

# National Child Protection Clearinghouse activities

Conferences and forums in which Clearinghouse staff have participated during the first six months of 2006 are detailed below. The resources that we prepare for conferences and forums are available free of charge. If you would like access to these resources, visit the Clearinghouse website at: [www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/presentations.html](http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/presentations.html), or contact the National Child Protection Clearinghouse by telephone: (03) 9214 7888 or email: [ncpc@aifs.gov.au](mailto:ncpc@aifs.gov.au)

## March

### **Child Safety: A Community Responsibility, Melbourne (7 March)**

Jenny Higgins attended a forum at which Victorian Child Safety Commissioner, Bernie Geary, was the guest speaker. The forum was hosted by the Australian Institute for Primary Care and the Primary and Community Health Network. Mr Geary spoke of his 30-year commitment to working with vulnerable children and young people, beginning with his career as Victoria's first youth outreach worker, followed by 17 years of experience serving on the Youth Parole Board. Mr Geary was an executive with the St Vincent De Paul Society prior to his current appointment. In his current role, Mr Geary spoke of his commitment to providing a strong and independent voice for children and young people in Victoria.

### **Statutory Child Protection Learning and Development Group meeting, Canberra (9–10 March)**

Leah Bromfield attended the bi-annual Statutory Child Protection Learning and Development Group meeting in Canberra. While in Canberra, Leah also visited with research staff at the Institute of Child Protection Studies at the Australian Catholic University.

### **Child Neglect Forum, Melbourne (27 March)**

The Child Neglect Forum was hosted by the Victorian Parenting Centre and the University of South Australia's Australian Centre for Child Protection on 27 March. The Australian Institute of Family Studies National Child Protection Clearinghouse provided the location for the event. During the course of the day, there were three panel sessions, with stimulating and lively discussion about issues relating to child neglect, and suggestions were put forward about a research agenda. Leah Bromfield and Daryl Higgins from the Clearinghouse both participated in one of the three panel discussions. Clearinghouse staff, Prue Holzer, Jenny Higgins and Ellen Fish, also sat in as observers.

## May

### **Out-of-Home Care Research Forum: From Research to Action (19 May)**

Daryl Higgins and Leah Bromfield attended the national Out-of-Home Care Research Forum: From Research to Action and provided an overview of the Clearinghouse research report *Out-of-home care in Australia: Messages from research*. The forum was jointly convened by the Australian Institute of Family Studies, the Community Services Ministers' Advisory Council, and the Child and Family Welfare Association of Australia. A small working party will draft a report based on the outcomes from this forum.

## June

### **Domestic Violence and Incest Resource Centre's Family Law Forum (13 June)**

Prue Holzer attended the Domestic Violence and Incest Resource Centre's annual Family Law Forum: 'Now be reasonable: Preparing for the new family law system'. The forum was designed to introduce practitioners, researchers and other interested parties to the changes that will be made to the family law system following the commencement on 1 July 2006 of the new *Family Law Amendment (Shared Parental Responsibility) Act 2006*.

### **National Child Protection Forum (27–28 June)**

Daryl Higgins and Leah Bromfield attended the National Child Protection Forum and presented a paper titled: *A national approach to child protection: How close are we?* The Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs hosted the forum, which was held on 27–28 June 2006 in Melbourne. The forum was part of the Australian Government's response to the Senate Community Affairs References Committee report, *Protecting vulnerable children: A national challenge*. The primary outcome of the forum was a draft National Strategy for Child Protection.

## Research updates

Over the past six months, Clearinghouse staff have met with researchers from key organisations to discuss current and future research, areas of potential duplication and potential partnerships. Organisations included: the Australian Catholic University Institute for Child Protection Studies, the New South Wales Department of Community Services Research Unit, the Take 2 Program, Berry Street Victoria, and the Australian Centre for Child Protection at the University of South Australia.