

working at a better understanding of what it costs to do what is needed, but we need to do what is needed when it is needed.

Much recent Australian research points to the limitations of crisis and placement focused services against better prevention, early intervention, enriched care, targeted therapeutic work and good transitional and leaving care work. It was helpful to attend the recent Face to Face National Improving Quality Forum and be startled by the array of local research in progress. The Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA) in New South Wales has produced its third edition of *Current Research in Child and Family Welfare*, January 2001, and has embarked on a thrice yearly journal venture, *Developing Practice*. The seminar drew together an array of researchers from around Australia, and the product of the sessions are on the Web², as are the details of the following one day workshop, Quality Improvement in Out-of-Home Care through Looking After Children, which concerned how the LAC assessment, case planning and review system, together with its extension, the British Department of Health's Children in Need Assessment Framework, might enhance service quality. Both ACT and Western Australia have now launched statewide and cross-sectoral implementations of LAC. Two articles in this issue report on the use of LAC in agencies.

Contributors to this issue as usual cover an array of areas of interest. Linda Briskman reports on research commissioned by the Minajalku Aboriginal Corporation which explored the role of church agencies in the removal of children from their families and, importantly, the steps they are now taking to deal where possible with the impact. 'Beyond Apologies: The Stolen Generations and the Churches' returns us to the issue of policies and practice making history and their costly consequences. An observation is made about the ongoing presence of humanitarian protest and its failure to arrest the day by day destruction. My attention was recently drawn to another historical account in Australia's north which appears to be an important read – Richard Trudgen's (2000) *Why Warriors Lie Down and Die*. Have we yet reached the necessary critical mass of humanitarian protest for our Aboriginal people to have an optimistic and equitable future? I wonder also what impacts we are building now for children of asylum seekers, or are we at war with them too?

Dale Bagshaw and Donna Chung report on some qualitative research undertaken by the University of South Australia. It tackles the impact issues for children who witness domestic violence and draws attention to a range of needs to be addressed. It is a useful contribution to the growing interest in the subject of the effect on children of violence in the home. In their article, 'Listening to the child victim of abuse through the process of therapy', Neerosh Mudaly and Chris Goddard have drawn on a substantial single case therapeutic intervention to explore and demonstrate many of the issues flowing from sexual abuse. It provides useful detail of the therapeutic intervention and the significance of cognitive and emotional accommodation made by both victim and perpetrator. Bronwen Elliott, Patricia Kiely and Sue Tolley in their article 'So much to gain: new approaches to child protection meetings' provide an agency perspective of using

Looking After Children (LAC) and Family Decision Making (FDM) as models to aid decision making in child protection planning meetings. Deirdre Dixon shares a study of the first 12 months of the Looking After Children (LAC) implementation by Barnardos Australia. It is worth observing that Barnardos have continued this work and, with a commercial licence, are now supporting a number of agencies in New South Wales, ACT and Victoria in LAC implementation; they are also well down the track with a computerised support package for LAC called LACES.

Rosemary Sheehan, Peter Birleson and Glenda Bawden have provided a conference report on 'Working together for children at risk'. This conference, organised by Monash University and the Southern Health Care Network, Victoria, imported some international guests and focused on trying to reach a better understanding of the nature of emotional harm to children vis-à-vis parental behaviour, and how adult mental health agencies and child welfare agencies might better work together, especially where parental mental illness is an issue.

Book reviews include the very practical guide to meeting developmental needs of children in care by Robbie Gilligan, *Promoting Resilience*, and Audrey Marshall and Margaret McDonald's *The Many-sided Triangle: Adoption in Australia*. This book and the review by Trudy Rosenwald pick up many issues pertinent to the present resurgence of interest in adoption in Australia. The authors have also provided a response to the review.

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REFERENCES

Trudgen, R. (2000) *Why warriors lie down and die*, Aboriginal Resource and Development Services Inc.

¹ www.pc.gov.au/service/gspindex.html

² www.acwa.asn.au

ERRATUM

In *Children Australia*, Vol 26 No 2, there was a formatting error in one of the references in the list at the end of Dr Frank Ainsworth's article, 'After ideology: The effectiveness of residential programs for 'at risk' adolescents'. The reference (p.18) should read as follows:

Whittaker, J.K. 2000a, 'The future of residential group care', *Child Welfare*, 79(1), pp.59-74.