

MEDIA RELEASE

27 April 2016

Institute of Child Protection Studies partnership with ACT Government bridges the divide between research and practice

The Institute of Child Protection Studies (ICPS) and the ACT Community Services Directorate have signed a new partnership agreement until 2021. Funding through this grant, worth \$500,000 over five years, will support ICPS to carry out high quality research, evaluation and professional development in the ACT and nationally.

ICPS began in 2005 as a partnership between Australian Catholic University (ACU) and the ACT Community Services Directorate. Founding director Professor Morag McArthur said the new agreement marked the continuation of an association that had been strengthened over the last 11 years.

“The support of the ACT Community Services Directorate has assisted ICPS to become a nationally recognised centre of research excellence in the area of child, youth and family welfare,” Professor McArthur said.

“Critical to the success of this partnership is recognising the needs of those who are vulnerable and marginalised in our community, and developing the evidence base for social research. Policy-makers and practitioners can draw on the results to improve outcomes for children, young people and families. Through this partnership, there has been a strong commitment to bridging this divide.”

Since 2005, ICPS and the ACT Community Services Directorate have partnered to complete more than 15 research and evaluation projects in Canberra, such as child protection workforce planning, enhancing responses for children and young people in out-of-home care, children’s experiences of homelessness, supporting transitions from juvenile detention, and evaluations of programs and frameworks.

The Kids Central Toolkit, for example, has become a significant professional development tool in the ACT. Results of collaborative research about the experiences of homelessness for accompanying children has inspired practical ideas and tools on how to support children through child-centred approaches.

ICPS and the Community Services Directorate are also partnering on an important three-year Australian Research Council grant to develop and trial an improved model of contact for children in out-of-home care and their families in the ACT and Victoria. This aims to improve children’s relationships with their birth parents.

Minister for Children and Young People Chris Bourke said it was important that the ACT government continue to support ICPS’s valuable work.

“The ICPS is a leader in carrying out high-quality research and professional development that ultimately improves strategies to prevent the abuse of children and reduce its impact on children,” Dr Bourke said.

“Renewing this agreement to provide continued funding for the ICPS is good news for our community

as we continue to develop new ways to prevent the abuse of children and young people.”

Media Event:

Date: Wednesday 27 April, 12.45pm

Venue: Rose garden Courtyard, Blackfriars Building (adjacent to Phillip St), Australian Catholic University, Watson

Interviews and photos available with Professor Morag McArthur, and Dr Chris Bourke.

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