

CONFERENCE REPORT

International Association for Feminist Economics conference

In June 2008, Dr Jennifer Baxter attended the 17th conference of the International Association of Feminist Economics (IAFFE) in Torino, Italy. The range of topics covered at the conference was vast, and included numerous papers of interest to AIFS. For example, key topics included women's involvement in the labour market, elder care concerns (a significant issue for European countries) and child care. Addressing the latter theme, Dr Baxter presented a paper co-authored with Dr Matthew Gray titled *Parents Who Don't Use Childcare: Who Provides the Care in Working Couple Families with Infants?* The conference was a terrific opportunity to meet researchers from around the world and discuss common interests, and to showcase the work of AIFS, and the potential of the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children.



Jennifer Baxter (left) with other conference attendees at the IAFFE conference dinner

LIFE AT 3

The Institute is pleased to be associated with the *Life at 3* series, produced by Film Australia (now Screen Australia) in association with Heiress Films, which tracks 11 families through their ordinary routines and milestones, and looks at the impact on their lives of things such as parents' relationships, finances, work, health and education.

The series draws on the experience of *Growing Up in Australia*, and input to the program is provided by Institute researchers, both through conducting the *Growing Up in Australia* interviews with the families (Carol Soloff and Ren Adams), and by providing the study data that forms the backdrop to the study (Sebastian Misson and Diana Smart).

The two episodes of *Life at 1* were re-screened on ABC1 during September and the "Fighting Fat" and "Bad Behaviour" episodes of *Life at 3* were screened during October 2008.



SOCIAL POLICY ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

While overseas, Dr Jennifer Baxter also attended the UK Social Policy Association conference, "Challenging Boundaries", in Edinburgh. Interestingly, there was some overlap in themes covered by this and the IAFFE conferences, although approached from different perspectives. Women's employment was again covered, including

a keynote presentation by Ann Orloff titled *Feminism for a Post-Maternalist Era: The Gender Equality Project in Europe and America*. Other papers addressed topics related to work and family, including grandparent care of children, welfare to work, retirement and employment opportunities for older workers.

GROWING UP IN AUSTRALIA UPDATE

The third round of interviews for *Growing Up in Australia: The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children* have been underway for most of 2008. While interviewers have been busy "in the field", Institute researchers have been busy publicising the results of the study at various conferences and have also been forging links with other related studies.

Several conference papers have been presented recently that use LSAC data. Dr Jennifer Baxter presented a paper jointly prepared with Dr Matthew Gray titled *Parents Who Don't Use Childcare: Who Provides the Care in Working Couple Families with Infants?* at the 17th conference of the International Association for Feminist Economics in Torino, Italy (see report above). On 30 October, Dr Matthew Gray made a presentation to the Australian General Practice Network Forum: *Early Years Longitudinal Study: What's the Data Saying?* and Professor Alan Hayes made an address to the 2008 Sir Harold Wyndham Lecture on 17 October, titled *Divided Nation? Why Educational Opportunity is an Engine of Social Inclusion*.

Linda Bencic, the study's design manager, presented a paper on *How Important is Marriage to Australians' Health, Wealth and Happiness?* at the Australian Population Association Conference in July, and at the Institute's own conference later that month.

Sebastian Misson, the study's data manager, also presented a paper at the AIFS conference on *Determining the Effects of Housing Costs on the Well-Being of Australian Families*. In total, 14 papers using data from the study were presented at the Institute's conference.

While overseas on leave in July, the study's project manager, Carol Soloff, made visits to the UK Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS), which conducts the Millennium Cohort Study (a birth cohort study that started in 2000), and the Growing Up in Scotland (GUS) team, who are conducting a two-cohort study like *Growing Up in Australia* that started in 2005. Ms Soloff also met with Professor Nick Buck, from the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Essex, who manages the new UK Household Longitudinal Study, which is subsuming the longer standing British Household Panel Study.

Ms Soloff also made a presentation on *Growing Up in Australia* as part of a concurrent session symposium, along with members of the *Growing Up in Australia* Consortium Advisory Group, Associate Professor Donna Berthelsen and Dr Linda Harrison, at the Early Childhood Australia conference in Canberra in October. Over 1,100 delegates attended this conference, and the session on the study was very well received.