Conference for Civil Celebrants, Monash University, Melbourne, 19 June 2004 (R. Parker).

"What is a family today?", Seminar presented to practitioners working in children's services and interested members of the general public, City of Boroondara, Melbourne, 26 March 2004 (L. Qu, R. Weston and J. Duffie).

“Family trends in Australia”, Presentation to the Victorian Home Economics and Textiles Teachers’ Association, Melbourne, 5 December 2003 (R. Weston, D. de Vaus and L. Qu).

“Partnership formation and stability”, Paper presented at the National Conference on Family Relations, Vancouver, Canada, 19-22 November 2003 (R. Weston, L. Qu and D. de Vaus).

“Cohabitation in Australia: Linkages to mental health and marital stability”, Paper presented at the National Conference on Family Relations, Vancouver, Canada, 19-22 November 2003 (D. de Vaus, L. Qu and R. Weston).

“Families and children with a disability”, Paper presented to the Singaporean delegation, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, 4 May 2004 (L. Qu and R. Weston).

Representation at workshops, conferences and external committees

Member, Stakeholders Reference Group, Australian Bureau of Statistics Family Characteristics Survey 2003 (B. Smyth).

Member, ABS General Social Survey Reference Group, Australian Bureau of Statistics (R. Weston).

Member, *Threshold* Editorial Board (R. Weston).

Member, National Council on Family Relations, USA (R. Weston).

Families in the Asian region

(International collaborative work)

Work has been underway to develop an improved understanding of family-related trends and issues shared by, or unique to, countries in different stages of modernisation in the Asian region, and to establish or strengthen connections with countries in the region regarding research on family relationships and wellbeing.

During the year, this work has included attendance at the East Asia Ministerial Forum on Families held in Hanoi in April 2004. This was co-sponsored by the Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services and the Vietnam Commission for Population, Family and Children. While in Hanoi, the Acting Director and a member of the Family and Marriage Program visited the Scientific Institute for Population, Family and Children (Commission for Population, Family and Children), and established many contacts with researchers, policy makers and agencies from other countries in the East Asia region who also attended the forum.

In May 2004, the Family and Marriage Program coordinated a visit by a delegation from Singapore’s Disability Policy Branch, Ministry of Community Development and Sports and, in conjunction with the Institute’s Demographic Trends Analysis unit, presented a paper to the delegation on families and disability. This delegation was preceded by a visit from the Minister of Community Development and Sports and other officials in December 2003. Researchers are maintaining close contact with staff members in the Ministry who are working in fields of key relevance to the Family and Marriage Program.

Presentations

“Families and children with a disability”, Paper presented to the Singaporean delegation, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, 4 May 2004 (L. Qu and R. Weston).

Fertility Decision Making Project

(Collaborative project)

As in other developed countries, Australia is experiencing a decline in fertility rates in the context of increasing life expectancy, and thus an ageing of the population in both relative and absolute terms. There is much speculation about the relative importance of factors contributing to the fall in fertility since access to effective contraception became readily available. Considerable attention has been given to life course trends in society, financial and non-financial costs of having children, and beliefs, attitudes and values that may discourage childbearing. However, little is known about the relative impact of, and the interactions among, the factors that shape Australians' fertility preferences, expectations and behaviour.

The *Fertility Decision Making Project* is being conducted in collaboration with the Office of the Status of Women, and seeks to explain how a range of factors contributing to decisions about having children interact to help shape fertility trajectories. The project also aims to provide insight into policy-relevant issues with respect to how couples and families manage work and family commitments.

Following an extensive period of consultation with the Office of the Status of Women, fieldwork on the project commenced in December 2003. A national, random sample of 3,201 men and women aged 20-39 years were interviewed by telephone. Questions covered a wide range of aspects of the respondents' lives, including their relationship and childbearing history, their employment, income and education, aspirations and expectations of having children in the future, and the importance they attach to various factors that might be considered in the decision to have or not have a child. The partners of a sub-sample of 1,059 respondents were given the opportunity to participate in a brief version of the telephone interview, via a mailed self-report questionnaire. The outcomes of the *Fertility Decision Making Project* will be reported to the Office of the Status of Women in the first half of the next reporting period.

The research foundation upon which the project was developed was published in a review of the literature, "Why is the fertility rate declining?" in *Family Matters*, no. 63, pp. 6-13, Spring/Summer 2002.

Presentation

"Two to tango? The importance of partnerships and partners' views in shaping fertility aspirations and expectations", Paper presented at the 8th Australian Social Policy Conference, University of New South Wales, Sydney, 9-11 July 2003 (L. Qu, R. Weston and P. Parker).

POSITIVE FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

The Family and Marriage Program examines how couples develop strategies for living together and for adjusting to change. The program examines relationships from various perspectives: strengthening relationships in their early stages, identifying factors that contribute to the trajectories of relationship quality and stability, and learning lessons from long-lasting marriages.

Relationship Wellbeing Analysis

(Ongoing core project)

A key aspect of work in the area of positive family relationships involves monitoring and evaluating policies, and disseminating information through publications, paper presentations, and media interviews.

Presentations

“Why marriages last”, Paper presented to the Professional Development Program, Bouverie Family Therapy Centre, Melbourne, 11 May 2004 (R. Parker).

Representation at workshops, conferences and external committees.

“FRSP – Progressing Partnerships in Policy and Practice” National Forum, Department of Family and Community Services, Sydney, 28 June 2004 (R. Parker).

Member, Organising Committee, “Showcasing Victorian Family Therapy Research” Conference, Victorian Association of Family Therapists, Bouverie Family Therapy Centre, Melbourne (R. Parker).

Member, International Association for Relationship Research (R. Parker).

Member, Marriage Educators Association of Australia (R. Parker).

AIFS Representative, Victorian Association of Family Therapists (Research Advisory Committee) (R. Parker).

Member, Victorian Marriage and Relationship Education Network (R. Parker).

The Case for Marriage in Australia

(Core project)

This two-stage project is being conducted in partnership with Dr Michele Simons of the University of South Australia. “The Case for Marriage” published in 2000 by American researcher Linda Waite and journalist Maggie Gallagher presented results from a vast body of research supporting the contention that getting and remaining married is generally associated with better functioning and wellbeing of individuals, couples and families. The broad research question to be addressed is whether such a case for marriage can be made in Australia. The first stage of the project involves examining the Australian marriage research to determine whether, in fact, marrying does confer a range of advantages on individuals and couples and if so, the nature and extent of those advantages. The review should also reveal gaps in Australian marital research that may lend themselves to future Institute projects. It was intended to publish this review in the last half of the financial year, however progress on this project has been delayed due to additional unanticipated work on other projects. The review will now be published in the next financial year.

The second stage of the project will entail analysing the same issues addressed in the extant Australian literature and the US publication “The Case for Marriage”, using available Australian datasets such as the Housing, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey, the Fertility Decision Making Project, and the Australian National University’s Negotiating the Life Course survey. The outcome of these analyses will be published in the form of a Research Report in 2005.

Family Relationships and Work Circumstances

(Internal collaborative project)

This project, undertaken in collaboration with the Institute’s Family and Society Program, aims to assess the nature and strength of links between marital and family wellbeing and parents’ work circumstances. Attention has focused on long work hours of fathers in couple relationships with children under the age of 15 years. Based on data from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey, analysis has focused on fathers’ long work hours and has taken into account not only fathers’ personal wellbeing and views about how work affects family life, but also the views of mothers regarding spousal relationships and father–child relationships.

Publications

Weston, R., Gray, M., Qu, L., and Stanton, D. (2004), *Long work hours and the wellbeing of fathers and their families*, AIFS Research Paper no. 35, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Presentations

“The impact of long work hours on employed fathers and their families”, Paper presented at the Work-Life Balance Across the Lifecourse International Conference, University of Edinburgh, Scotland, 30 June – 2 July 2004 (R. Weston, M. Gray, L. Qu and D. Stanton).

“The impact of long work hours on employed fathers and their families”, Paper presented at the 12th Employee Assistance Professionals Association of Australia (EAPAA) Conference, Melbourne, 23-28 October 2003 (R. Weston, M. Gray, L. Qu and D. Stanton).

“The impact of long working hours on employed fathers and their families”, Paper presented at the 8th Australian Social Policy Conference, University of New South Wales, Sydney, 9-11 July 2003 (R. Weston, M. Gray, M. L. Qu and D. Stanton).

FAMILY LAW

Monitoring and contributing to the debate on family law issues is part of the core function of the Family and Marriage Program. The scope of family law research has broadened to include not only marriage and divorce but also parental responsibilities to children regardless of whether the parents have ever lived together or married, and thus spans the entire Family and Marriage Program. In the past year the main focus of family law research has been on the Institute’s *Caring for Children after Parental Separation* project, and on the impact of policy and reform on consumers of the family law system. Building on and extending this project, a new study of disputes about parent–child contact arrangements has also begun.

Family law monitoring and evaluation

(Ongoing core project)

The family law system is under constant review, and a key part of the Institute’s charter is to monitor changes along with the wellbeing of families who may be affected by them. This work is used to help inform the community about new developments in family law. It also ensures that research projects are both timely and policy relevant.

Publications

Caruana, C. (2004), “Legislating for shared parenting”, *Family Matters*, no. 67, Autumn, pp. 16-19.

Caruana, C. (2003), “The joint custody debate: Where to now?”, *Family Matters*, no. 66, Spring/Summer, pp. 64-67.

Rodgers, B., Smyth, B. and Robinson, E. (2004), “Mental health and the family law system”, *Journal of Family Studies*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 50-70.

Smyth, B. (2004), “Child support policy in Australia: Back to basics?”, *Family Matters*, no. 67, Autumn, pp. 42- 45.

Smyth, B. (2004), “Post-Separation fathering: What does Australian research tell us?” *Journal of Family Studies*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 20-49.

Smyth, B. (2003), “Researching fathers: Back to basics”, *Australian Policy Online* (<http://www.apo.org.au>).

Smyth, B. and Moloney, L. (2003), “Therapeutic Divorce Mediation: Strengths, limitations and future directions?”, *Journal of Family Studies*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 161-186.

Representation at workshops, conferences or external committees

Team member, La Trobe University Family Law PDR practitioner standards project (C. Caruana).

Member, La Trobe University Family Law PDR practitioner standards project Reference Group (R. Weston).

Editorial Board, *Journal of Family Studies* (B. Smyth).

AIFS Observer, Family Law Council of Australia (B. Smyth).

Member, Statistical profile sub-committee, Family Law Council of Australia (B. Smyth).

Member, Review Reference Group – Family & Relationship Services Program, Department of Family and Community Services (B. Smyth).

Member, Separation Support Network, Canberra (B. Smyth).

Member, Reference Group for the evaluation of the Co-mediation and Therapy Model (CoMeT II), Family Mediation Centre, Melbourne (B. Smyth).

Representative of the Family Law Council, Primary Dispute Resolution Reference Group (B. Smyth).

Caring for Children after Parental Separation

(Core project)

As part of the broad policy shift towards encouraging post-separation co-parenting, there remains keen interest in ascertaining the nature, amount and quality of contact that non-resident parents have with their children. To date, however, little is known in Australia about some of the most rudimentary components of parent-child contact, such as the distinction between “day only” contact versus “sleepovers”, and “holiday” versus “term-time” arrangements. Failure to make these distinctions can inaccurately convey both the amount and quality of contact that is occurring. The *Caring for Children after Parental Separation* project hopes to fill some of these gaps.

The main aims of the project are: (a) to map the nature, amount, and quality of parent-child contact between non-resident parents and their children; (b) to improve understanding of why a significant proportion of non-resident parents have little or no contact with their children; and (c) to examine the inter-relation, if any, between contact and child support.

While the focus of the project is on mapping the detail of post-separation parenting patterns, the data will nonetheless serve as a benchmark on which to begin modelling the economic implications of contact for parents (both non-resident and resident). The data will also act as an important source of information for a more comprehensive investigation into the impact of divorce on children and parents.

Data have been collected from two sources: a series of focus groups, comprising 54 separated/divorced parents with at least one child under 18 years; and telephone interviews with 971 separated parents from around Australia who had a biological or adopted child under 18 in 2003. Data from the HILDA survey were used to augment the project.

Research from this project formed the basis for the Institute’s submission to the Australian Government’s Parliamentary Inquiry into Child Custody Arrangements in the Event of Family Separation. The project’s findings were also drawn on by many other organisations in their own submissions to the Inquiry.

The year’s work culminated in the publication by the projects’ research team of a substantial Research Report (no. 9).

Publications

Caruana, C. and Smyth, B. (2004), "Daytime-only contact", in Smyth, B. (ed), *Parent-child contact and post-separation parenting arrangements*, Research Report No. 9, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Caruana, C. and Ferro, A. (2003), "Points of convergence", in Smyth, B. (ed), *Parent-child contact and post-separation parenting arrangements*, Research Report No. 9, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Ferro, A. (2004), "Standard contact", in Smyth, B. (ed), *Parent-child contact and post-separation parenting arrangements*, Research Report No. 9, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Smyth, B. (Ed) (2004), *Parent-child contact and post-separation parenting arrangements*, Research Report No. 9, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Smyth, B. (2004), "Research design", in Smyth, B. (ed), *Parent-child contact and post-separation parenting arrangements*, Research Report No. 9, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Smyth, B. (2004), "Little or no contact", in Smyth, B. (ed), *Parent-child contact and post-separation parenting arrangements*, Research Report No. 9, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Smyth, B. (2004), "Summary and conclusions", in Smyth, B. (ed), *Parent-child contact and post-separation parenting arrangements*, Research Report No. 9, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Smyth, B., Caruana, C. and Ferro, A. (2004), "Fifty-fifty care", in Smyth, B. (ed), *Parent-child contact and post-separation parenting arrangements*, Research Report No. 9, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Smyth, B., Qu, L. and Weston, R. (2004), "The demography of parent-child contact", in Smyth, B. (ed), *Parent-child contact and post-separation parenting arrangements*, Research Report No. 9, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Smyth, B. and Whitfield, C. (2004), "Holiday-only contact", in Smyth, B. (ed), *Parent-child contact and post-separation parenting arrangements*, Research Report No. 9, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Smyth, B. and Wolcott, I. (2004), "Why study parent-child contact?", in Smyth, B. (ed), *Parent-child contact and post-separation parenting arrangements*, Research Report No. 9, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Smyth, B. (2004), "Post-separation fathering: A review of the issues and research in Australia", in R. Fletcher, H. Fairbairn and S. Pascoe (eds), *Fatherhood research in Australia*, Family Action Centre, University of Newcastle.

Smyth, B. and Weston, R. (2004), "The attitudes of separated mothers and fathers to 50/50 shared care", *Family Matters*, no. 67, Autumn, pp. 4-11.

Smyth, B., Caruana, C. and Ferro, A. (2004), "Father-child contact after separation: Profiling five different patterns of care", *Family Matters*, no. 67, Autumn, pp. 18-25.

Smyth, B., Caruana, C. and Ferro, A. (2003), "Some 'hows', 'whys' and 'whens' of 50/50 shared parenting after divorce", *Australian Policy Online* (<http://www.apo.org.au>).

Smyth, B., Caruana, C. and Ferro, A. (2003), "Shared parenting: The views of separated parents with 50/50 care arrangements", *Family Matters*, no. 65, Winter, pp. 4-11.

Smyth, B., Caruana, C. and Ferro, A. (2003), "Shared parenting: The views of separated parents with 50/50 care arrangements", *Relatewell*, vol. 7, no. 4, pp. 3-6, 11.

Presentations

"Post-Separation fathering: What does Australian research tell us?", Paper presented at the Fatherhood Research in Australia Seminar, Family Action Centre Conference, University of Newcastle, Newcastle, 4 December 2003 (B. Smyth).

“Cooperative parenting after separation: Some qualitative and quantitative insights”, Presentation to the Eastern Suburbs Lawyer Association dinner, Melbourne, 14 October 2003 (B. Smyth).

“Researching fathers: Back to basics”, Paper presented at the National Strategic Conference on Fatherhood, Canberra, 18-19 August 2003 (B. Smyth and R. Weston).

“Some whens, hows and whys of shared care: What separated parents who spend equal time with their children say about shared parenting”, Paper presented at the 8th Australian Social Policy Conference, University of New South Wales, Sydney, 9–11 July 2003 (B. Smyth, C. Caruana and A. Ferro).

“Applied social research: Linking theory and practice” Guest lecture, Swinburne University of Technology, Hawthorn, 28 July 2003 (B. Smyth).

Understanding Contact Disputes

(Collaborative project)

The aim of this project is to gain insight into the prevalence of disputes about contact, and the dynamics or trigger events that lead to contact disputes escalating into legal conflict. The project will examine contact disputes in the general population of separated parents whether or not they have had any contact with the family law system, lawyers, or professionals involved in dispute resolution. It will involve telephone interviews with a nationally representative sample of separated parents, together with qualitative face-to-face interviews with separated parents in Melbourne and Sydney who have used mediation services and a contact orders program.

The project is a collaborative one between the Institute and the University of Sydney Faculty of Law. It is funded by the Australian Government Attorney-General’s Department in conjunction with the Australian Institute of Family Studies. During 2003-2004, the design and methodology for this project were developed and inter-agency agreement was established. The project commences on 1 July 2004.

HILDA SURVEY

(Ongoing collaborative project)

The Institute continued to contribute to the ongoing design of *the Household, Income, and Labour Dynamics in Australia* (HILDA) survey. HILDA is being conducted by a consortium of three research bodies: the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, University of Melbourne (the lead agency), the Australian Institute of Family Studies, and the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER). Family and Marriage Program researchers, in consultation with the Institute’s then Director and members of other Institute research programs, developed the family dynamics module of the survey and worked in partnership with the other members of the consortium in coordinating the overall questionnaire design.

Wave 1 of the survey, which gathered data from almost 14,000 people from 7,680 households around the country, took place in 2001. Wave 4 is scheduled to be in the field in the first half of the next financial year. The Institute has used data from the first wave of HILDA to address a range of research questions, the findings of which have been the subject of a number of papers and presentations. This work has involved collaboration with other Institute researchers and various universities. Publications involving HILDA have already been listed elsewhere in this report.

Representation at workshops, conferences and external committees

Member, Family Dynamics Team, Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services' Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey (B. Smyth).

Member, Project Management Group, Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services' Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey (R. Weston).

Member, External Reference Group, Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services' Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey (R. Weston).

PROGRAM C FAMILY AND SOCIETY

The Family and Society Program focuses on the relationship between the family and other social institutions. Changes in society have a direct impact on family life, just as changes in family life can have implications for other aspects of social organisation. To understand the contemporary family in Australia, it is necessary to understand the changing relations between it and three sets of social institutions. Changes in any one of these three areas will have impacts upon the way in which families operate. Families contribute to, and are in turn affected by: the economy and market; the welfare system and interaction with government; and social life and the community. The Family and Society Program, therefore, focuses broadly on the relationship between family change and economic and social change.

Families, Social Capital and Citizenship

(Existing core project)

The key aims of the *Families, Social Capital and Citizenship* project are to document and understand the extent and diversity of family engagement in the community, economy, and in Australian political life. A primary goal is to explain different patterns of engagement and wellbeing among families in a range of circumstances, living in different sorts of communities. The project aims to inform the growing policy and social concern about the perceived erosion of community networks and civic society. As well, it aims to arm community groups and service providers with knowledge about social capital and how it can best be used to inform policy and practice to assist Australian families and communities.

This project has also provided a basis on which to advise and assist family and community practitioners about the role of social capital in assisting families and communities to prosper. The Institute's work on Social Capital has been extensively cited in important government reports. For example, the Productivity Commission's report *Social Capital: Reviewing the Concept and its Policy Implications*, and the Australian Bureau of Statistics report *Measuring Social Capital: An Australian Framework and Indicators Information Paper*, both cite Institute work.

Publications

Hughes, J. and Stone, W. (2004), "Family and community life: Exploring the decline thesis", *Transition*, Spring, pp. 7-12.

Hughes, J. and Stone, W. (2003), "Family and community life: Exploring the decline thesis", *Family Matters*, no. 65, Winter, pp. 40-47.

Stone W., Gray M. and Hughes, J. (2003), "Social capital at work: An Australian illustration", *Horizons*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 55-60.

Stone, W., Gray, M. and Hughes, J. (2004), "Social capital at work", *Economic and Labour Relations Review*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 235-255.

Presentations

"Older carers: Bonding, bridging and linking with social capital", Keynote presentation to the Older Carers Forum, Melbourne, 5 August 2003 (W. Stone).

“Social capital at work: How family, friends and civic ties relate to labour market outcomes”, Paper presented at the 8th Australian Social Policy Conference, University of New South Wales, Sydney, 9-11 July 2003 (W. Stone, M. Gray and J. Hughes).

“Social capital poor? The relationship between social capital and disadvantage in Australia”, Presentation at the Workshop on the Role of Social Capital in Alleviating Persistent Poverty, hosted by CTLDEC, CRCTSM and ASSA, Darwin, 1-2 July 2003 (W. Stone).

Representation at workshops, conferences and external committees

Member, ABS Social Capital Advisory Group (J. Hughes).

Member, Discussion group on “From risk to opportunity: labour markets in transition”, organised by the Centre for Public Policy, The University of Melbourne; Deakin University; the Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA); the Brotherhood of St Laurence and the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) (J. Hughes).

Member, Reference Group for Parents on Low Income Study (POLIS), Department of Family and Community Services (J. Hughes).

External expert, Reference Group for FaCS project on Community Strengths Indicators and Measures (W. Stone).

Member, Steering Committee for a Hanover study of longitudinal outcomes for homeless families (W. Stone).

Member, International e-advisory reference group for the Families and Social Capital Research Group funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) UK (W. Stone).

Family and Work Decisions Project

(Existing core project)

The *Family and Work Decisions* project is a study of the work decisions of families with dependent children. This project is being conducted in partnership with the Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services.

The project adopts several approaches to understanding this issue. The first strand of the project has involved the analysis of existing secondary data and several papers have been published (see 2002-2003 Annual Report as well). The second strand involved reviewing the international experience of welfare reform relating to families and labour force participation and the implications for Australian social policy.

The third strand focuses on people’s knowledge and understanding of the income support system, the way in which it interacts with paid employment and decisions about labour force participation, living arrangements, and family formation. In order to answer these questions a survey of 2,400 partnered and lone mothers has been undertaken and in-depth qualitative interviews with 60 mothers have been completed. A number of conference and research papers analysing the survey data and qualitative interviews are planned for the forthcoming financial year. These include papers on how mothers view and understand the income support system, how important are financial considerations in their decisions to work or not, what are the key determinants of their decisions to seek employment, and the extent to which long-term health problems impact on their employment decisions.

Related research has focused on the impact of relationship breakdown on the economic wellbeing of Australian mothers and their children using data from the HILDA survey. The results of this research were presented at an international workshop held at Princeton University in January 2004 and are currently being prepared for publication.

Publications

Gray, M., Qu, L., de Vaus, D. and Millward, C. (2003), "Determinants of Australian mothers' employment: An analysis of lone and couple mothers", *Australian Journal of Labour Economics*, vol. 6, no. 4, December, pp. 597-617.

Presentations

"Does money matter? How financial considerations feature in the employment decisions of partnered mothers receiving government assistance", Paper presented at the Work-Life Balance Across the Lifecourse International Conference, University of Edinburgh, Scotland, 30 June – 2 July 2004 (J. Hughes, K. Hand and J. Renda).

"Relationship breakdown and the economic welfare of Australian mothers and their children", Paper presented to the Economics Department Seminar Series, University of Wollongong, 13 May 2004 (M. Gray and B. Chapman).

"The effect of divorce on Australian mothers and their children", Paper presented to the Supporting Children: English-Speaking Countries International Conference, Princeton University, Princeton, USA, 8 January 2004 (M. Gray and B. Chapman).

"Lone and couple mothers understanding of the interaction between the labour market and the social security", Presentation to the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research Labour Economics Seminar Program, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, 31 October 2003 (M. Gray and J. Renda).

"Understanding of the income support system: a study of lone and couple mothers", Paper presented at the 8th Australian Social Policy Conference, Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, Sydney, 9-11 July 2003 (M. Gray and J. Renda).

Representation at workshops, conferences and external committees

Participation in workshop on "Working Mothers and Social Change", RMIT University, 4-5 July 2003 (J. Hughes).

Family Relationships and Work Circumstances

(Internal collaborative project)

The average hours worked by full-time employees in Australia have increased since the late 1970s. This, combined with increases in female labour force participation, has led to concerns about the impact of long work hours on family life. In collaboration with the Institute's Family and Marriage Program, this project explores the relationship between fathers' work hours, their own wellbeing and that of their families using data from the HILDA survey.

Publications

Gray, M. and Tudball, J. (2003), "Family-friendly work practices: Differences within and between workplaces", *The Journal of Industrial Relations*, vol. 45, no. 3, pp. 269-291.

Weston, R., Gray, M., Qu, L. and Stanton, D. (2004), *Long work hours and the wellbeing of fathers and their families*, AIFS Research Paper no. 35, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Presentations

"The impact of long work hours on employed fathers and their families", Paper presented at the 12th Employee Assistance Professionals Association of Australia (EAPAA) conference, Melbourne, 23-28 October 2003 (R. Weston, M. Gray, L. Qu and D. Stanton).

"Effects on family life of parents working non-standard or 'atypical' hours", Invited Paper presented at the Work, Health and Families Forum, Australian National University, Canberra, 25-26 August 2003 (C. Millward, presented by M. Gray).

“The impact of long working hours on employed fathers and their families”, Paper presented at the 8th Australian Social Policy Conference, Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, Sydney, 9-11 July 2003 (R. Weston, M. Gray, L. Qu and D. Stanton).

Representation at workshops, conferences or external committees

Member, Committee for Family Research of the International Sociological Association (ISA) (C. Millward).

Consultant and reviewer, Joseph Rowntree Foundation “Work and Family” research program, York, UK (C. Millward).

External reviewer, The Australian Sociological Association (TASA) *Journal of Sociology* (C. Millward).

External reviewer, *Journal of Family Studies* (La Trobe University, Melbourne) (C. Millward).

Ageing and Inter-generational Exchanges within Families

(Core project)

The ageing of the Australian population has important implications for the ongoing social and economic support of people in society. Current issues include: (a) the role of grandparents in providing child care; (b) the needs of and support for the growing elderly population; (c) financial and “in kind” support and transfers across generations; (d) implications for the so called “sandwich generation” – that is, women, typically in their fifties or sixties, who have multiple caring responsibilities such as taking care of ageing parents, their spouse and own children, as well as grandchildren; and (e) the position of mature age and older workers amidst debates about lengthening working lives versus options of early retirement.

Research into ageing and inter-generational exchange considers the internal processes of family interaction, such as family cohesion and solidarity, and how these impact on the interface between families and society – for example, in the spheres of welfare, health and child care services, and the individual’s interaction with the labour force.

Building upon the publications already produced on unpaid and community work performed by older Australians and the emerging issues for research on ageing and families, further scoping work has been carried out in preparing an international conference paper on “Paid work and retirement in the context of family obligations and community work, for mature and retirement age Australians”. Further development work of this preliminary paper, based upon HILDA data on mature age groups (45-74 years) will lead to a published article or report.

Publications

de Vaus, D., Gray, M., and Stanton, D. (2003), *Measuring the value of unpaid household, caring and voluntary work of older Australians*, AIFS Research Paper No. 34, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

de Vaus, D. and Gray, M. (2003), “Issues for further research on ageing and families”, *Family Matters*, no. 66, Spring/Summer, pp. 4 –19.

de Vaus, D., Gray, M., and Stanton, D. (2003), “The value of unpaid work of older Australians”, *Family Matters*, no. 66, Spring/Summer, pp. 34-39.

Presentations

“Paid work and retirement in the context of family obligations and community work, for mature and retirement age Australians”, Paper presented to Work-Life Balance across the Lifecourse International Conference, Centre for Research on Families and Relationships, University of Edinburgh, UK, 30 June – 2 July 2004 (C. Millward).

Parents on Low Income Study

(Collaborative project)

This is a three-year Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage project which is being undertaken in collaboration with the Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS) and the Australian National University. This project will build a new seven-year longitudinal database, from FaCS administrative records and supplementary surveys, for low-income parents with dependent children. One of the supplementary surveys that will be attached to the longitudinal database is the Family and Work Decisions survey that was undertaken by the Institute in late 2002. The linking of this and other supplementary surveys to longitudinal FaCS administrative records will allow analysis of the dynamics of, and interrelationships among, changes in family structure, income and welfare reliance. The project will help policy makers evaluate the impacts of existing government income support and work related programs.

Australians Working Together (AWT) Parenting Payment Activity Requirement Evaluation

(New contract research)

The Institute has entered into a contract with the Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS), to undertake the *Australians Working Together (AWT)* study. This is an evaluation of the impact of compulsory Centrelink interviews and activity requirements introduced by the Government in September 2003. Respondents will be Parenting Payment customers who have a youngest child aged 13-15 years and have signed a formal Participation Agreement with Centrelink two to three months before the interview. This evaluation seeks their views, and those of their youngest child, on how the required (compulsory) activities – such as paid work, voluntary work, training or study – are affecting themselves or their family.

The study includes a literature review and the conduct of a two-wave longitudinal study to evaluate the impact of the new activity requirements for Parenting Payment customers on themselves and their children aged 13-15 years. Fieldwork will be via taped telephone interviews with 60 parents and 60 children (paired interviews). Wave 1 and Wave 2 telephone interviews will be conducted by a contracted fieldwork agency, approximately nine to ten months apart, in mid-2004 and early 2005 respectively.

A commissioned report and formal presentation of findings to FaCS are due at the end of the Wave 2 data collection, in July-August 2005.

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS ANALYSIS (Supporting all research program areas)

Demographic Trends Analysis was established to undertake research into broad social and demographic trends that related to family functioning and family change. A good understanding of these trends is important for policy and for the timely development and design of research projects.

In the past year research on a range of issues in relation to family has been undertaken and some of the research has been collaborative work with the three program areas. In addition, *Demographic Trends Analysis* has provided support to the program areas and responded to a number of queries on family trends from media, government organisations and university students.

Demographic Trends Analysis has made regular contributions to the “Family Trends” column in the Institute’s journal *Family Matters*.

Following reviewers’ reports, revision and editing work progressed on a major book entitled *Diversity and Change in Australian Families: Statistical Profiles*. Planned for release in the first part of the next financial year, this substantial book will provide an overview of family diversity and change in families in Australia.

Since its establishment, the Institute’s online database *Family Facts and Figures*, which provides up-to-date information on family trends, has been increasingly used. Web statistics highlight the demand for such information (Table 3.4). In the past year, a cohabitation series and a child care series have been developed using ABS data and other survey data.

Table 3.4 Statistics of web use of “family facts and figures”			
	January-June 2003	July-December 2003	January-June 2004
Pages downloaded	16,859	27,163	40,981

During the year, Demographic Trends Analysis collaborated with the Institute’s Children and Parenting Program on multiple arrangements of child care. It also contributed to the preparation of a Research Report and two presentations with the Institute’s Family and Marriage and Family and Society research programs on the links between father’s work hours and their personal and family wellbeing.

Collaborative work with the Family and Marriage Program resulted in two publications on ageing and cohabitation, two presentations on cohabitation, and one presentation on fertility aspirations. Work with the Family and Society Program has produced one publication on mothers’ employment. Demographic Trends Analysis contributed to two invited presentations to a Singapore delegation, on family trends and on children with a disability. A list of collaborative publications and presentations can be found under each of the program areas.

Assistance was also provided to the Institute’s submission to the Inquiry into Child Custody Arrangements in the Event of Family Separation and to the Fertility Decision Making Project on data preparation, data analysis and report preparation.

Publications

de Vaus, D. and Gray, M. (2004), “The changing living arrangements of children, 1946-2001”, *Journal of Family Studies*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 9-19.

Qu, L. (2004), "Children's living arrangements after parental separation", *Family Matters*, no. 67, Autumn, pp. 4-7.

de Vaus, D. and Gray, M. (2003), "Family transitions among Australia's children", *Family Matters*, no. 65, Winter, pp. 10-17.

Qu, L. and Weston, R. (2003), "Ageing, living arrangements and subjective wellbeing", *Family Matters*, no.66, Spring/Summer, pp. 26-33.

Qu, L. (2003), "Minding the children during school holidays", *Family Matters*, no.65, Winter, pp. 18-21.

Presentations

"Australian children's experience of disruptions in family living arrangements, 1946-2000", Presentation to the Social Policy Research Centre Seminar Series, University of New South Wales, Sydney, 11 November 2003 (M. Gray and D. de Vaus).

Representation at workshops, conferences and external committees

Member, Family Statistics User Advisory Group, Australian Bureau of Statistics (L. Qu).

CONTRACT RESEARCH

Part of the Institute's research strategy includes research funded by external funding sources. These projects are undertaken where they complement the general research priorities of the Institute. In addition to adding value to the other research activities of the Institute, these contracts provide the opportunity to undertake major, policy relevant research that it would otherwise be unable to embark on.

In 2003-2004 the Institute was engaged in four major contract-funded collaborative projects: the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children; the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault; the National Child Protection Clearinghouse; and the Stronger Families Learning Exchange.

LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN

The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC) is also known as *Growing Up in Australia*, particularly by the families participating in the study. During the year, LSAC entered a significant stage with the commencement of the first wave of data collection.

Using the Medicare database, the Health Insurance Commission (HIC) randomly selected children of the right age and their families from a large number of postcodes across Australia. HIC then sent letters to these families, inviting them to take part in the study. Families could opt-out by phone or mail. After a four-week opt-out period, contact names and addresses were then forwarded to the data collection agency.

During the latter part of 2003, all wave 1 study instruments and processes were trialed on a preliminary sample of just over 500 families. In March 2004, after intensive training of 150 interviewers, recruitment commenced of 5,000 infants and 5,000 four-year-old children and their families to the study.

Data collection involves a face-to-face interview with the child's primary parent (usually the mother), physical measurements and other direct assessment tasks for the child, self-complete forms for the primary parent and any other resident parent, leave-behind Time Use Diaries to record the activities of the study child and, where applicable, a mail-out questionnaire to the child's teacher or carer.

The main data collection phase was launched by the Minister for Family and Community Services, Sen. the Hon Kay Patterson, on 8 February 2004 at the Melbourne Museum. The launch was attended by 100 key stakeholders, including study participants.

In March a comprehensive three-day interviewers training course was conducted in Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth and Sydney by I-View and the Project Operations Team.

To date, more than 6,000 interviews have been conducted and, by the end of the wave 1 data collection period in September, it is expected that about 10,000 families will have been recruited to the study.

The wave 1 development and data collection process will have cost about \$7.0m, with most of this cost being for the recruitment of families and data collection. The higher than expected cost of data collection has implications for the collection methodology

for waves 2-4, as the remaining budget for this project would not cover the same design as used for wave 1. Therefore, in order to better inform a decision on the design for future waves (before the development of wave 2 instruments commences), an earlier than intended 'Request for tender for waves 2-4 data collection' has been advertised. Tenderers have been asked to cost a number of design options and tenders are due on 1 July 2004.

Publications

Sanson, A., Johnstone, R., LSAC Consortium Advisory Group and the FaCS LSAC Project Team (2004), "Growing Up in Australia takes its first steps", *Family Matters*, no. 67, Autumn, pp. 46-53.

Publications on the Web

Growing Up in Australia Newsletter no. 6, June 2004 (electronic newsletter of the study - <http://www.aifs.gov.au/growingup>).

Growing Up in Australia Newsletter no. 5, March 2004 (electronic newsletter of the study - <http://www.aifs.gov.au/growingup>).

Growing Up in Australia Newsletter no. 4, December 2003 (electronic newsletter of the study - <http://www.aifs.gov.au/growingup>).

Growing Up in Australia Newsletter no. 3, September 2003 (electronic newsletter of the study - <http://www.aifs.gov.au/growingup>).

Commissioned reports

Project Operations Team in collaboration with Colmar Brunton Social Research and I-view (2004), *Wave 1 Fieldwork May Progress Report*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, for the Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra, June.

Project Operations Team (2004), *Request for tender for data collection with respect to the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC) Waves 2-4*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, for the Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra, May.

Johnstone, R., Project Operations Team and the LSAC Consortium (2004), *Data Management Report No. 1*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, for the Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra, March.

Johnstone, R., Project Operations Team and the LSAC Research Consortium (2004), *Data Management Issues*, Discussion Paper no.3, Australian Institute of Family Studies, for the Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra, March.

Project Operations Team (2004), *Workplan 2004 Project Plan*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, for the Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra, February.

Project Operations Team in collaboration with Colmar Brunton Social Research and NCS Pearson (2004), *Wave 1 Dress Rehearsal Preliminary Report no. 4*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, for the Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra, January.

Soloff, C. and Millward, C. in collaboration with Colmar Brunton Social Research and NCS Pearson (2004), *Wave 1: 2004 Interviewer's Instructions Manual*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, for the Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra, January.

Project Operations Team in collaboration with Colmar Brunton Social Research and NCS Pearson (2003), *Wave 1 Dress Rehearsal Preliminary Report no. 3*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, for the Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra, December.

Sanson, A., Church, A. and the Project Operations Team (2003), *Interviewer Observation Report*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, for the Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra, November.

Project Operations Team in collaboration with Colmar Brunton Social Research and NCS Pearson (2003), *Wave 1 Dress Rehearsal Preliminary Report no. 2*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, for the Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra, November.

Project Operations Team in collaboration with Colmar Brunton Social Research and NCS Pearson (2003), *Wave 1 Dress Rehearsal Remote Areas Report*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, for the Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra, November.

Johnstone, R. (2003), *Growing Up in Australia - The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children: Data Security Manual*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, for the Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra September.

Millward, C. (2004), *Final changes between Dress Rehearsal and Wave 1 instruments - ADDENDUM to W1 Dress Rehearsal Report no. 3*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, for the Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra, September.

Millward, C., White, E., Soloff, C., Soriano, G. and Sanson, A. (2003), *The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children - Wave 1 Pilot Report*, Project Report no. 8, Australian Institute of Family Studies, for the Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra, August.

White, E. with Millward, C. (2003), *The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children - Wave 1 Pilot Biomarkers Report*, Project Report no.8.1, Australian Institute of Family Studies, for the Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra, July.

Presentations

“Growing Up in Australia: A Longitudinal Study of Australian Children – Data Management Strategic Directions”, Presentation to the Department of Family and Community Services, Department of Science and Technology, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra, 10 June 2004 (R. Johnstone).

“The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children - An Overview”, Talk presented to the Knox Rotary Club, City of Knox, 4 March 2004 (C. Millward).

“Growing Up in Australia: A Longitudinal Study of Australian Children – an overview”, Presentation to the Australian Research Alliance on Children and Youth (ARACY) Meeting, Canberra, 29 January 2004 (A. Sanson).

“Growing Up in Australia – the longitudinal study of Australian children”, Poster presented at the World Association for Infant Mental health World Congress, Melbourne, 14-17 January 2004 (A. Sanson, G. Vimpani and the Consortium Advisory Group (CAG)).

“Growing Up in Australia, the new longitudinal study of Australia’s children”, Colloquium at the Department of Psychology, Deakin University, Geelong, 5 September 2003 (A. Sanson).

“Growing Up In Australia’, The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children: What are we asking, who are we asking and how?” Paper presented at the Australasian Human Development Association (AHDA) Conference, Auckland, New Zealand, 7-9 July 2003 (C. Millward).

“Sample design for Growing Up in Australia: the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children: Key features, challenges and solutions”, Paper presented at the Australasian Human Development Association (AHDA) Conference, Auckland, New Zealand, 7-9 July 2003 (C. Soloff).

Representation at workshops, conferences and external committees

Chair, Board of Management, Centre for Developmental Health, Curtin University/Institute for Child Health Research (A. Sanson).

Member, Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC) Steering Committee (A. Sanson).

Member, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Australia’s Picture of Australian Children Advisory Group (A. Sanson).

Member, Scientific Research Committee, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) (A. Sanson).

Co-chair, International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development (ISSBD) Organising Committee, ISSBD06 International Biennial Meeting (A. Sanson).

Member, International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development (ISSBD) Organising Committee, ISSBD06 International Biennial Meeting (G. Soriano).

Publications by Consortium Advisory Group members

Nicholson, J. and Rempel, L. (2004), "Australian and New Zealand birth cohort studies: Breadth, quality and contributions", *Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health*, vol. 40, no. 3, March, pp. 87-95.

Wake, M. (2004), "Australasian childhood longitudinal studies: Exciting yet challenging times", *Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health*, vol. 40, no. 3, March, pp. 85-86.

Vimpani, G. (2004), "Growing Up in Australia: A new longitudinal study of children", *Joint Medical and Health Sciences Newsletter*, Faculty of Health, University of Newcastle, Hunter Area Health Service and Hunter Medical Research Institute, no. 120, June, p.11.

Presentations by Consortium Advisory Group members

"An introduction to Growing Up in Australia: the longitudinal study of Australian children", Paper presented at the Brisbane Combined Interagency Forum Day: The Importance of the Early Years, Brisbane, 22 April 2004 (D. Berthelsen).

"Growing Up in Australia: the longitudinal study of Australian children – an overview", Presentation to the Epidemiology Special Interest Group Meeting, Centre for Epidemiology and Research, NSW Department of Health, Sydney, 2 April 2004 (J. Ungerer).

"Monitoring activity patterns of young children - recent experience with Growing Up In Australia", Paper presented at the International Association of Time Use Research Annual Meeting, Brussels, 17-19 September 2003 (K. Fischer, M. Bittman, A. Sanson, M. Wake and LSAC consortium and presented by K. Fischer).

"Growing Up in Australia: A longitudinal study of Australian children", Paper presented at the National Conference of Playgroup Australia: Best practice, Brisbane, 13 August 2003 (D. Berthelsen).

"Growing Up In Australia – the longitudinal study of Australian children: Background and current status", Paper presented at the Australasian Human Development Association (AHDA) Conference, 7-9 July 2003, Auckland, New Zealand (Sanson, A., Nicholson, J., Project Operations Team and Consortium Advisory Group and presented by J. Ungerer).

AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

The *Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault*, or ACSSA, aims to improve access to current information on sexual assault in order to assist service providers, policy makers and others working in the field of sexual assault to develop evidence-based strategies to respond to, and ultimately reduce the incidence of, sexual assault.

The Centre is funded by the Australian Government's Office of the Status of Women under its *National Initiative to Combat Sexual Assault*. The Centre was officially launched in September 2003 by Senator Amanda Vanstone (former Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Status of Women) who took the opportunity to remark on the continued high levels of under-reporting, and the need for research that can improve on our awareness and responses to the issue. An external Reference Group was also established at this time to provide advice and guidance to ACSSA with respect to promoting the key functions of the Centre and in identifying priorities for research and topics for publications.

The emphasis of the Centre is on all forms of sexual assault; particularly the sexual assault of women and girls over 15 years of age (the most commonly reported victim/survivors); and adult survivors of child sexual assault. The main functions of the Centre are: to facilitate access, particularly electronic access, to national policy relevant data to inform strategies to more effectively prevent and respond to sexual

assault; to establish a comprehensive evidence base, and provide information and advice on research and best practice approaches for interventions in response to sexual assault; to stimulate debate amongst policy makers, academics and service providers about the most effective strategies to prevent, respond to, and reduce the incidence of sexual assault; and to raise awareness of sexual assault and its impact on the Australian community.

The establishment of ACSSA now makes up a trio of national clearinghouses across Australia dealing with issues of violence and abuse. The National Child Protection Clearinghouse, located at the Institute since 1995, deals with the sexual assault and other forms of abuse involving children. In 2000, the Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse was established. Located at the University of New South Wales, the Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse is a national point for the collection and dissemination of Australian domestic and family violence policy, practice and research.

During this first year, ACSSA's activities have included: producing several key publications on issues relevant to the sexual assault field; developing a dynamic and user-friendly website with links to the latest research, statistics and materials relevant to those working on issues related to sexual assault; and involvement in projects and policy initiatives aimed at early intervention and sexual assault prevention.

Published output

ACSSA has three types of publications that aim to report on developments in the sexual assault field. *ACSSA Aware*, a quarterly Newsletter, includes feature articles on current topics in sexual assault, stakeholder profiles, alerts for upcoming workshops and conferences, and a literature review of the latest sexual assault research from Australian and international sources that have been obtained for the collection. *ACSSA Briefing Papers* provide a brief commentary on contemporary issues of importance in the area of sexual assault. *ACSSA Issues Papers* present a more in-depth investigation of some of the critical gaps that remain in understanding and responding to sexual violence.

During 2003-2004, ACSSA has published three issues of the Newsletter, three Briefing Papers and one Issues Paper. The details of the publications are listed at the end of this section. ACSSA distributes its publications to over 6,600 individuals and organisations across Australia who have subscribed to the ACSSA mailing list.

Research enquiry service

ACSSA also provides a research enquiry service that includes: library or literature searches on particular issues; current statistical information; and research support or advice on current issues in relation to sexual assault. Research enquiries can be lodged by phone, email, or via the ACSSA website. Since the establishment of the Centre, ACSSA researchers have responded to over 150 enquiries relating to a vast range of topic areas relevant to sexual assault including: statistics on incidence and prevalence, approaches to prevention, current legislation, and the nature and characteristics of sexual offences. Government departments, specialist sexual assault services, general practitioners, police and tertiary students have been making particular use of the enquiry service.

Good practice programs and responses database

ACSSA is developing a national collection of Good Practice Programs and Responses for Sexual Assault. The collection aims to provide a valuable resource to service

providers and policy makers in sharing information about good practice in responding to issues around sexual assault. It is modelled on what has been a highly successful mechanism used by both the National Child Protection Clearinghouse and the Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse to facilitate the sharing of good practice and ideas across the relevant sectors. Currently ACSSA has 12 examples of “good practice” programs available for browsing in the collection, including education campaigns, resource kits and training manuals, an offender treatment program and a legal service for victim/survivors. The detailed information available to view for each program includes a description of the program/initiative and the aspects of good practice it demonstrates, particular groups targeted by the program, information about the philosophical framework and research behind the program and details of any publications produced.

Website

The primary point of access for ACSSA is via the website. The website contains information on new developments in the field of sexual assault, online access to the publications and a range of other resources including the “Good Practice Programs and Responses for Sexual Assault Database”, current statistical information on the incidence and prevalence of sexual assault, forthcoming events and conferences, bibliographies, and links to other Australian and international organisations working to address sexual assault. The website also provides online access to the Institute’s library catalogue that includes the ACSSA library collection.

Since the launch of the Centre in September 2003, ACSSA’s website has been visited by over 70,000 users. Greatest use of the website has been concentrated in accessing the publications and in browsing the bibliographies and the “on line” documents. The Good Practice Programs and Responses for Sexual Assault section has been frequently visited since the first good practice programs were added to the website in mid February, with approximately 1,000 hits on this page per month.

Visitors to the ACSSA website can also join *acssa-alert* – which provides fortnightly updates via email on current events/training/research in relation to sexual assault. Membership to *acssa-alert* is becoming increasingly popular as a means of receiving the publications electronically and of being regularly updated on the latest reports, training and community initiatives that address issues relating to sexual assault.

Library collection

ACSSA holds over 850 items in its catalogue database directly related to sexual assault, and continues to build on its collection of the latest research and practice literature, legislation and reports that can better inform the development of services and programs aimed at improving the response to sexual assault. Materials held in the collection are available for browsing at the Institute’s Family Information Centre, which is open to the public by appointment during business hours. Otherwise items may be borrowed through the inter-library loan system. Bibliographic information or items in the collection can also be viewed by accessing the Institute’s library catalogue via the ACSSA website.

Networking/outreach

Promoting the services provided by ACSSA through presentations, information sessions, and forums has been an important part of the Centre’s activities over the past 12 months. ACSSA staff have attended several state-wide service forums for

workers at specialist sexual assault services as well as presenting at the annual general meeting of the national peak body for services known as NASASV (National Services Against Sexual Violence). ACSSA staff have also delivered presentations or been invited to speak at conferences and seminars that have been attended by forensic practitioners, police, lawyers, and students in relation to both ACSSA's functions and the current research priorities of the Centre.

Health burden of violence against women

ACSSA was contracted by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) in July 2003 to review and analyse the existing data in relation to the incidence of physical and sexual violence perpetrated against women by their intimate partners. The project was led by VicHealth in partnership with the Victorian Department of Human Services, and in consultation with an expert Advisory Committee that included federal and state government representatives, academics, researchers, and representatives from specialist domestic violence and sexual assault services.

The study linked the most reliable population based data on prevalence with the known health effects of domestic violence to produce the world's first estimate of the disease burden resulting from male partner violence. The study found that intimate partner violence is the greatest risk factor for poor health in Victorian women aged between 15 and 44 years even when other well-known risk factors, such as high blood pressure, obesity, and high cholesterol are considered. The report was officially launched by the Acting Premier of Victoria, the Hon. Mr John Thwaites. The report can be downloaded from the ACSSA website.

Home Truths conference

ACSSA is a member of the organising committee for the "Home Truths": A National Conference on Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence, to be held in Melbourne on 15-17 September 2004. An important aim of the conference is to create partnerships between sexual assault and domestic violence sectors at both a practice and policy level in the local and national arena, and to ensure that the voices of survivors inform those discussions. ACSSA has been the key distributor of information and materials promoting the conference given the national reach of its mailing list, and the increasing use being made of its website.

Publications

Heenan, M. (2004), "Just keeping the peace: A reluctance to respond to male partner sexual violence", *Issues Paper 1*, Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Neame, A. and Heenan, M. (2004), "Responding to sexual assault in rural communities", *Briefing Paper 3*, Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Neame, A. (2003), Beyond "Drink-Spiking": Drug and alcohol facilitated sexual assault", *Briefing Paper 2*, Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Neame, A. and Heenan, M. (2003), "What lies behind the hidden figure of sexual assault? Issues of prevalence and disclosure", *Briefing Paper 1*, Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Heenan, M. (2003), "Reconstituting the 'relevance' of women's sexual history evidence in rape trials", *Women Against Violence: An Australian Feminist Journal*, Issue 13, pp. 4-17.

Presentations

“Current research priorities for ACSSA”, Guest Speaker at the Annual Committee Meeting of the Providers of Sexual Assault Care (Tasmania) Inc, Launceston, 19 June 2004 (M. Heenan).

“Male Partner Sexual Violence”, Presentation at the Victorian Family Therapy Research Conference, Bouverie Family Therapy Centre, Melbourne, 1 June 2004 (M. Heenan).

“Overview of ACSSA functions and research priorities”, Presentation to the New South Wales State-wide Services Against Sexual Assault Regional Meeting, Sydney, 24 May 2004 (M. Heenan).

“The prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence against women”, Paper presented at the 18th World Conference Health Promotion and Health Education, Melbourne Convention Centre, Melbourne, 29 April 2004 (M. Heenan and J. Astbury).

“Sexual assault and the law: Her body of evidence”, Presentation to the Australia and New Zealand Sexual Assault Satellite Symposium, Forensic and Medical Sexual Assault Clinicians Australia (FAMSAC) and Doctors for Sexual Assault Care (DSAC), Adelaide, 30 March 2004 (M. Heenan).

“Overview of ACSSA and research priorities with a focus on drug and alcohol facilitated sexual assault”, Presentation at the UnitingCare Wesley Justice and Solidarity Forum Series, Adelaide, 24 February 2004 (M. Heenan and A. Neame).

“Key research priorities to assist community organisations in work with victims of sexual assault”, Discussion at a workshop of the UnitingCare Wesley Justice and Solidarity Forum Series, Adelaide, 24 February 2004 (M. Heenan and A. Neame).

“Overview of ACSSA functions and research priorities”, Presentation to the New South Wales Quarterly Strategy Meeting to Reduce Violence Against Women, Sydney, 13 February 2004 (M. Heenan).

“Current research issues surrounding sexual assault”, Special Guest Speaker at the Barwon Centre Against Sexual Assault Annual General Meeting, Geelong, 14 November 2003 (M. Heenan).

“Overview of ACSSA functions and research priorities”, Presentation to the National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence Annual General Meeting, Canberra, 22 October 2003 (M. Heenan).

“Update on the current priorities and functions of the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault”, Presentation to the Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault Forum Meeting, Melbourne, 14 October 2003 (M. Heenan).

NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION CLEARINGHOUSE

The *National Child Protection Clearinghouse* serves as an interchange point for information, research and initiatives supporting work on the prevention of child abuse and neglect. The Clearinghouse is funded by the Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services with the aim of informing policy, practice and research into child abuse prevention. The Clearinghouse has operated from the Australian Institute of Family Studies since 1995.

The Clearinghouse undertakes research projects on child protection and the prevention of child abuse. In 2003-2004 the Clearinghouse has been involved in projects aiming to inform child protection reform processes, and to further understanding of the issues around how families, with a child at risk of being maltreated, access family support programs designed to prevent maltreatment.

Accessibility to child abuse prevention programs

In 2001-2002, the Clearinghouse began an exploratory study to gain further understanding of the issues that affect the ability of families where a child is at risk of being

maltreated to access child abuse prevention programs. Issues that were considered included how program design and implementation impacts on accessibility for the service user; factors associated with the service users themselves, such as knowledge of the program; and how identified barriers to accessibility could be overcome.

In 2002-2003, interviews were conducted with 33 service providers currently running group-based parent education or home visiting programs in New South Wales and Victoria, on their views about the issues affecting clients' access to services. A final report was prepared, published and disseminated in early 2004 (as Clearinghouse Issues Paper no. 18).

Australian Children's Contact Services Project

Children's contact services facilitate post-separation contact in situations of high parental conflict and/or risk to children. The Institute, in collaboration with Griffith University, the University of Melbourne and the Attorney-General's Department, was funded under the Australian Research Council's Strategic Partnerships with Industry and Research Training (SPIRT) Support Scheme 2001 to evaluate the operation of children's contact services in Australia.

The study is investigating the ways in which these services are used and perceived by participants and key stakeholders, and the extent to which the use of these services results in positive outcomes, especially for children. Following the successful pilot testing of data collection methods and interview schedules, data collection was with contact centre staff and client families in Victoria and Queensland. Data collection and analysis was completed in early 2004, and the project report is being prepared.

Northern Territory Child Protection review

In 2003-2004, the Clearinghouse was invited by the Northern Territory Department of Health and Community Services to assist with the Department's review of child protection services. Specifically, the Clearinghouse was contracted to develop a discussion paper on key aspects of child protection practice, particularly as it pertains to working with rural and remote communities, and Indigenous communities. The report was subsequently published in January 2004. In addition, the Clearinghouse manager acted as an ex-officio advisor to the Northern Territory Caring for Our Children Reference Group.

Additional projects

In 2003-2004, the Clearinghouse produced a Fact Sheet series, based on questions frequently received by the Clearinghouse related to child abuse and its prevention. Four Facts Sheets have been produced with another six in preparation. These will be placed on the Clearinghouse website (and kept updated).

Knowledge base

The Clearinghouse forms a knowledge base from which to inform policy, practice and research in child abuse prevention by collecting resources and providing access to information. Currently it holds over 9,093 records in its catalogue database related to child abuse/neglect, of which 1,393 were added during the reporting period. Bibliographic information about the prevention of child abuse and neglect is also incorporated into the Institute's computerised database, *Australian Family & Society Abstracts (AF&SA)*. The catalogue is widely accessible via the Institute's website and access to the AF&SA database is via two web-based online services – RMIT's *Informit Online* and the US *Biblioline* service.

Materials are made available to most clients by the interlibrary loan system, but 124 service providers working in small non-government agencies receive special access to the collection via a membership arrangement.

Communications

The knowledge base is used to generate a number of communications activities. Publications are disseminated to a network of 7,900 clients registered on the Clearinghouse free mailing list, or may be downloaded from the Clearinghouse website. *Issues Papers* focus on a topic of particular relevance to the field, while *Newsletters* include feature articles plus information on the latest publications and resources, developments in policy or legislation, and forthcoming conferences and workshops.

Advisory services

Clearinghouse staff draw on the knowledge base to provide advisory services. A key role for the Clearinghouse is to provide advice on child abuse policy and practice issues to the Australian Government (and state and territory governments). During the year, key policy advisory tasks have involved responding to requests for advice and information from government agencies and contributing to government inquiries. The Clearinghouse also provides advice and support for service providers who run, or who plan to run, child abuse prevention programs. The service is designed to provide greater support to those agencies and groups who want to evaluate their prevention programs, but require research advice and support.

Information exchange

As a key aspect of networking/outreach activities, Clearinghouse research staff participate in relevant workshops, conferences and related activities, presenting papers and seminars and carrying out other promotional work as required. The Clearinghouse also provides education and training seminars, and has developed a particular emphasis on running seminars or training sessions in rural/remote areas throughout Australia.

An email discussion list, *childprotect*, with 520 subscribers, gives service providers, government agencies and policy makers and researchers a forum to discuss research, policy and practice issues, and facilitates discussion and dissemination of good practice knowledge.

Website

The Clearinghouse website (www.aifs.gov.au/nch/) continued to be well used during the year with 512,531 pages downloaded. Publications produced by the Clearinghouse were in high demand with the *Issues Papers* and articles from the *Child Abuse Prevention Newsletter* receiving 211,181 and 139,224 requests respectively. Other pages receiving frequent use are regularly updated bibliographies covering 24 topics, a directory of links to organisations working to prevent child abuse and neglect, a listing of counselling services for parents and children, and forthcoming conferences and events, both at the national and international level. As a result of discussion on the *childprotect* discussion list, resources have been developed to provide information on police clearances and checks, Internet safety, and contact numbers for each state and territory to report incidences of child abuse.

A “Good Practice” database, of programs demonstrating good practice elements, is now available on the website. The database is intended to provide useful models for other

service providers planning to run child abuse prevention programs. The Clearinghouse has currently accepted 17 programs for the database, including the award winners of the 2003 National Child Abuse Prevention Awards.

Publications

Kovacs, K. (*in press*), "Protecting children: Queensland Inquiry into abuse of children in foster care", *Child Abuse Prevention Newsletter*, National Child Protection Clearinghouse, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, vol. 12, no. 1.

Kovacs, K. and Tomison, A. (2004), "An Analysis of current Australian program initiatives for children exposed to domestic violence", *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 38, no. 4, p. 513.

Stanley, J. and Goddard, C. (*submitted*), "Multiple forms of violence and other criminal activities as an indicator of severe child maltreatment", *Child Abuse Review*.

Stanley, J. and Kovacs, K. (*in press*), "Is child sexual abuse declining? Evidence from a population-based survey of men and women in Australia" (Letter to the Editor), *Child Abuse & Neglect*.

Kovacs, K. (2003), "How accessible are child-abuse prevention services for families?", *Online Opinion* (Online Journal), 14 July 2003, <http://www.onlineopinion.com.au/>

Kovacs, K. (2003), "Violence in the media and its effects on children", *Child Abuse Prevention Newsletter*, National Child Protection Clearinghouse, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, vol. 11, no. 2, Spring.

Stanley, J. (2003), "Downtime' for children on the Internet: recognising a new form of child abuse", *Family Matters*, no.65, Winter, pp. 22-27.

Stanley, J. and Kovacs, K. (2003), *Accessibility issues in child abuse prevention services*, National Child Protection Clearinghouse Issues Paper no. 18, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Stanley, J., Tomison, A. and Pocock, J. (2003), *Child abuse and neglect in Indigenous Australian communities*, National Child Protection Clearinghouse Issues Paper no. 19, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

Presentations

"Changes to family support in the 21st century", Keynote address presented at the "In partnership with families: Stepping off the roundabout", Intensive Family Services 5th National Practice Symposium, Sydney, 31 March-2 April 2004 (A. Tomison).

"Child sexual assault and paedophilia", Invited presentation to the Australian Police Summit, Melbourne, 18-19 February 2004 (A. Tomison).

"Child Abuse and the Internet", Paper presented at the 9th Australasian Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect "Many Voices Many Choices", Sydney, 26-28 November 2003 (J. Stanley, C. Tinning and K. Kovacs).

"Hearing only half of the story by leaving out half of the violence", Paper presented at the 9th Australasian Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect "Many Voices Many Choices", Sydney, 24-27 November 2003 (J. Stanley and C. Goddard).

"Evidence-based practice in child protection: Building bridges to better inform practice", Paper presented at the 9th Australasian Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect "Many Voices Many Choices", Sydney, 24-27 November 2003 (A. Tomison).

"Informing and enhancing practice: Adopting an evidence based approach", Keynote address presented at the "Art of the Heart and the Heart of the Art" Marriage and Relationship Education National Conference, Adelaide, 25-28 September 2003 (A. Tomison).

"Preventing child abuse and neglect and exploring interagency collaboration", Professional seminar presented at the Centre for Remote Health, Alice Springs, 12 September 2003 (A. Tomison).

“Child abuse and neglect in Australia: Prevention strategies and issues of accessibility”, Presentation at the Creating Spaces, Interdisciplinary Writings in the Social Sciences, Australian National University, Canberra, 17-18 July 2003 (K. Kovacs).

Conferences attended

Australian Medical Association Summit on Child Abuse, “Working together: Toward a national policy for child protection and recovery”, AMA House, Canberra, 19 February 2004 (K. Kovacs).

Representation at workshops, conferences and external committees

Advisor, National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN), Victorian Branch (A. Tomison).

Associate Editor, *The Link Newsletter*, International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN) (A. Tomison).

Co-convenor, Scientific Committee of the 15th ISPCAN International Congress on Child Abuse and Neglect, Brisbane, September 2004 (A. Tomison).

Ex-officio member, NT Caring for Our Children Reference Group (A. Tomison).

Executive Member, “Innocence in Danger” South Pacific Regional Action group (kIDs.ap) (A. Tomison).

Member, Australian Childhood Foundation (A. Tomison).

Member, Australian Family Research Network (A. Tomison).

Member, Editorial Board, *Child Abuse & Neglect – the International Journal* (A. Tomison).

Member, External Reference Group, Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault (A. Tomison).

Member, Home-Based Care Review External Reference Group, Department of Human Services 2002-2003 (A. Tomison).

Member, International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN) (A. Tomison).

Member, National Advisory Council, National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) (A. Tomison).

STRONGER FAMILIES LEARNING EXCHANGE

The *Stronger Families Learning Exchange* (SFLEX) provides action research support to Stronger Families Fund projects throughout Australia to contribute to the evidence base about the effectiveness of early interventions for families. It also provides a Clearinghouse to disseminate information and resources related to strengthening Australian families.

SFLEX was funded by the Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services under the first phase of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy. SFLEX provides information, resource sharing, training and advice on family wellbeing, community development, primary prevention and early intervention. Its primary stakeholders are Stronger Families Fund project staff and government officers working with these projects, but its services extend to the wider community concerned with family wellbeing.

The two key components of the Learning Exchange are the Training and Support Team (research team) and the Stronger Families Clearinghouse (library and information services).

Training and support team activities

The major component of the Learning Exchange is the provision of action research evaluation support to Stronger Families Fund projects, funded under the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy. The Training and Support Team of researchers was expanded to support the additional Stronger Families Fund projects allocated in 2003-2004, giving a total allocation of 50 projects. These projects are located in disadvantaged communities throughout Australia. Twenty involve working with Indigenous communities, a significant number of which are located in quite remote regions.

The Training and Support Team has continued to develop flexible and responsive ways of working with funded projects both collectively and individually. Project teams have been provided with a variety of information and diverse strategies to develop and carry out an evaluation of their projects based on action research principles. The teams are supported to reflect on their achievements throughout the project and to use the knowledge that results from their participatory processes to adjust the focus or style of their work where necessary. The resultant learnings are also used to plan and refine future activities.

The specific areas of advice and support include: development and refinement of evaluation frameworks; participatory action research processes; research design and methods; analysis and interpretation of data; and production of project reports.

Through our publications and conference presentations the experiences of the projects are already contributing to the growing national and international body of knowledge about local participation, collaborative processes and early intervention strategies. We aim to inform government policy, community development and capacity building, service delivery, and research practices.

In 2003-2004, team members provided ongoing support to all 50 Stronger Family Fund projects. Team members have visited each of the projects and maintain regular contact and support between visits. Support included developing and implementing evaluation frameworks, working with projects to design and implement action research projects and supporting projects to record and disseminate information about their work.

Development of resources

The Training and Support Team has developed and trialled a range of tools and resources to facilitate the work of the projects, including tailored training materials for project workers. The team is continuing to work collaboratively with projects on the design and development of a series of publications that record project outcomes and provide learning resources for the projects and others working with participatory, community based programs. Team members have also continued to work with the Department of Family and Community Services officers at regional, state, territory and national levels in relation to specific projects and in the documentation of broader themes and issues arising from the projects.

Regional workshops

Following the very successful national workshop in Melbourne last year a series of regional workshops was planned to follow up and extend the action research and participatory evaluation processes of projects. So far, workshops have been held in Perth, Dubbo, Canberra, Adelaide, Darwin and Melbourne.

The workshops have been popular and well attended. In many cases community members, other Stronger Families and Communities Strategy projects and Department of

Family and Community Services officers as well as project officers were represented at the workshops.

Clearinghouse collection and library services

The resource collection has been further developed with a focus on Australian materials. In addition there has been a focus on Action Research, Social Capital and Community Development to cater to the research and practice interests of community based projects

Provision has been made for Stronger Families Fund project workers to have direct access to Institute databases and library services. A help desk responds to queries which may be in the form of phone calls, faxes or emails. Help desk staff assist with catalogue searches, provide reference information and undertake literature searches of bibliographic databases. Personnel from 31 projects have requested information or borrowed resources from the Clearinghouse. In the reporting period, 60 Stronger Families Fund personnel registered to obtain materials from the Clearinghouse and borrowed 166 items. In addition, a range of bibliographies were distributed both via the website and in hard copy (by post) to each project and a general bibliography was compiled for distribution at the SFLEX National Workshop.

Databases

Three databases continue to operate as part of the Clearinghouse operations.

Mailing list database. There are approximately 6,900 organisations and individuals on a stakeholder mailing list database to which the *Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin* is distributed.

Stronger Families Fund projects database. With a diverse range of projects and activities across the projects a web page has been created for each project to showcase their innovations and achievements rather than through a structured database.

Early intervention database. The early intervention database is continually updated. The criterion for inclusion is “good practice” or “what works” in early intervention, as demonstrated by evaluation. Managers of early intervention projects who are happy to depict “good practice” elements of their projects have been contacted to request permission to include this information in the database. Details of over 80 such projects have been added to the database which is publicly available on the SFLEX website.

Publications, website and extranet

The Stronger Families Learning Exchange publishes six-monthly bulletins, in hard copy and electronic format. These contain theoretical or methodological articles, information about the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy, Stronger Families Fund project descriptions and news, best practice and research. Three Bulletin issues have been compiled and published both in print and electronically in the reporting period. Print copies have been distributed to the mailing list and the print run for recent issues has been increased to 9,000 to meet increasing demand.

The website contains current information and links to resources on prevention, early intervention and capacity building, to support the stakeholders of the Stronger Families Fund projects and the wider community.

The website contains two sections – a public access section and a password-protected extranet. The public access website contains: descriptions of the objectives and

functions of SFLEX; announcements; information about the Stronger Families Fund projects; Good Practice database; electronic resources and links; dates for forthcoming conferences; and electronic versions of the Bulletins.

The password-protected part of the website, the extranet, is reserved for Stronger Families Fund personnel, the Training and Support Team at the Institute, and the Department of Family and Community Services staff involved in the Stronger Families Fund projects. This featured pages for individual Stronger Families Fund projects demonstrating their work and activities (including photographs and stories); research and evaluation reports and a series of electronic training resources. The password-protected part of the website was used mainly early in the project, but from November 2003 emphasis changed to the public access website, and on providing public access to the resources that have been collected and developed since the project began. The public access site has been very active since that time. Numbers of visitors to the site have increased considerably, particularly in 2004 with 86,609 visits to the site during the last five months. From its inception until the end of May 2004, the public access website has received 177,616 requests for electronic pages.

Special resources were compiled in response to requests from Stronger Families Fund project staff who visited the Stronger Families Clearinghouse, and an expanding series of annotated bibliographies was developed to highlight material available to projects via the Clearinghouse. The *sff-discuss* electronic discussion list was established to facilitate communication and resource sharing between projects, their support teams and the Stronger Families Clearinghouse. Its use has been sporadic, although it has been very useful in gathering specific information, examples and opinions when developing resources and issue-specific discussion papers.

The Stronger Families Learning Exchange contract has been extended for another year to work specifically with the most recent Stronger Families Fund projects and to support the established projects in their ongoing research and evaluation.

Publications

Bredhauer, K. (2004), "How many ways can we evaluate a workshop?", *Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, no. 4, Spring/Summer, pp. 32-33.

Bredhauer, K. (2004), "Scrapbooking: creative documentation", *Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, no. 5, Autumn, pp. 6-7.

Fish, E. (2004), "Centres collaborate on new visual resource" (review), *Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, no. 5, Autumn, pp. 8-9.

Fish, E. (2004), "Journeys of community involvement and development", *Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, no. 5, Autumn, pp. 22-24.

Garrow, A. (2004), "The influence of location on community projects", *Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, no. 4, Spring/Summer, pp. 24-27.

Garrow, A. (2004), "Scrapbooks in the context of a Parent Peer Support Group", *Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, no. 5, Autumn, pp. 7-8.

Haviland, M. (2004), "Gathering information to inform action", *Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, no. 5, Autumn, pp. 3-6.

Haviland, M. (2004), "Using photography as a tool in action research", *Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, no. 5, Autumn, pp. 10-15.

Johnson, K. (2004), "Coming together: introducing the National Workshop for Stronger Families Fund projects", *Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, no. 4, Spring/Summer, pp. 3-4.

Johnson, K. (2004), "An ocean of stories", *Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, no. 5, Autumn, pp. 16-18.

Anderson, L. Stern, G. and Turner, C. (2003), "The Stronger Families Fund: from vision to methodology to practice", *Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, no. 3, Winter, pp. 12-13.

Bolitho, J. and Garrow, A. (2003), "Reflections on being a community representative", *Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, no. 3, Winter, pp. 9-10.

Garrow, A. (2003), "'Five bags thumping': impressions of first project visits", *Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, no. 3, Spring/Summer, pp. 16-17.

Johnson, K. (2003), "The elephant and action research", *Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, no. 3, Winter, pp. 3-5.

Munt, R. (2003), "Building collaboration", *Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, no. 3, Winter, pp. 6-8.

Turner, C. and Fish, E. (2003), "Parents are invincible superheroes", *Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, no. 3, Winter, pp. 14-15.

Turner, C. Holt, M, Reid, T. and de Zen, L. (2003), "Stronger Families Fund longest running projects", *Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, no. 3, Spring/Summer, pp. 29-31.

Presentations

"Participatory Action Research and Parenting Education", Presentation to the Regional Parenting Education Groups, YWCA, Melbourne, 21 June 2004 (L. Orr).

"Sustainability and evaluation of community projects", Presentation to Stronger Families Learning Exchange Tasmania/Victoria Regional Workshop, Melbourne, 27 May 2004 (L. Orr, C. Turner and A. Shadbolt).

"The Stronger Families Learning Exchange: An empowerment agenda", Poster presentation at the Empowerment in the Human Services Conference, Melbourne, May 2004 (T. Lienert).

"Tasmanian Aboriginal Family Violence Action Plan", Presentation to the ATSI Regional Council, Hobart, 22 April 2004 (L. Orr and C. Turner).

"Community work is always personal to someone: reflections on the role of 'insider' and 'outsider' in community projects", Workshop presented at the Towards a Civil Society: Third National Family and Community Strengths Conference, University of Newcastle, Newcastle, December 2003 (M. Haviland, K. Johnson, L. Orr, L. and T. Lienert).

"Parent Education and Playgroups", Paper presented at the Towards a Civil Society: Third National Family and Community Strengths Conference, University of Newcastle, Newcastle, 2 December 2003 (C. Turner and K. Bredhauer).

Conferences attended

"Doing Participatory Evaluation in Communities", Participants in a Workshop, IAP2, Brisbane, 15 May 2004 (M. Haviland and R. Munt).

Community Development, Human Rights and the Grassroots, Deakin University, Melbourne, 14-16 April 2004 (L. Orr and T. Lienert).

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH PERFORMANCE

The following pages (66 – 85) of this report present in tabular form a summary of research project performance in the Institute's three research programs and its contract research work. For each of the research projects in these four areas, project aims, planned outputs, actual outputs, and outcomes are recorded.

Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
PROGRAM A: CHILDREN AND PARENTING			
<p>Australian Temperament Project (ATP) <i>(Ongoing longitudinal study)</i> <i>(Commenced at AIFS in 2000 but has been in existence since 1983)</i></p> <p>Data analysis</p> <p>Reporting</p>	<p>Statistical analysis of wave 13 ATP data collection</p> <p>Preparation of 3 journal articles, 2 newsletters, and 1 conference presentation</p>	<p>Statistical analyses undertaken and completed</p> <p>3 journal articles published</p> <p>2 newsletters published</p> <p>1 conference presentation</p> <p>1 workshop presentation</p>	<p>Increased understanding of the developmental pathways traversed by children, and the factors that influence pathways, has provided valuable information for policy makers and service providers about the ways in which children's development can be enhanced within the context of their families</p> <p>Findings provide new Australian information, and are used as evidence base to support policy development and professional development initiatives</p> <p>Research cited in national and international publications</p> <p>Invited to contribute to international conferences and publications</p> <p>Invited to present findings to policy makers and practitioners at workshops</p> <p>Findings discussed in the media</p>

Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
<p>Forward planning for next data collection (to take place in 2006)</p>	<p>Initial planning commenced Identification of possible areas to assess</p>	<p>In early stages of the project planning Research literature collected and synthesised Consideration of the relevance of issues/topics previously addressed in the study</p>	
<p>ATP Generation 2 sub-study <i>(Core research)</i> <i>(Commenced 2004 and ongoing)</i></p> <p>Planning</p>	<p>Preparation of a concept brief</p>	<p>Concept brief developed Research literature collected and synthesised Consultations with international experts on this issue</p>	
<p>Child Care Choices <i>(Collaborative research)</i> <i>(Commenced 2001; scheduled completion 2004)</i></p> <p>Ongoing collaboration with partners (Macquarie University and Charles Sturt University)</p> <p>Data collection – Wave 1</p>	<p>Regular teleconferences and face to face meetings for planning and development of project Undertake CATI survey for complete sample while other partners undertake complementary site visits and observations</p>	<p>Completed and ongoing Completed</p>	<p>Close liaison with policy makers and practitioners Invited to apply for ongoing funding for an Extension Project to span the years from before school to early schooling, and also to look at the Child Care Choices being made by Indigenous families</p>

Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
<p>Sample maintenance</p> <p>Development of Protocols for Wave 2 data collection</p> <p>Data collection – Wave 2</p> <p>Maintain sample</p> <p>Analysis of data – Wave 1</p> <p>Analysis of data – Wave 2</p> <p>Dissemination of findings via written papers</p> <p>Dissemination of findings via conference presentations and speaking engagements</p> <p>Submission for funding for Extension Project and Indigenous Project</p> <p>Development of protocols for Wave 3 data collection for Extension Project</p>	<p>Undertake a range of strategies with partners to maintain sample</p> <p>Writing of CATI program for Wave 2 methodology</p> <p>Undertake CATI survey for complete sample while other partners undertake complementary site visits and observations</p> <p>Undertake a range of strategies with partners to maintain sample</p> <p>Undertake analysis of data relevant to research questions</p> <p>In preliminary stages</p> <p>International and national engagements</p> <p>Writing of submissions with partners, costing and ethics approval</p> <p>Writing of CATI program for Wave 3 methodology</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed and ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>1 national conference 1 international conference</p> <p>Submissions completed</p> <p>Completed</p>	<p>Substantial funding received for Extension Project and Indigenous project</p>

Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
<p>Child Care in Cultural Context <i>(Core research)</i> <i>(Commenced February 2000; scheduled completion December 2003)</i></p> <p>Literature review</p> <p>Data collection</p> <p>Data analysis</p> <p>Dissemination</p>	<p>Collect relevant literature</p> <p>Collect data on child and family functioning</p> <p>Undertake statistical analyses</p> <p>Conference presentations 2 Research Papers</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Presentations at international conference in New Zealand and National Family Day Care Conference in Sydney</p> <p>Ongoing — delays due to additional commitments with contract research and staff leave</p>	
<p>Children and Family Life <i>(Core research)</i> <i>(Commenced July 2002; scheduled completion 2004)</i></p> <p>Recruitment</p> <p>Data analysis</p>	<p>Recruitment of representative sample of 100 schools across Victoria</p> <p>Families</p> <p>Teachers</p> <p>Preliminary analysis</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	

Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
Dissemination of findings	In preliminary stage – first presentation at International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development (ISSBD) conference 2004, in Ghent, Belgium	Paper presented at ISSBD conference in July 2004	
<p>Follow-up Study of Children Conceived through Donor Insemination <i>(Collaborative research)</i> <i>(Commenced 2003; scheduled completion 2004)</i></p> <p>Recruitment</p> <p>Analysis</p>	<p>Recruitment by Professor Gabor Kovacs from Monash Medical School from a sample of 100 families</p> <p>Analysis as part of Children and Family Life Study</p> <p>Analysis as nested study within Children and Family Life study</p>	<p>Almost completed</p> <p>Underway</p> <p>To be done in second part of 2004</p>	
<p>Efficacy of Early Childhood Interventions <i>(Collaborative contract research)</i> <i>(Commenced 2004; scheduled completion 2004)</i></p> <p>Planning</p> <p>Literature review</p>	<p>Collaborative planning of project with Melbourne Institute</p> <p>Literature review of early intervention programs and cost benefit analysis methodologies</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>	

Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
<p>Analysis</p>	<p>Proposal of modelling of cost benefit analysis on early interventions and preliminary estimates of cost benefits</p>	<p>Draft report complete</p>	
<p>ATP/Crime Prevention Victoria <i>(Contracted research) (Commenced December 2001, scheduled completion 2004)</i></p> <p>Data analysis Reporting and dissemination</p>	<p>Statistical analyses of ATP data Publication and launch of Second Report</p> <p>Presentations at international, national and state and local conferences and workshops</p> <p>Preparation of Third Report</p>	<p>Statistical analyses undertaken and completed Publication of Second Report and Executive Summary completed</p> <p>9 presentations at national and international conferences and state workshops</p> <p>Due to the great interest in this research, significantly more dissemination activities were undertaken than initially planned</p> <p>First draft of Third Report completed and under review</p>	<p>This project, in identifying developmental pathways into and away from antisocial behaviour and key transitions points at which children and adolescents are particularly amenable to change, has informed policy makers and service providers about the timing and content of prevention and early intervention efforts</p>
<p>ATP/Transport Accident Commission of Victoria and Royal Automobile Club of Victoria <i>(Contracted research) (Commenced June 2003, scheduled completion 2004)</i></p> <p>Data analysis Reporting</p>	<p>Statistical analyses of ATP data</p> <p>Preparation of Report</p>	<p>Statistical analyses undertaken and completed</p> <p>First draft of Report completed, reviewed by collaborative partners and under final revision</p>	<p>Findings widely cited by research community</p> <p>Invitations accepted to present findings to policy makers and practitioners</p> <p>Strong media interest in findings</p>

Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
<p>Parenting influences on adolescent alcohol use <i>(Contract with Department of Health and Ageing)</i> <i>(Commenced May 2004, scheduled for completion August 2004)</i></p> <p>Undertake a literature review</p> <p>Data analysis</p> <p>Reporting</p>	<p>Summarise the latest Australian and international research and thinking</p> <p>Identify significant gaps and deficiencies in the research</p> <p>Develop recommendations for policy and practice based on the research findings</p> <p>Identify issues that affect the relationship between parenting and adolescent alcohol use</p> <p>Statistical analysis of ATP data</p> <p>Preparation of Report</p>	<p>Literature review completed and preparation for publication</p> <p>Analysis and synthesis of literature currently in progress</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Statistical analyses completed</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	
PROGRAM AREA B: FAMILY AND MARRIAGE			
<p>Family Trends and Transitions Family Transitions Analysis <i>(Ongoing)</i></p> <p>Analyse and disseminate information on a broad range of family trends and transitions</p>	<p>Publish articles, present papers, and participate in media interviews on family transitions, most particularly, leaving home, partnering, fertility, relationship stability/separation, divorce and re-partnering</p>	<p>Ongoing analysis and dissemination of broad family trends and transitions</p> <p>3 published articles</p> <p>7 paper presentations</p> <p>Around 50 media interviews (TV, radio and print)</p>	<p>Recognition of and interest in findings have resulted in invitations to present papers at conferences, including the Regional Family Conference, Singapore, November 2004</p> <p>Invited to represent AIFS on the ABS General Social Survey Reference Group</p> <p>Wide publicity through strong media interest</p>

Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
<p>Families in the Asian Region <i>(International collaboration) (Ongoing)</i></p> <p>Establish connections with East Asian countries regarding family relationships research</p>	<p>Liaise with researchers and policy makers in the Region</p> <p>Report on this work where appropriate</p> <p>Disseminate information on Australian family trends</p>	<p>1 Report on the <i>East Asia Ministerial Forum on Families</i></p> <p>1 Report on meetings with representatives from East Asian countries</p> <p>Met with 2 delegations from Singapore</p> <p>Attended <i>East Asia Ministerial Forum on Families</i>, Hanoi, Vietnam</p> <p>Visited the Scientific Institute for Population, Family and Children (Vietnam Commission for Population, Family and Children)</p> <p>Presented a paper on Australian families with children with a disability to a delegation from the Singaporean Ministry of Community Development and Sport</p>	<p>Links with representatives of South East Asia who are involved in research on families have been developed and strengthened</p> <p>Developed closer links with FaCS International Branch</p> <p>Interest expressed by Asian government and academic researchers</p> <p>Knowledge exchange regularly occurs</p> <p>Increased visits to Asia and from Asian representatives</p> <p>Accepted invitation to present paper on family trends in Singapore</p>
<p>Fertility Decision Making Project <i>(Collaborative research with the Office of the Status of Women) (Commenced June 2002, scheduled for completion August 2004)</i></p> <p>Increase understanding of the factors influencing individuals' and couples' decisions regarding having children</p>	<p>Develop interview schedule and mailout questionnaire</p> <p>Undertake CATI survey and mail survey fieldwork</p> <p>Data preparation and analysis</p> <p>Submit report</p>	<p>Surveys and databases developed</p> <p>CATI survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fieldwork conducted - data prepared - analysis underway <p>Mail survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fieldwork conducted - data being prepared for analysis <p>Report in preparation</p> <p>Awaiting final returns of mail survey</p>	<p>Wide publicity through ongoing media coverage</p>

Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
<p>Positive Family Relationships Relationship Wellbeing Analysis <i>(Ongoing core project)</i></p> <p>Monitor and evaluate marriage-related research and policies, and disseminate information about marital and couple relationships, stability and satisfaction, and marriage and relationship education</p>	<p>Presentations at conferences or other professional engagements</p>	<p>1 conference presentation</p> <p>1 professional development engagement</p> <p>Representation at the Marriage and Relationship Education Network Committee</p>	<p>Ongoing enquiries from media and other relationship professionals</p> <p>Ongoing consultations with marriage and relationship education providers</p> <p>Invitation accepted to represent AIFS on Editorial Advisory Board of <i>Threshold</i> magazine</p>
<p>The Case for Marriage in Australia <i>(New core project in partnership with University of South Australia)</i> <i>(Commenced June 2003; to be completed in 2005)</i></p> <p>Examine whether marriage confers particular advantages on Australian individuals and couples</p> <p>Stage 1: Literature review</p> <p>Stage 2: Analysis of Australian datasets</p>	<p>Draft paper for review March 2004</p>	<p>Preparation of paper delayed due to other unanticipated priorities</p>	
<p>Family Relationships and Work Circumstances <i>(Internal collaborative project)</i> <i>(Commenced July 2003; scheduled for completion April 2004; dissemination of findings is ongoing)</i></p>			

Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
<p>Gain increased understanding of the nature and strength of links between parents' work circumstances and marital and family wellbeing</p>	<p>In collaboration with Program C, analyse and disseminate the HILDA dataset and disseminate findings</p>	<p>1 Research Paper 3 conference presentations 14 media interviews 2 invitations to present findings</p>	<p>Findings widely publicised in print and radio media Findings presented to international conference</p>
<p>Family Law Family Law Monitoring and Evaluation</p> <p>Monitor and evaluate family law-related research and policies, and disseminate relevant information</p>	<p>2 articles in <i>Family Matters</i></p>	<p>5 articles in peer-reviewed journals: - 3 in <i>Family Matters</i> - 2 in academic journals</p> <p>Respond to calls for submissions to three government reviews including the Parliamentary Inquiry into Child Custody Arrangements in the Event of Family Separation</p> <p>Peer review 4 national and 2 international journal articles, and 2 book chapters</p> <p>Appearances on several television and radio shows, including <i>Insight</i> (SBS), <i>Sunday</i> (Ch 9), <i>Sunrise</i> (Ch 7), <i>Life Matters</i> (ABC), and <i>State Focus</i> (Southern Cross TV Ch 10)</p>	<p>Increased contact with national and international research bodies and universities, community and professional groups (including the UK House of Commons Select Committee for Work and Pensions – Child Support sub-committee)</p> <p>Institute reports and books continue to be used by the Family Court, mediation agencies, international and national universities and research institutes</p> <p>Institute research drawn on heavily by the Parliamentary Inquiry into Child Custody Arrangements in the Event of Family Separation</p>

Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
<p>Caring for Children after Parental Separation Project <i>(Core research)</i> <i>(Commenced 2002, scheduled completion June 2004, revised completion date October 2004)</i></p> <p>Achieve a better understanding of the dimensions, predictors, and outcomes of contact between non-resident parents and their children</p>	<p>2 Research Reports submitted for publication</p> <p>2 articles in peer-reviewed journals: - 1 in <i>Family Matters</i> - 1 in academic journal</p> <p>1 additional journal publication</p> <p>2 conference presentations</p>	<p>2 submissions (1 written, 1 oral) to Parliamentary Inquiry</p> <p>1st Research Report published 2nd Research Report commenced</p> <p>4 articles in peer-reviewed journals: - 3 in <i>Family Matters</i> - 1 in academic journal</p> <p>3 other journal publications</p> <p>Coordinate Special Issue of <i>Family Matters</i> on children's living arrangements after parental separation</p> <p>3 conference presentations</p> <p>2 conference proceedings</p> <p>2 submissions (1 written, 1 oral) to Parliamentary Inquiry</p> <p>Numerous media interviews and reports</p>	<p>AIFS work cited extensively by Government's Parliamentary Inquiry into Child Custody Arrangements in the Event of Family Separation</p> <p>Research cited and reproduced in a number of publications in Australia and overseas</p> <p>Invited to contribute to international and national conferences and publications</p> <p>Increased general profile of outcomes due to media work</p>
<p>Understanding Contact Disputes <i>(Collaborative project)</i> <i>(Commenced 2004, scheduled completion Dec 2005)</i></p> <p>Gain insight into the prevalence of disputes about contact and the dynamics or trigger events that lead to disputes on contact escalating into legal conflict.</p>	<p>Prepare scoping documents</p>	<p>Project brief (design and methodology) completed, and inter-agency agreement signed</p>	

Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
<p>Household, Income & Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey <i>(Ongoing collaborative research) (Commenced July 2002; ongoing)</i></p> <p>Represent AIFS in HILDA Program Management Group and External Reference Group meetings</p> <p>Develop the Family Dynamics module for the next wave (fourth wave)</p> <p>Encourage use of the HILDA dataset where appropriate</p>	<p>Attend regular HILDA meetings</p> <p>Finalise module for wave 4</p> <p>Where appropriate, encourage use of HILDA data</p>	<p>Achieved and ongoing</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>The HILDA dataset has been used for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Family Facts and Figures</i> Online - 7 articles in refereed journals: (6 in <i>Family Matters</i> 1 in academic journal) - 1 article in non-refereed journal - 1 article in conference proceedings - Submission to the House of Representatives Committee on Family and Community Affairs, Inquiry into Child Custody Arrangements in the Event of Parental Separation - 13 conference presentations - numerous media interviews 	<p>HILDA dataset is now being used extensively by AIFS researchers, university researchers and by Government departments to increase understanding of links between household and family dynamics, income dynamics and labour dynamics, and to shape evidence-based policies</p>
PROGRAM AREA C: FAMILY AND SOCIETY			
<p>Families, Social Capital and Citizenship <i>(Commenced 2000; completed 2004)</i></p>	<p>Publish research findings</p> <p>Disseminate research findings</p>	<p>1 journal article</p> <p>3 presentations</p>	<p>Research used extensively by academic researchers</p> <p>Research extensively cited by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and Productivity Commission in important papers on the concept of social capital and how to measure it</p> <p>Advice sought from national and international organisations on social capital</p>

Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
<p>Family and Work Decisions (Commenced February 2001; scheduled completion December 2004)</p>	<p>Collect qualitative data Produce research papers Disseminate findings</p>	<p>Qualitative data collected 2 journal articles 3 conference papers 5 presentations to conferences or seminar series Media interviews and research reported in print media</p>	<p>Research cited in government reports and by other researchers</p>
<p>Work and Family (Commenced 2002; scheduled completion January 2004)</p>	<p>In collaboration with Program B, analysis and dissemination of research on links between fathers' work hours and personal and family wellbeing Disseminate other work and family research widely</p>	<p>1 Institute Research Paper in collaboration with Program B and Demographic Trends Unit 3 conference presentations 1 journal article</p>	<p>Findings widely reported in print and electronic media</p>
<p>Ageing and Inter-generational Exchanges within Families (Commenced 2002; ongoing)</p>	<p>Develop program of research Produce research papers Disseminate research publications</p>	<p>Special edition of <i>Family Matters</i> produced 1 journal article 1 Institute Research Paper 1 paper published in workshop proceedings</p>	<p>Research cited in government reports and by other researchers Project findings reported widely in the print media</p>
<p>Parents on Low Income Study (Commenced February 2003; scheduled completion December 2005)</p>	<p>Link FaCS longitudinal database to AIFS Family and Work Decisions survey Produce and disseminate research publications</p>	<p>In progress In progress</p>	

Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
<p>Australians Working Together (AWT) Parenting Payment Activity Requirement Evaluation (Commenced March 2004, scheduled for completion end 2005)</p> <p>It is planned that this evaluation project will inform both the federal government and the public at large about the possible impacts of new legislation concerning compulsory activity requirements for FaCS "customers"</p>	<p>Literature review</p> <p>Development and testing of wave 1 interview schedule (March-June 2004)</p> <p>Undertake wave 1 CATI survey (June-July 2004)</p> <p>Analysis of wave 1 data and development of wave 2 interview schedule (late 2004)</p> <p>Analysis of wave 1 and wave 2 data and preparation of report</p> <p>1 Commissioned report to FaCS (July-August 2005)</p> <p>1 Formal presentation of findings to FaCS (July-August 2005)</p> <p>1 AIFS Research Paper (late 2005)</p> <p>1 Conference paper (late 2005)</p> <p>1 Journal article (late 2005)</p>	<p>Partly completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Partly completed</p> <p>Not due yet</p> <p>Not due yet</p> <p>Not due yet</p> <p>Not due yet</p> <p>Not due yet</p> <p>Not due yet</p> <p>Not due yet</p>	<p>Provision of information about the impact of compulsory activity requirements upon the daily lives of welfare recipients, in this case, those receiving Parenting Payments and whose youngest child is 13-15 years old</p>

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS ANALYSIS
(Supporting all program areas)

<p>Demographic Trends Analysis (Ongoing)</p> <p>Analyse and disseminate broad social and demographic trends related to family</p>	<p>Publication of major book on statistical profiles of Australian families</p> <p>Articles based on Institute datasets, other datasets and ABS data on family trends for <i>Family Matters</i></p> <p>Update and add new series to <i>Family Facts and Figures</i> on AIFS website</p>	<p>Book entitled <i>Diversity and change in Australian families: Statistical profiles</i> has been reviewed and edited</p> <p>4 <i>Family Matters</i> articles</p> <p>1 Journal article</p> <p>1 conference presentation</p> <p>2 new series on cohabitation and child care added to <i>Family Facts and Figures</i> on AIFS website</p>	<p>Articles/information reported by the media and cited by government organisations</p> <p>Findings discussed in media</p> <p>Ever increasing number of AIFS web pages downloaded on <i>Family Facts and Figures</i></p>
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Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
<p>Support to research program areas through collaborative research work</p>	<p>8 joint presentations with Program A and B 4 published articles with Program B and C</p> <p>Collaboration for a paper on child care with Program A</p> <p>Ongoing assistance on data preparation, analysis and report preparation on the Fertility Decision Making Project for OSW (Program B)</p> <p>Assistance in the preparation of AIFS Submission to the Inquiry into Child Custody Arrangements in the Event of Parental Separation</p>	<p>Support to research program areas through collaborative research work</p>	

CONTRACT RESEARCH
Longitudinal Study of Australian Children

<p>Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC) <i>(Expression of Interest 2001; scheduled completion 2011)</i></p> <p>Instrument and methodology development and testing</p>	<p>Conduct of Dress Rehearsal, August-October 2003</p> <p>Preparation of commissioned reports on the conduct of the Dress Rehearsal</p>	<p>526 families recruited to the preliminary sample</p> <p>Wave 1 instruments and data collection processes refined in preparation for main wave</p> <p>4 Commissioned Reports on the Dress Rehearsal submitted to FaCS as per project schedule</p>	<p>LSAC approached for its expertise by overseas governments interested in undertaking studies similar to LSAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project Director invited to serve as member of the Steering Committee for an Irish study - Visit by government officials from the New Zealand Ministry of Social Development - Contact with Scottish Centre for Social Research
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Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
Main wave sample design and selection	Main wave sample selection across 300 postcodes by Health Insurance Commission in 4 stages over the period January-May 2004	About 19,000 families contacted by HIC seeking their participation in the study	Several requests received for nested studies
Main wave 1 data collection	Methodology paper that details the sample design Recruitment of 150 interviewers Conduct 4 interviewer training courses plus preparation of interview instruction manual Recruitment of 5,000 infants and 5,000 four year olds to the study	Paper circulated for comment Completed 4 interviewer training courses conducted over three days in Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth and Sydney. Recruitment of families of infants and 4-year-olds to the study (6,000 to date)	Wave 1 will include two nested studies on the Australian Early Development Index (Centre for Community Child Health), and Parental leave: access, use and efficacy in Australia (University of Queensland) POT and CAG invited to present on LSAC at various state and federal government meetings and workshops (refer to presentation section of main text for details)
Data management	Commissioned report and Discussion Paper no 3 on data management issues related to output of data	Paper circulated for comment	CAG, POT and FaCS LSAC representatives have been invited to the AIHW Advisory Group for the preparation of the AIHW Picture of Australian Children: LSAC data to be used in preparing indicators of children's health and wellbeing
Data analysis	Preparation of draft paper of development of an Outcome Index	Outcome Index Working Group formed Paper circulated for comment	The study was discussed in many government workshops and conferences as having potential to make an important contribution to the evidence base on child-related policies
Implementation of marketing and promotion strategies	Extensive mail-out of posters and brochures to 18,000 child-related agencies Publish articles in a range of magazines Official launch of LSAC wave 1	Multiple media interviews resulting from marketing and promotion strategies Articles on LSAC published in Woolworths <i>Parents' Magazine</i> , <i>Jigsaw</i> (NCAC), <i>Women's Day</i> , <i>The Journey</i> (Centrelink), <i>FaCS Research News</i> Wave 1 of LSAC officially launched by the Minister for Family and Community Services	

Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
		<p>Launch featuring in evening news of most TV channels (in Melbourne and interstate) followed by radio interviews and articles in the print media</p>	
CONTRACT RESEARCH			
AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SEXUAL ASSAULT			
<p>Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault (ACSSA) <i>(Commenced January 2003; scheduled completion June 2005)</i></p> <p>Publications</p>	<p>1 Issues Paper 3 Newsletters 3 Briefing Papers</p> <p>Respond to small-scale research enquiries, or requests for advice to key stakeholders.</p> <p>Promote national use of enquiry service</p>	<p>1 Issues Paper produced and distributed 3 Newsletters produced and distributed 3 Briefing Papers produced and distributed 1 Journal Article published</p> <p>Numerous media interviews</p> <p>Responded to 151 research queries in the reporting period</p> <p>Participated in two consultative committees</p> <p>Increased use of enquiry service by non-Victorian States and Territories</p> <p>Member of Conference Organising Committee for "Home Truths" conference</p> <p>Principal author of Project brief to research an increase in the number of rape complaints being withdrawn after initial reports being made</p> <p>Member of Victorian State-wide Steering Committee to Reduce Sexual Assault</p>	<p>Invitations to give presentations</p> <p>Information from publications used in policy documents/consultations papers</p>
<p>Advisory</p>			<p>Provided access to current information and research on sexual assault to government and non-government organisations</p>

Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
<p>Website</p> <p>Networking and outreach</p> <p>Establish an evidence base of best practice approaches and interventions in response to sexual assault</p> <p>Research for Victorian Health Promotion Foundation</p>	<p>Develop a website that would provide for electronic access to ACSSA's publications and other resources</p>	<p>Over 70,000 hits on website</p> <p>Over 11,000 hits accessing the publications online.</p> <p>Over 200 members of ACSSA-Alert receiving an "alert message" regarding new publications.</p> <p>Fortnightly "alert" messages sent to subscribers in relation to new events, conference, reports.</p> <p>6 promotional presentations to sexual assault services</p> <p>3 conference presentations</p> <p>1 seminar presentation and participation in research priorities workshop</p> <p>10 items available for browsing in the Good Practice Programs and Responses to Sexual Assault</p> <p>Contracted to analyse and review data for Victorian Health Promotion Foundation "Burden of disease caused by intimate partner violence"</p> <p>Contributed to publication</p> <p>Provided distribution point for publication to over 6,500 individuals and organisations</p>	<p>The work of ACSSA and information about on sexual assault made readily accessible to national audience</p> <p>Promote and raise awareness of the Centre</p> <p>Raise awareness of sexual assault and its impact on the Australian community</p> <p>Increasing hits on Good Practice page of website, browsing current programs</p> <p>Publication of the report <i>The health costs of violence: Measuring the burden of disease caused by intimate partner violence</i>, launched on 16 June 2004</p>

Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
CONTRACT RESEARCH CLEARINGHOUSE			
NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION CLEARINGHOUSE			
<p>National Child Protection Clearinghouse (NCPC) <i>(Commenced 1995; current three-year contract until June 2007)</i></p> <p>Publications</p> <p>Advisory role</p>	<p>2 Issues Papers</p> <p>2 Newsletters</p> <p>Significant consultation and advice to international agencies, governments, national bodies, the non-government sector and the child abuse research community</p>	<p>2 Issues Papers published and distributed to a mailing list of 7,900 individuals and organisations</p> <p>2 Newsletters published and distributed to a mailing list of 7,900 individuals and organisations</p> <p>Ongoing advisory role for Australian Government and State departments</p> <p>Responded to 952 queries in the reporting period</p>	<p>211,181 electronic copies of Issues Papers downloaded from the website</p> <p>139,224 electronic copies of Newsletters downloaded from the website</p> <p>Publications cited in research and policy publications</p>
<p>Accessibility to Child Abuse Prevention Programs <i>(Commenced 2001; scheduled completion October 2003)</i></p>	<p>Data collection and analysis completed</p> <p>Final report drafted and published</p>	<p>Study completed</p> <p>Report disseminated to the mailing list and published electronically on the website</p>	<p>Study has been cited by non-government peak bodies in policy material</p>
<p>Australian Children's Contact Services Project <i>(Commenced 2002; scheduled completion June 2004)</i></p>	<p>Development and piloting of all data collection instruments completed</p> <p>Data collection completed</p> <p>Report produced</p>	<p>Development and piloting of all data collection instruments completed</p> <p>Data collection completed</p> <p>Report almost completed</p>	<p>Family Court of Australia and the Australian Government Attorney-General's department have expressed strong interest in the project</p>
<p>Northern Territory Child Protection Review <i>(Contribution to the Review)</i></p>	<p>Production of Discussion Paper</p>	<p>Discussion Paper published</p>	

Project aims	Planned outputs	Actual outputs	Outcomes achieved
CONTRACT RESEARCH			
STRONGER FAMILIES LEARNING EXCHANGE			
<p>Stronger Families Learning Exchange (SFLEX) <i>(Commenced January 2002; scheduled completion June 2004- extended to June 2005)</i></p> <p>Ongoing collection and analysis of information from Stronger Families Fund (SFF) projects</p> <p>Provide ongoing assistance to projects</p> <p>Disseminate learnings to FaCS, the Community Sector, projects and other stakeholders</p>	<p>Develop website to include information from SFF projects</p> <p>Collect regular Action Research Reports from SFF projects</p> <p>All projects to receive visits from SFLEX training and support team</p> <p>Assist projects to report on and evaluate their work</p> <p>Conduct workshops for SFF projects</p> <p>Publish 2 Bulletins</p> <p>7 conference presentations</p>	<p>Website opened and developed to include information from all 50 SFF projects</p> <p>Action Research Reports received from projects and published in SFLEX Bulletins</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Many projects have completed and published evaluation reports and many are ongoing</p> <p>6 state and regional workshops were conducted for projects</p> <p>3 Bulletins, including a special "workshop" edition were published and distributed to the SFLEX mailing list of 7,000</p> <p>Achieved</p>	<p>Valuable information is publicly available via the website which has grown increasingly popular - especially project pages</p> <p>Information about the issues of community-based projects made widely available in the SFLEX Bulletins</p> <p>At least three projects have received "Exemplary" or "Best Practice" awards</p> <p>Bulletins have been widely used in community sector and several articles were reprinted in other publications</p> <p>Presentations at conferences well received and copies sought</p>