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A report on...

## Choosing Better Practice

### ACWA Biennial Conference

4-8 August 1996

Well over 300 delegates from every state and territory participated in a stimulating and varied program at the Choosing Better Practice conference held recently in Sydney. The conference, hosted by the NSW Association of Child Welfare Agencies (ACWA) on behalf of the Child and Family Welfare Association of Australia (CAFWAA), featured presenters from around Australia and overseas.

Workshops and seminars focused on subjects pertinent to direct care workers, managers and clinical staff, while pre- and post-conference workshops provided for a more in-depth exploration of issues. There were stimulating plenary session presentations from the keynote speakers Dr Rick Small (USA) and Dr Mike Lindsay (UK), along with Mr Chris Sidoti (Commissioner for Human Rights and Equal Opportunity), Ms Ann Symonds (NSW MLC), and Ms Quentin Bryce (National Child Care Accreditation Council).

Other highlights of the conference included a presentation by young people from state bodies linked with the Australian Association of Young People in Care (AAYPIC) whose national conference had been held on the previous weekend, a humorous dinner speech by "Dr" Mary Hartman critiquing the inner lives of people who work with children and young people, and the formal public launch of CAFWAA, the national peak body for our industry, which was attended by around a hundred delegates.

The conference would have to be rated at one of the best in recent years given the number, variety and quality of workshop options and the opportunity for developing links with practitioners from across Australia. Along with other delegates I have returned to my work with renewed enthusiasm, eager to try out a number of new ideas. The organising staff from ACWA are to be congratulated for the thoughtful and professional organisation of this landmark event.

Howard Bath  
August 1996