Our aim

To enhance the well-being of children, young people and families through quality research, training and community education
INTRODUCTION

The Institute of Child Protection Studies (the Institute) at Australian Catholic University (the University) was established in January 2005 to carry out high quality practice research, evaluation and professional development to enhance outcomes for children, young people and their families. It was established as a partnership between the ACT Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (the Department) and the University. The Department also contracts the Institute to carry out various projects.

Through its activities the Institute aims to influence policy and practice to achieve positive social change. One of the benefits of the Institute is our strength in rigorous academic research and its direct translation into policy and practice. It does this by building partnerships with government, non government and community organisations.

We frame our work with the assumption that best outcomes are achieved by:

- keeping children and young people at the forefront
- understanding children and young people in the contexts of family, community and society
- recognising everyone’s strengths, resources and possibilities
- a commitment to social justice as outlined in the University’s mission

The Institute believes that the care and protection of young people is inextricably linked with the overall well-being of children, families and communities. For the service system to best respond to children and young people, it must continually develop its understanding of their needs, experiences and understandings. Through research, the Institute aims to work with a range of partners to ensure that ongoing reflection and development are fundamental to the policy process.

All research undertaken by the Institute is underpinned by commitments to:

- collaborative approaches to planning and conducting research;
- seeking the views of those affected by a program or service (such as client groups and service providers);
- exploring ways of developing research partnerships with key stakeholders including people who use services; and
- ethical research practice
REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF THE INSTITUTE

As Chief Executive of the ACT Department of Disability Housing and Community Services and the Chair of the Institute of Child Protection Studies, it is my privilege to present the Institute’s Annual Report.

While the Institute works closely with our Department on a number of initiatives, its reach into the broader community is significant. In reviewing the Institute’s achievements of the past year, it is pleasing to note the number of cutting edge projects designed to improve outcomes for the most vulnerable children and young people in the Australian community.

From a Departmental perspective, the strong relationship we have developed with the Institute has allowed us to reflect and improve our planning for the future. For example, the Supporting Transitions from Juvenile Detention research examined outcomes for young people at the (now decommissioned) Quamby Youth Detention Centre. The findings of this report are assisting the Department to improve transitions for young people who attend the new Bimberi Youth Justice Centre to ensure they have the best opportunities to return and successfully integrate into the community.

The Department has also recently completed a successful overseas recruitment campaign of new Care and Protection caseworkers from the United Kingdom. Recruitment and retention of professionals in the area of Care and Protection area is always a challenge. The Transferability of Social Work Knowledge between Different Practice and Cultural Contexts study and the Institute’s submission to the Review of the Qualifications and Training Pathways for the Dept of Child Safety Queensland are critical contributions to our understanding of the issues facing Care and Protection agencies. This work highlights the benefits of the partnership the Department has with the Institute as the findings inform our daily work practices.

More broadly, there has been a heightened interest over the last year in relation to national developments and work on early childhood, prevention and intervention, child protection and reducing Indigenous disadvantage. The Institute has been involved in evaluating a number of Government and Non-Government programs which are relevant to this work including the Early Intervention Programs in the ACT, the Integrated Family Support program, and the Step up, Step down Program. The Institute members also continue to promote the importance of collaborative work through all strata of government and non-government agencies to affect positive outcomes for children and young people in our community.
As we look forward, the innovative work of the “Working in the Grey- Increasing collaboration between services in Inner North Canberra: A Communities for Children” partnership is of special interest and strongly complements work occurring across and within the Department to improve the social connectedness and capability of vulnerable families and hard to reach families. Strengthening links for vulnerable families to available supports and networks in the community will make a difference. It is important for all of us to ask, how can I make our community stronger? This project will help show the way.

I would like to thank Morag McArthur and her team for the excellent work of the Institute, and commend the body of work that has been achieved this year.

Martin Hehir
Chair, Board of the Institute of Child Protection Studies

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

The fourth year of the Institute was one of consolidating and building our research strengths and partnerships. We looked forward, developing a strategic plan and framework for the next three years. One key objective is to build the Institute’s identity as a leading, child-centred research organisation. We have made good progress in working towards this objective; by developing a set of child-centred research principles, through our writing, and through a wide range of research projects and other activities. We met success with our strategy of attracting post graduate students to carry out research about children and their families, much assisted by obtaining funding from the Canberra Southern Cross Club for a three year PhD scholarship.

**Effective dissemination and partnerships**

The work over the year has been varied and broad. However, all of our projects are unified by the shared aim of using the research process and findings to influence and directly inform policy makers and practitioners to improve outcomes for children and their families. Policy and practitioners are under considerable pressure to underpin what they do with the best evidence available. In response, we have focused our attention on developing strategies to more successfully link research evidence to policy and practice. Our two key strategies are to work in partnerships and to use a range of different dissemination approaches. Institute projects have built links across the otherwise often siloed research and policy environment. A variety of different methods have been used to ensure research is meaningful and useful to decision makers and practitioners with the ultimate aim of improving services for children, young people and their families.
New Partnerships
Partnerships are vital to effective working and in 2008 two further projects demonstrate the wider connections we are making. The Institute is a member of an Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) funded collaboration that has been formed to develop a network that brings together child protection and homelessness practitioners, policy makers and researchers. The Institute brings its expertise in engaging children directly in research and our learning from the 2007 project that explored children’s experience of homelessness.

Also in 2008 we successfully applied for an Australian Research Council Discovery grant for a study that examines the future and challenges of the Children’s Courts throughout Australia. Professor Peter Camilleri and Institute staff are responsible for the ACT component of the study. This national project will explore the issues facing the Children’s courts in each state and territory and identify what key stakeholders think is possible in terms of reforms. This is a groundbreaking project bringing together researchers with both juvenile justice and child protection backgrounds.

The context within which the Institute works is undergoing significant change. Early in 2008 a new Vice Chancellor was appointed to the University. Professor Greg Craven has a broad ranging reform agenda and is very keen to increase the University’s research activities. There will be some structural changes that may affect the Institute. It has been recognised that the Institute is developing significant research expertise and is well aligned with the University’s social justice mission.

The broader policy and political context is also changing, particularly with the Australian Government pushing ahead with a wide reform agenda. We still await the release of a Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children and the potential it may have for change.

Institute Staff
We are very lucky to have attracted a group of excellent researchers to the Institute who bring significant expertise and passion to the work. The number of projects that we have completed and are working on demonstrates the hard work and range of skills and knowledge the Institute team possesses. Staff on the whole has remained very stable over the last 4 years which is important to building the Institute’s capacity. Debbie Noble-Carr, who has worked on a number of projects that have directly engaged children and young people, has left the Institute to have a baby but we hope to see her back in the future. Kate Butler joined the Institute staff and brings with her significant expertise in evaluation research and a background in Health Promotion which strengthens our research capacity in those areas. Tim Moore will take up the Southern Cross Club PhD scholarship in 2009 but will remain attached to the Institute while carrying out his studies.

We look forward to the next year and the challenges and opportunities that will emerge.
Associate Professor Morag McArthur
Director, Institute of Child Protection Studies
INSTITUTE BOARD AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
As at 31 December 2008

Institute of Child Protection Studies Board

Sandra Lambert Chief Executive, Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DHCS), Chair of the Board
Prof Peter Wilson Pro Vice Chancellor, International & Research, ACU National
Prof Peter Camilleri Rector, ACU National, Canberra Campus, Head, School of Social Work, ACU National (ACT, NSW and QLD)
Dr Valerie Braithwaite Director, Centre for Tax System Integrity in the Regulatory Institutions Network, Australian National University
Frank Duggan Senior Director, Strategy and Purchasing, Office of Children, Youth & Family Support, DHCS
Patricia Hansen Head, School of Social Work, ACU National
Jenny Kitchin Director, Partnerships, Office of Children, Youth & Family Support, DHCS
Assoc Prof Morag McArthur Director, Institute of Child Protection Studies
Megan Mitchell Executive Director, Office of Children, Youth and Family Support, DHCS
Bev Orr National President, Australian Foster Care Association
Prof Dorothy Scott Director, Australian Centre for Child Protection, University of South Australia
Lisa Stockheim Representative of Children, Youth and Families ACT (CYFACT)

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee provides advice to the Institute in relation to its operations and provides advice to the Board Chair for the Board Agenda.

Prof Peter Camilleri Rector, ACU National, Canberra Campus, Chair of the Executive Committee, Head, School of Social Work, ACU National (ACT & NSW)
Frank Duggan Director, Care & Protection Services, Office of Children, Youth and Family Support
Dr Morag McArthur Director, Institute of Child Protection Studies
Jenny Kitchin Director, Partnerships, Office of Children, Youth & Family Support, DHCS
Megan Mitchell Executive Director, Office of Children, Youth and Family Support, DHCS
Board and Executive Committee Members who resigned prior to 31 December 2008

Annette Edgerton  Representative of Children, Youth and Families ACT (CYFACT)
Meredith Hunter  Director, Youth Coalition of the ACT
Professor Peter Wilson  PVC Research ACU resigned end of 2008
A fourth edition of the journal was produced in 2008. We are pleased to have brought together a group of articles in this edition which are from different disciplines and which demonstrate examples of the diverse knowledge base required for a genuinely cross sectoral approach to policy and practice in child protection.

The first article identifies a lack of research into work with parents (of very young children) who present with signs of borderline personality disorder (BPD) Louise Newman, Professor of Perinatal and Infant Psychiatry at the University of Newcastle provides an overview of theories of attachment and borderline personality disorder and discusses the overdue need for attachment focused ways of working with parents to assist them build relationships with their babies and young children. A key message is the need for skilled and resilient people, working from universal settings, who can really support parents in non judgmental ways. Dedicated support, for example, by child care staff or maternal and child health nurses can help parents recognise the link between their own early experiences and the way they respond to their infants. Dedicated resources to universal settings also requires support for staff as they work with parent’s who have such an enduring and highly articulated level of personal need.

Dr Lesley Laing from the University of Sydney contributes to a growing understanding of how violence often continues to occur after parents separate. She presents findings from an exploratory study that documents experiences of women involved in post separation contact between children and former partners who were violent. The findings reveal the debilitating effects of ongoing intimidation on women and their children and the need for greater support to women’s efforts to keep their children safe. The findings of this and other studies which challenge myths that women and children are safe once they leave violent partners call for more integrated service responses between Courts, State Child Protection and the Commonwealth funded family relationship service system.

Dr Joanna Zubrzycki and Lorraine Thomson from Australian Catholic University and Dr Pamela Trevithick from University of Hull in the United Kingdom provide research findings which inform international recruitment strategies in child protection. Their study of the recruitment of 23 child protection workers to the Australian Capital Territory from England, Scotland, Northern Island and the Irish Republic in 2003-5 describes workforce issues generally in child protection and the particular challenges of overseas recruitment, especially professional identity, qualifications, understanding of cultural influences and the integration
and transferability of existing knowledge and experience. It identifies the need for targeted support, information and training during the transition in order to maximise the contribution which overseas qualified workers can make to Australian Child Protection.

The focus of an article by Dr Fran Gale and Associate Professor Natalie Bolzan’s paper is young people, social capital and mental health. The article reinforces the importance of a commitment through research to hearing directly from children and young people. The authors argue that without this commitment we cannot know how young people experience the world or understand how social arrangements impact on them. An additional benefit of hearing directly from young people is the contribution they can directly make to effective research.

We are really pleased that this edition features a reflection by Dr Sue Packer, ACT Community paediatrician. Sue shares the wisdom of her more than 20 years practice with children who have suffered harm through child abuse and neglect. She identifies few real advances in some spheres over all those years, pointing, for example, to the continuing need for changed court procedures to enable children to present evidence in more developmentally appropriate and supported ways so that the court experience itself is not more damaging than the abuse. Sue argues also that the closed nature of the Children’s Court (intended to protect the identity of the child) means that the public is prevented from learning about how child abuse is a problem in their community as well as the decisions which are being made for children’s futures through the courts.

Sue’s vast experience of children referred for the management of violent behaviours have led her to the conclusion that almost all have experienced violence directly in their lives, particularly domestic violence. This “pervasive trauma” tears their lives apart and isolates them from the childhood experiences which best equip them for successful adulthood. Along with general observations about the impact of mandatory reporting she argues that reporting sexual abuse before it has actually been disclosed by the child imposes barriers to these children seeking help. Sue’s reflection should be read carefully; it contains many messages about the long term failings of current approaches and enduring frustrations which require a much greater effort to overcome. Success will only come, she believes, “when children are universally recognised as the highly vulnerable, but valued inheritors of our world”.

We have two very exciting editions planned for 2009. The first is a collection of invited papers that are responding to an article written by Professor Valerie Braithwaite, Dr Nathan Harris and Ms Mary Ivec from the Australian National University entitled: Seeking to clarify child protection’s regulatory principles. The paper aims to examine the current child protection system from a regulatory perspective. This is an important and timely paper that seeks to elicit debate about the role of government in child protection.

The second edition planned for 2009 is being edited by Professor Dorothy Scott from the National Centre for Child Protection and discusses how best to build systems for protecting and nurturing children. The journal will have a range of articles focused on the areas of Drug and Alcohol, Mental Health, Family Violence and Homelessness to explore how the capacity of adult services can be developed to be more family and child focused.
The College of Child and Family Protection Practitioners continues to generously support the journal which is now available through the INFORMIT data base as well as in hard copy for members of the college. We also acknowledge the very generous personal support provided by Michael Bishop who is President of the College.

We are also very appreciative of the willing assistance provided by Kate Jones, Chairperson of the Editorial Board and of all our excellent reviewers. The quality of the journal is further enhanced through professional copyediting services funded by the ACT Department of Housing, Disability and Community Services.

Gail Winkworth
Editor
INSTITUTE STAFF

As at 31 December 2008

Director

Associate Professor Morag McArthur, (Dip. Welfare: BScSci (Hons) UNSW; Postgrad Cert Higher Ed Teaching UNSW; PhD UNSW)

Morag is the founding Director of the Institute and is an experienced human services researcher. Prior to this appointment she was an academic in the School of Social Work at Australian Catholic University where she taught research methods, public policy and electives in substance abuse. Her research interests include issues facing children and families such as homelessness, implementation of social policy and early intervention approaches. Her PhD examined the privatisation of welfare services.

Senior Research Fellow

Dr Gail Winkworth PSM, BSW (Hons) UNSW; DSW USyd

Prior to completing her doctoral research in government service delivery and partnerships Gail held a number of senior positions managing government programs for children and families in NSW and the ACT. These included child protection, out of home care and adoptions. She coordinated the ACT Strategy for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect and developed the Strategy for the Introduction of Mandatory Reporting in the ACT. During the late 1990s she developed and managed a number of cross sectoral, early intervention programs in the ACT such as the multi media initiative, “Parentlink” (www.parentlink.act.gov.au) to support families and prevent child abuse and neglect and the “Schools as Communities Program”. Gail is the editor of the journal of the Australian Child and Family Protection Practitioners, “Communities, Children and Families Australia”.

Research Fellows

Mr Tim Moore, BA ANU; M.Child&AdolWelf CSU; M.Youth Studies ACU

Tim is a Research Fellow with the Institute. For ten years, he has worked with children, young people and their families, particularly those experiencing homelessness, affected by alcohol or drug programs or parental disability or mental illness. Over the past four years, Tim has been involved in a number of research projects that have elicited children and young people’s experiences and views about their lives and the systems that support them. As a youth worker he is particularly interested in youth participation and access issues for those most marginalised.

Ms Lorraine Thomson, BSW (Hons) UNSW; M.Litt (Peace Studies) UNE; MSW ACU
Lorraine is a Research Fellow in the Institute with experience in generalist social work. Lorraine was a project officer for the Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) funded research on sole father families who are homeless, and the ACT Health funded evaluation of the ACT Sobering up Shelter. Within the Institute she has undertaken research in a number of projects, including Good Practice for Placement Planning (for the Office of Child Youth and Family Support) Good Practice in Residential Care (for Marist Youth Services) and the development of the AFFIRM evaluation framework for Disability ACT.

Kate Butler, BA App SocSci (Hons); MA Women’s Studies; Postgrad Dip Health Promotion; Postgrad Cert Assessment & Evaluation.

Prior to joining the Institute, Kate worked as an independent consultant specialising in evaluation, planning and service development. Kate’s background is in health promotion. She has held positions at several State Government agencies and worked in the areas of population health policy development, program planning and implementation, and evaluation. Her particular interests include prevention and early intervention issues associated with youth health, child and family health and rural community health.

Project Officers

Ms Vicky Saunders, RN, BSW(Hons) ACU National

Vicky is a Research Officer with the Institute. Over the last eight years, she has predominantly worked with foster carers and children and young people in out of home care. More recently Vicky has been involved in a number of research projects at the Institute including the Supporting Transitions from Juvenile Detention Project and the evaluation of the Relationships Australia Canberra and Riverina (RACR) Counselling Program. Her research interests include: community participation; engagement of children and young people in research activities and child protection policy and practice.

Ms Megan Layton-Thompson, BSW Monash, BA ANU, Cert IV Training and Accreditation

Megan has spent the last 12 years working with refugees and migrants, with a focus on children, young people and their parents and has a particular interest in cross-cultural work. She worked at Companion House for 8 years in a number of roles including Children’s Counsellor/Advocate, Community Development Team Leader and Acting Director. Much of her work has focused on prevention and early intervention strategies and collaboration. She has also run training for support workers working with people with disabilities. She has coordinated youth services for young migrants and refugees in Canberra and south-east Sydney.

Debbie Noble-Carr, BSW RMIT

Since completing a Bachelor of Social Work degree in 1997, Debbie has worked in a wide range of direct service positions such as financial counselling and housing support work.
Over the last five years Debbie has started a family and actively pursued her interest in social research, completing projects on issues such as young carers, child care, adoption and children experiencing homelessness.

**Adjunct Staff**

**Giovanna Richmond**, B.Soc.Stud., (Sydney Uni.), B.A (Hons) (ANU), PSM

Giovanna is a lecturer and a PhD student in the School of Social Work at the ACU. Prior to joining the School, Giovanna was Director of Child, Youth & Women’s Health Program in ACT Health. For many years she has worked in the ACT and NSW as a practitioner and manager of health, disability and family support services for government and non government organisations. Her research interests are in policy development and sustainability in human services, cross disciplinary service and knowledge integration, and child protection policy and practice.

**Dr Paul Chesterton**, MEc Dip Ed USyd; MA PhD Macq; FIAIR

Paul is an Adjunct Professor at ACU National and a former Director of the University's Institute for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning. He specialises in evaluation, focusing on policies, programs, service provision and organizational structures. During the past 18 years, he has undertaken more than 35 evaluation projects for state and federal government departments, education systems, universities and international development agencies. He has been regularly contracted to provide evaluation training workshops for federal government departments and in 2008 for the Australasian Evaluation Society, across Australia and New Zealand.

**Ms Christine Healy**, B.A, Dip Soc.Studies Uni Melbourne; Dip Business Admin, Swinburne Inst. Tech; Masters Social Policy, University Wollongong

Chris has an extensive career in public sector senior management in the Victorian, NSW and ACT State and Territory Governments and a long professional background and experience in community recovery after emergencies and disasters. She is a regular lecturer at the EMA Training Institute at Mt Macedon, and provides community recovery training in the ACT and in other states. As well as being the ACT partner on the Canberra Bushfire Recovery Research undertaken by the Institute Chris was a consultant to the Queensland Government on community recovery services after Cyclone Larry.

*The Institute also employs additional staff as required. These staff members are listed with the relevant project description.*
AUSTRALIAN AWARD FOR UNIVERSITY TEACHING

A partnership with University staff began in 1998 when the ACT Government requested professional development workshops for staff in youth justice and community corrections. Since then, the partnership has evolved into a project titled ‘Engaging the Human Services.’ This has led to the development and delivery of professional training services and undergraduate and postgraduate courses for specific cohorts of ACT Government staff in the areas of both child protection and corrections. “The outcomes have improved institutional culture and practice as well as influencing policy development in human services,” Professor Camilleri said. According to Professor Camilleri, child protection and corrective services are two of the most difficult, complex and controversial areas of human service work, that deal with either the most vulnerable or marginalised members of society.

Having well-educated custodial staff has been a central strategy in the planning of the first new prison in the ACT, which is expected to opened in 2009. The child protection program has also witnessed huge success, especially in terms of staff retention. By the end of 2006, the ACT Government reported that staff turnover in child protection services had plummeted from 60 per cent to just 6 per cent. This success also led to the development of the new Master of Human Services (Child Protection) which began early in 2008.

YOGIE AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH
In December 2008, the Institute, in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Support Unit at DHCS won a YOGIE award for Excellence in Research and Evaluation for a project entitled: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Young people’s Experiences of Out of Home Care. The use of peer researchers, the cultural alliance with Aboriginal communities and creative use of youth friendly methods were particularly noted. The YOGIE awards acknowledge creative and innovative practice with young people and are auspiced by the Youth Coalition of the ACT.

RESEARCH PROGRAM

Projects Completed in 2008

Evaluation of Relationships Australia Canberra and Riverina (RACR) Counselling Program for Relationships Australia

The Institute undertook an evaluation of the Relationships Australia Canberra and Riverina (RACR) counselling program. This program aims to improve relationships for individuals, couples and families. The research assessed the extent to which the program achieves its goals and addresses the priority areas identified in the strategic plan. The evaluation involved: analysing the use of the program by individuals, couples and families, including the number of sessions they attended and their overall demographics; assessing clients' views as to the effectiveness (accessibility, appropriateness and responsiveness) of the program and working with staff to explore their views as to what is in place or needs to be in place for an effective service.

Vicky Saunders, Lorraine Thomson, Morag McArthur, Merrilyn Woodward
Review of the Qualifications and Training Pathways Dept of Child Safety Queensland for Australian Association of Social Workers

The Institute was invited to draft the submission by the Australian Association of Social Workers to the Queensland Review of qualifications and training pathways. The submission calls for a national approach to workforce planning strategies for attracting, training and retaining staff and accredited courses in child protection at the post graduate levels. It argues that a range of quality management and leadership post graduate courses that include units of study such as Supervision, Leadership and Management of Human Services Organizations offered by universities have credibility with staff and the broader human services industry.

Morag McArthur, Gail Winkworth

Submission for the Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Services in NSW for Australian Association of Social Workers

The Institute was invited to draft the submission by the Australian Association of Social Workers for the inquiry into Child Protection Services in NSW. The submission argues the need for far reaching change that results in a renewed focus on children in their families and their communities which includes not only the protection of children in danger but the wider perspectives of wellbeing, prevention, therapy, family and community capacity building and social inclusion.

Gail Winkworth

Child Wellbeing and Protection Curriculum Content for Social Work Qualifying Courses for Australian Association of Social Workers

ICPS was contracted by the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) to develop guidelines and a resources document for child wellbeing and protection content and accreditation standards in social work education programs. This project was undertaken through a process of telephone consultations with a range of stakeholders and was submitted to AASW in December 2008.

Lorraine Thomson

Supporting Transitions from Juvenile Detention Project for the ACT Office for Children, Youth and Family Support

In 2007-8, the Institute conducted a research project for the ACT Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services that attempted to develop a better understanding of the experiences of young people transitioning through the youth justice system.

This project highlighted significant challenges experienced by young people: particularly in engaging with services post-release and in managing their drug use and the many risks and temptations that they faced on ‘the outside’. However, there were many examples of how...
these young people were attempting to make changes in their own lives with support from family, friends and the community. The research showed how the young people’s involvement in the system was often long-term and requires collaborative and system-wide responses for their progress to be sustained. Working collaboratively with DHCS throughout the life of the project has enabled a number of these challenges to be addressed subsequently improving the provision and the quality of support provided to young people.

Tim Moore, Vicky Saunders, Morag McArthur, Tracy Cussen (ACT DDHCS)

**Supporting Children and Young People in Families Affected by Alcohol or Other Drug Use**

This project, funded through the Carer Recognition Grants Program, aimed to explore the lived experiences, nature of care responsibilities, support needs and services responses to children, young people and families affected by AOD. Working in collaboration with Anglicare Canberra-Goulburn, the Institute reanalysed data from a previous study, interviewed young people and stakeholders and worked with peer leaders to determine how to best meet the needs of these families.

Tim Moore, Debbie Noble-Carr, Kate Butler, Morag McArthur

**Transferability of Social Work Knowledge between Different Practice and Cultural Contexts**

In this project Lorraine Thomson from the Institute worked with Joanna Zubrzycki from the School of Social Work, Australian Catholic University, and Pamela Trevithick, University of Gloucestershire. This research is the second phase of a project which explored the experiences of Canberra based social workers recruited from the UK, Ireland and Scotland to work in child protection in the Australian Capital Territory.

Joanna Zubrzycki (School of Social Work, ACU), Pamela Trevithick (University of Gloucestershire) Lorraine Thomson (Institute of Child Protection Studies)

**Evaluation framework for “Step up Step down” program: STEPS for Centacare**

The Centacare Step up Step down program (STEPS), funded by ACT Health, was established in 2008 to provide a 24 hour supported accommodation facility in Canberra for young people (14-18 years) who have a diagnosed mental illness and are at risk of being admitted to hospital for acute psychiatric treatment. The program also provides transitional, outreach support to the young people following their stay in the supported accommodation. The Institute, in collaboration with STEPS, developed an evaluation framework for the program involving consultations, testing and refinement of the framework.

Kate Butler, Lorraine Thomson

**Murray Darling Basin Evaluation Framework for Centrelink**

The Murray Darling Basin has been experiencing the effects of a prolonged drought. Many irrigators are reaching a critical point in the decision-making as to the long-term liability of
their business, both economically and environmentally. The Institute of Child Protection Studies developed an Evaluation Framework to enable Centrelink to report on its progress in contributing to the following outcomes: Better service co-ordination and improved access to services for irrigators, farmers and small businesses, workers and industry in severe financial difficulty. Increased community resilience and capacity to deal with the social consequences of change and Centrelink's ability to better inform and influence policy development.

Gail Winkworth, Morag McArthur, Kate Butler, Chris Healy

**Evaluation Plan of Clearinghouses for FaHCSIA**

FaHCSIA currently funds a number of clearinghouses across Australia. In this project the Institute was contracted to develop a working definition for clearinghouses; and to suggest a methodology for undertaking an evaluation of clearinghouses. The development of the working definition was based on a review of the literature, plus consultation with key stakeholders associated with the operation of clearinghouses supported by FaHCSIA. The development of suggested evaluation methodology was based on a review of evaluation forms, approaches and techniques, undertaken in the light of the evaluation terms of reference, the working definition, issues raised by key stakeholders, and the contexts in which the FaHCSIA-supported clearinghouses operate. (Phase one was completed in 2008)

Paul Chesterton, Kate Butler, Morag McArthur

**Ongoing Institute Projects as at 31 December 2008**

**Communities for Children Evaluation for Northside Community Services**

The Communities for Children project, a Commonwealth funded initiative, focuses on children in 0-5 age group and their families in North Canberra to ensure greater opportunities for children to grow and thrive in their local community. The Canberra C4C project is being facilitated by Northside Community Services. The Institute was appointed as the external evaluator for the project and provides support and advice to funded community organisations to assist them to evaluate their projects. The Institute will carry out this role from 2006-2008.

Morag McArthur, Stella Conroy

**Understanding Children and Young People's Experiences of Separation and Divorce - a Scoping Project for FaHCSIA**

Up until recently research concerning children’s experiences of separation and divorce has been based upon the views of adults, parents and professionals. However these studies have provided only a partial perspective of a child or young person’s experience. This research project, commissioned by FaHCSIA, aims to scope the boundaries and possible methodologies of future research with children and young people regarding their experience...
of separation and divorce in ways that enable children to participate directly in a sensitive, ethical and effective manner.

Morag McArthur, Gail Winkworth, Vicky Saunders, Tim Moore,

**Child Protection Practitioners Values Survey**

This project received funding through the Australian Research Council. The “Values” project is a national study that aims to explore the personal, professional and organisational values of child protection workers and team leaders and the relationship this has to retention and resilience of professionals working in this sector. It is anticipated that the sample will include child protection workers and team leaders in all State and Territory jurisdictions.

Morag McArthur, Stella Conroy, Fran Wilson

**Working Across the Grey - Communities for Children for Northside Community Services**

Through a partnership between the Institute of Child Protection Studies and early childhood and family support services, the project aims to improve the social connectedness and capability of vulnerable and hard to reach parents and the safety and life chances of their very young children in Inner North Canberra. This research will extend the knowledge base for services working with vulnerable families with young children to enable a clearer understanding of how to increase the capability and social connectedness of vulnerable and hard to reach families with young children and increase the capability of early childhood and family services to work collaboratively to better support such families.

Gail Winkworth, Megan Layton-Thompson

**Early Intervention in the Australian Capital Territory for ACT Government**

There is increasing recognition that early intervention has the potential to improve outcomes for children aged 0-8 years. This project will provide the ACT Government with a typology of early intervention based on available evidence, an analysis of current investment in early intervention programs, and recommendations for future early intervention investments.

Kate Butler, Morag McArthur

**Integrated Family Support Project Evaluation for Office Children Youth and Family Support**

The Integrated Family Support Project has been established as a pilot project from 2008 to 2010 to develop a model for collaboration between government and non-government agencies and families, with the aim of providing sustained, integrated services to families at risk. The project aims to engage with families from a strengths perspective early in the life of the child and the life of the problem, before the problems necessitate court intervention.

Lorraine Thomson, Morag McArthur, Kate Butler

Institute of Child Protection Studies
Enabling conditions for collaboration between the Commonwealth Family Relationship System and Child Protection Services in two states for FaHCSIA

FaHCSIA commissioned ICPS to identify broad principles of possible future collaborative models between FRSP and Child protection systems in NSW and QLD and to identify potential barriers, strengths, threats and opportunities to the development of such models. The project will contribute towards the increased safety and wellbeing of children and young people who are “in need” or who are at risk of child abuse and/neglect by improving collaborative arrangements between the FRSP and statutory child protection for more targeted protection and support.

Gail Winkworth, Lorraine Thomson, Vicky Saunders

Victorian Community Linkages Project for FaHCSIA

The purpose of the Victorian Community Linkages Project, commissioned by FaHCSIA, to achieve and measure improved outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and their families through increased collaboration between the Commonwealth Family Relationship system and State Child Protection/ Family Support systems in Victoria. Specifically the Institute is describing and analysing current collaborative arrangements between: State funded agencies (Child Protection, ChildFIRST and Family Services) and Commonwealth funded agencies (Family Relationships services including Family Relationship Centres) in two Victorian localities. The baseline developed by the Institute will assist in a later assessment of changes over the life of the project.

Gail Winkworth, Chris Healy

Evaluation of Clearinghouses for Department Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)

FaHCSIA currently funds a number of clearinghouses across Australia. The evaluation will focus on six clearinghouses with an emphasis on the overall operation of the clearinghouses. The clearinghouses’ circumstances, functions, links, design, processes, outcomes, performance measures, and interaction with FaHCSIA are key elements of the evaluation. Other clearinghouses and means of transferring knowledge and disseminating information will be examined to inform consideration of good practice and of alternatives. The evaluation will be undertaken within the context of the information needs of the various target populations.

Paul Chesterton, Kate Butler, Morag McArthur

National Library of Australia (NLA) Project

The NLA has funded a series of in depth interviews with senior executives who have long term experience and perspectives derived from working within government and non government child and family welfare agencies for more than 15 years. The interviews seek
to explore the changing social, institutional and political context of Child Protection and to identify major issues that are shaping the contemporary public policy debate.

Gail Winkworth, Morag McArthur

Previously completed projects:

2007

- Consultations for the Youth Services Program for the ACT Office for Children, Youth and Family Support
- Indigenous Family Support for Marymead Child and Family Centre
- Evaluation of 'Families Together' Program for Marymead Child and Family Centre
- Affirm Evaluation Framework for Disability ACT
- Emergency Readiness Training for Lifeline ACT
- Children’s Experiences of Homelessness for Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services
- Recovering from the 2003 Canberra Bushfires for Emergency Management Australia
- Australian Government Evaluation Framework for Disaster Recovery for the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
- Family Relationship Centres and Family Relationship Advice Line Continuous Improvement Process for Attorney General’s Department
- Young Carers in Western Australia for Carers WA
- Experience of Former Foster Carers for the foster Care Association ACT

2006

- Reading, Writing and Responsibility: Young Carers and Education for Carers Australia
- Principles for Child Centred Practice for the Office of Children, Youth and Family Support
- Family Group Conferencing Scoping Paper for the Office of Children, Youth and Family Support
- Youth Support Workers in Schools for ACT Department of Education and Training
- Family Relationship Centres and Family Relationship Advice Line Practice Framework for Screening and Assessment for Attorney General’s Department
- Family Relationship Centres and Family Relationship Advice Line Research Report for Attorney General’s Department
- The Multidisciplinary Approach to Student Services for the ACT Department of Education and Training

2005

- Good Practice for Placement Planning for the Office of Children, Youth and Family Support
- Screening of People Working with Children and Young People: Issues Paper for ACT Children’s Services Council
• Workforce Planning in the Care and Protection System in the ACT: Issues Paper for ACT Children's Services Council
• Consultation on Strengthening Families Partnership Approach in ACT for ACT Health (Alcohol and Other Drug Policy Unit)
• What Works in Residential Care for Marist Youth Care
• Schools as Communities Evaluation for The Office of Children, Youth and Family Support

Most reports are available at www.acu.edu.au/icps

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Professional Development: Training, Workshops, Seminars and Consultations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity:</th>
<th>Carried out for:</th>
<th>By Who:</th>
<th>When:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference group meetings</td>
<td>Northside Community Services</td>
<td>Megan Layton-Thomson</td>
<td>Various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Research Training</td>
<td>Attorney General’s Department</td>
<td>Morag McArthur</td>
<td>6 June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Research Training</td>
<td>Attorney General’s Department</td>
<td>Morag McArthur</td>
<td>17-19 November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles for Practice in Family Dispute Resolution</td>
<td>Australian Catholic University – School of Social Work</td>
<td>Gail Winkworth</td>
<td>6 May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment issues in child protection practice</td>
<td>Australian Catholic University – School of Social Work</td>
<td>Gail Winkworth</td>
<td>18 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical issues in child protection practice</td>
<td>Australian Catholic University</td>
<td>Gail Winkworth</td>
<td>3 October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership in Human Services</td>
<td>Marymead Child and Family Centre</td>
<td>Gail Winkworth</td>
<td>17 November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post graduate course – Leadership in Human Services</td>
<td>Australian Catholic University- School of Social Work</td>
<td>Gail Winkworth</td>
<td>July - November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working ‘in the Grey’ with isolated Families</td>
<td>Families ACT</td>
<td>Gail Winkworth</td>
<td>17 December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Ability Pathways</td>
<td>ACT Youth Justice</td>
<td>Tim Moore</td>
<td>2/3rd June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation: Working with children</td>
<td>Communities @ Work</td>
<td>Tim Moore</td>
<td>9th June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting with Children in the research context</td>
<td>Australian Catholic University – School of Social Work</td>
<td>Tim Moore</td>
<td>29th October</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Youth workers and ethical practice  | Youth Coalition of the ACT  | Tim Moore  | 3rd December
Course Development: Youth Ministry  | Australian Catholic University – School of Theology  | Tim Moore  | Second Semester
Sessional Lecturing: Social Work with Children, Young People and Families  | Australian Catholic University – School of Social Work  | Tim Moore  | Second Semester

### Participation in consultations and think tanks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Carried out by</th>
<th>Participated by</th>
<th>When:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which Way Home Green Paper</td>
<td>Commonwealth Government</td>
<td>Tim Moore</td>
<td>28th March &amp; 13th May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think Tank: “Involving Children and Young People in Research”</td>
<td>Australian Research Alliance for Children &amp; Youth</td>
<td>Tim Moore</td>
<td>11th November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission to the Woods Inquiry for AASW</td>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>Gail Winkworth</td>
<td>February 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of the Qualifications and Training Pathways for the AASW</td>
<td>Department of Child Safety Queensland</td>
<td>Gail Winkworth Morag McArthur</td>
<td>February 2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Post Doctoral Research Supervision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Giovanna Richmond</td>
<td>The use of sustainability as conceptual and planning tool in influencing the connectivity between policy and practice: A case study of Child Protection Inquiries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine King</td>
<td>The Aboriginal Kinship System: A Key To The Future</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inaugural Canberra Southern Cross PhD Scholarship

In 2008 the University signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Canberra Southern Cross Club. The MOU will formalise a strategic partnership with the objective of providing assistance to young people and families through two scholarships (Aloysius Morgan and Canberra Southern Cross Club scholarships). Support will also be provided in the form of a research partnership with the Institute of Child Protection Studies to fund a PhD Scholarship.

The inaugural recipient is Tim Moore and he will begin his thesis in 2009 exploring how best to conduct research with vulnerable children.

Social work Student Placement Supervision 2008

Supervision for the final year placement of Bachelor Social Work student, Fran Wilson, was provided by Lorraine Thomson and Morag McArthur. Fran, amongst other tasks was pivotal to the development of the Values study literature review and online questionnaire.
## Conference Presentations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conference</th>
<th>Paper Presented by:</th>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Where and When:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN)</td>
<td>Tim Moore and Morag McArthur</td>
<td>Little voices and big ideas: Lessons learned from children about research</td>
<td>Hong Kong, September 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN)</td>
<td>Gail Winkworth and Morag McArthur</td>
<td>More than goodwill: action research methodology for creating sustainable networked practice to support families</td>
<td>Hong Kong, September 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th Australian Institute of Family Services Conference “Families Through Life”</td>
<td>Gail Winkworth and Morag McArthur</td>
<td>What’s missing between “strategy” and “task”? A practice framework to guide screening and assessment in the new Family Relationship Centres</td>
<td>9 July Melbourne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT DHCS Practice Talking Forum 2008</td>
<td>Gail Winkworth</td>
<td>‘Someone to check in on me’ Learning from parents raising children on their own</td>
<td>28 October Canberra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National ACCFPP Conference Ethical Responsiveness</td>
<td>Gail Winkworth Morag McArthur</td>
<td>Building system wide support</td>
<td>24 May Adelaide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Carers Forum (Carers Australia / FaHCSIA)</td>
<td>Tim Moore</td>
<td>Young Carers and Respite</td>
<td>26th November</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Reviewed articles – published 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/s:</th>
<th>Article</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moore, T., McArthur, M. and Noble-Carr, D.</td>
<td>Stuff You'd Never Think Of: Children Talk about Homelessness and How They'd Like to Be Supported &quot; <em>Family Matters</em> Volume 3, 36-43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Other – activities 2008

Lorraine Thomson successfully completed “Statistics for Social Sciences” postgraduate study single unit at ANU
Committee/Board Memberships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Committee/Board</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morag McArthur</td>
<td>Associate Editor <em>Communities, Children and Families Australia</em>, the journal of the Australian College for Child and Family Practitioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tim Moore</td>
<td>Vice President, ACT Council of Social Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regional President, Society of St Vincent de Paul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Officer, Tumladden Youth Accommodation Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Board Member, Carers ACT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Board Member, Carers Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Member, ACT Carer for Carers Implementation Partnership, DDHCS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Member, Sharing Responsibilities Steering Committee (ACT Govt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gail Winkworth</td>
<td>Editor/editorial committee, <em>Communities, Children and Families Australia</em>, the journal of the Australian College for Child and Family Practitioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Member of Child Support National Stakeholders Group (CSNEG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Member of Queensland Department of Child Safety Innovators Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorraine Thomson</td>
<td>Member International qualifications Committee, Australian Association of Social Workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Member Act Alternatives to Violence Project organising group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate Butler</td>
<td>Member Greater Southern Area Health Service Health Ethics Research Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Community Engagement

**Workshop: Safeguarding Children Living With Trauma & Family Violence: An Evidence Based Approach to Assessment & Intervention: A Seven Staged Model**

Dr Arnon Bentovim and Marianne Bentovim 10-11 December

Arnon Bentovim, child and family psychiatrist and Marianne Bentovim, consultant social worker and individual and family therapist, are leaders in the child protection field in the UK who develop evidence based approaches to assessment and intervention commissioned by the UK Department of Health, Education and Science. Their aim is to share the power of a research-validated approach to everyday practice. The Institute was fortunate in hosting this 2 day workshop which provided an update on the impact of living with trauma and family violence on children at different ages and stages of development, and current approaches to assessment and intervention. The event was funded by the Office for Children, Youth & Family Support in partnership with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service and the Child at Risk Health Unit.