

Tomison, A M; Stanley, J (2001). Strategic Directions in Child Protection: Informing Policy and Practice. Unpublished report for the South Australian Department of Human Services

Brief No. 2
Social welfare framework: System design and service system requirements for a holistic child protection system

An overview of an holistic child protection system

Brief No. 1 referred to the trend of Australian State and Territory child protection systems to shift the balance from a 'forensic' investigation of suspected child maltreatment to one where a greater emphasis was placed on family support and the promotion of a 'needs' approach to the management of suspected child maltreatment cases. As Tomison notes (1998a), much of this change in practice systems came from the United Kingdom: an Audit Commission report (1994), and a research program implemented by the Department of Health and coordinated by the Dartington Social Research Unit, University of Bristol (*Messages from Research*).

This research impacted on child protection policy at a time when western democratic governments had been in a period of welfare 'downsizing' or rationalisation for some time (Tomison 1998a, 1999). In the 1990s policy changes consistent with economic rationalist philosophies led to the introduction of user pays service provision, compulsory competitive tendering and the contracting out of many aspects of health and welfare services), the privatisation of services, and the separation of funding from the provision of services. As Parton notes:

the attempts to re-balance child protection and family support are thus intimately related to new ways of targeting scarce resources (1997:10).

The move to a family support model in child protection is an attempt to take a holistic approach to preventing maltreatment and protecting children by addressing family problems through promoting cooperation between workers and families. The benefits of such a system are that, ideally, families are not unduly stigmatised or traumatised by inappropriate or unnecessary protective investigations, and are therefore more likely to accept assistance. In addition, family problems can be comprehensively assessed and appropriate services put in place to address them (Tomison 1998a).

The crux of any child protection system would [therefore] appear to be the adequate resourcing of family support services such that families in need can receive appropriate counselling or support in a cooperative venture with welfare professionals. Without adequate resources, no system can expect to adequately protect children or enhance family welfare (Tomison 1996:3).

Recent trends in the US suggest that some protective systems are trialing new protective models (a mix of approaches that relate to both the WA 'case streaming' model and the ECO differentiated response system used in Victoria). For example, the Texas department has adopted the Flexible Response system (Chiple, Sheets, Baumann, Robinson & Graham 1999). The emphasis in this system is to provide appropriate services to the child and family as early as possible, rather than gathering evidence as a qualifier for services. 'The Multiple Response System' has been piloted in five protective departments in the US (Virginia Department of Social Services, 1999). This system allowed for a differential response to reports of maltreatment. An Investigation response Track provided traditional protective processes. An Assessment Response Track was offered where there was no immediate concerns for the child's safety. Under the Assessment Track family strengths and service needs were identified and services were offered to the family (Virginia Department of Social Services, 1999). Finally, a referral Response Track was used for children where there was no maltreatment but where the child's well being could be improved.

Developing an holistic child protection system

(See also Brief no. 3 for collaborative service delivery and Brief no. 5. for issues in the provision of alternative care).

Key components of an holistic system (drawn from a variety of Clearinghouse sources – such as Tomison 1997, Tomison 1999, Tomison 2000, Tomison & Poole 2000, Tomison & Wise 1999).

Resourcing Adequate resourcing and service provision for children and families. There is a need to develop interventions that are truly preventative in nature, that address the needs of the 'at risk' (non-maltreating) sections of the community (Tomison 1998a). Such services have an important role to play in preventing the development of maltreatment and cutting both re-notifications and longer-term child protection reports.

Participation Child and family participation in decision making – intake and case planning processes (including placement decision making). On a precautionary note, while developing opportunities for participation (e.g. family conferencing, open case planning meetings), the protection of the child needs to remain paramount, with workers exercising statutory authority where necessary.

Comprehensive assessment

As evidenced by the recent move to develop comprehensive needs assessment frameworks in the UK (DoH 2000), Victoria (Practice Leadership Unit 2000) and possibly Queensland, there has been greater recognition of the need to underpin decision making with careful assessment of children and families' needs. It should be noted that an assesment of the local community needs may also be important. Vinson and others have noted that child protection cases often come in geographic clusters (Baldry & Vinson 1999; Vinson & Baldry 1999; 2000). Mechanisms need also be developed to ensure child protection services' adequate case planning, case

monitoring, service planning, and potentially, their management of service delivery (see Practice Leadership Unit 2000).

Interagency and interprofessional collaboration and communication – recognition of the vital role other agencies play in identification, investigation, assessment, treatment, support and prevention. Most states have re-newed respect for the role of other agencies, are seeking to engage in partnership throughout assessment and the family support phases of cases. A key aspect of this is cross-sectoral partnerships – vital when working with multi-problem families. Precautionary note: interagency collaboration and communication is exceedingly difficult to undertake successfully, – hence the frequently reported difficulties and case ‘mishaps’. To make it successful requires the development of formal and informal structures for information sharing and working together, and importantly, effective case coordination (see Brief no.3). Bottom line – it requires a ‘shared understanding’ of definitions of child maltreatment and other terminology and the roles and responsibilities of the various ‘players’.

Colclough, Parton and Anslow (1999) argue that families need help before they are exposed to the child protection system and that a more holistic view of the needs of vulnerable children and families is needed. They argue for a ‘third way’ (termed by Pringle 1998) of helping children in addition to child protection investigatory and tertiary-level family support services. As most of the counselling and support services come from non-government agencies, there is a need to be more systematic and coordinated and the role of the community should be far more central to the child protection process, not peripheral, as it is at present.

Early intervention (see Tomison & Poole 2000)

Early intervention strategies, often closely linked with universal services, are one of the most effective ways to ameliorate the effects of maltreatment (Widom 1992; Tomison & Wise 1999). Early intervention initiatives are also allied with the promotion of health and wellbeing. When used as a preventative measure, it has been argued that early intervention approaches should incorporate both the promotion of health and wellbeing and the prevention of social ills like child maltreatment (LeGreca & Varni 1993).

Much of the current approach to child abuse prevention results from a re-visitation and extension of the programs and tenets of early intervention programs, that were first begun in the United States 30 years ago (Tomison & Wise 1999). The US Civil Rights movement provided the impetus to develop new ways of thinking and to overhaul the existing social structure. Education was seen as the key to eliminating social and economic class differences (Zigler & Styfco 1996; Ochiltree 1999) and resulted in attempts to improve the cognitive and social competence of disadvantaged young children. Programs such as Head Start and the Perry Preschool projects were effectively secondary prevention programs, given that they targeted specific ‘at risk’ populations for service provision; more accurately

however, their focus was one of health promotion and the development of resiliency.

The resurgence of interest in early intervention approaches has been strengthened by growing empirical evidence that early exposure to chronic violence, a lack of nurturing relationships and/or chaotic and cognitively 'toxic' environments (Garbarino 1995), may significantly alter a child's neural development and result in a failure to learn, emotional and relationship difficulties and a predisposition to violent and/or impulsive behaviour (Perry et al. 1995; Perry 1997; Shore 1997). That is, if a child's sensory, cognitive and affective experiences are significantly below those required for optimal development, such as may occur in a chronic violent environment, the brain may develop in ways that are maladaptive in the long term.

Specifically, the child may develop a chronic fear response, such that neural systems governing stress-response will become overactive, leading the child to be hypersensitive to the presence of cues signalling a threat. Although this 'survival' reaction may be an important adaptation for life in a violent home environment, it can be maladaptive in other environments, such as at school, when the child needs to concentrate and/or make friends with peers.

Thus, although early intervention to prevent child maltreatment or other social ills may be beneficial across the lifespan from birth to adulthood, the prenatal/perinatal period, in particular, has become a predominant focus for intervention. Infancy is a period of developmental transition that has been identified as providing an ideal opportunity to enhance parental competencies and to reduce risks that may have implications for the lifelong developmental processes of both children and parents (Holden, Willis & Corcoran 1992). In Australia, the National Investment For The Early Years (NIFTeY) group (Vimpani 2000) has been developed by a body of researchers and practitioners dedicated to promoting the benefits of early intervention in infancy.

Early intervention programs like Perry Preschool (Barnett 1993; Zigler & Styfco 1996), Head Start (Zigler & Styfco 1996), and the Elmira Prenatal/Early Infancy Project (Olds, Henderson, Chamberlin & Tatelbaum 1986a; Olds, Henderson, Tatelbaum & Chamberlin 1986b; Olds et al. 1997) have demonstrated some improvement in disadvantaged children's lives, and may reduce the number of 'at risk' or maltreating families who will require more intensive support in order to reach an adequate level of parenting and overall functioning. Early intervention is therefore a vital, cost-effective component of any holistic approach to preventing social ills or promoting social competence (Barnett 1993; Emens et al. 1996; Zigler & Styfco 1996).

Support for children

A holistic child protection system would offer programs that cover the full range of children's needs, from primary, secondary and tertiary prevention services, through child and family support services. Following a comprehensive assessment of needs, services should be available to address a wide range of children's needs - from education, physical health and recreation, to specialist services, counselling services and therapeutic treatment (Tomison & Wise 1999). While re-dressing the impact of maltreatment or a dysfunctional family environment, such services need to work to develop health and wellbeing and children's resiliency.

There is also a need to address the intergenerational transmission of maltreatment by offering programs to 'at risk' and maltreated children displaying disturbed behaviour. Such services should provide a high quality assessment and monitoring services of the needs of the child and people involved with the child's welfare. This includes the child's natural parents and siblings and the regular caregiver(s).

The services offered to children who have been brought to the attention of protective services would range through crisis responses and short-term programs to long term programs, according to the assessed need. It is important that a holistic child protection system also offers a range of placement options and services which can be tailored to the child's needs (see Briefs 5-11). These services would include programs like pre-placement preparation and transition-to-independent living programs.

Family preservation services

Intensive family preservation services (very popular in the US) are designed to reduce the risk of imminent removal of a child from her/his family. In recent times these have increasingly been questioned, and seen as 'ineffective and unresponsive to the needs of families with chronic problems and children at risk of out-of-home placement. Indeed, in some quarters it has been rejected as a presumed failure' (Maluccio & Anderson 2000:5). However, others have reviewed the available evidence and concluded that family preservation remains a valuable component of the service continuum (e.g. Kelly & Blythe 2000).

Australian child protection services moved, in the 1990s, towards a family preservation policy. Ainsworth (1997) reports that there are no clear messages about the effectiveness of family preservation programs, nor that family preservation services are more effective than the more traditional forms of family casework. Some programs appear to demonstrate success, while others do not.

For example, Ainsworth (1997) reports that few conclusions could be drawn from a major evaluation of 60 'Families First' programs in the US, because of methodological problems associated with the evaluative process (Ainsworth 1997). However, there is clearer evidence for success in the US program, 'Homebuilders', where placement was avoided for the majority of children. Success was greatest for the children who had suffered physical abuse, only, rather than neglect, and multiple forms of maltreatment (Ainsworth 1997).

Ainsworth (1997) reports that Australian evaluations of family preservation programs have been small in scale and fraught with methodological difficulties. He concludes that until the evidence can be produced about the effectiveness of family preservation programs, there should be a combination of both family preservation programs and the traditional forms of family casework, used in practice.

Nelson (2000) reports, however, that studies which use comparison groups and use services which are consistently implemented, significantly more children returned home or remained at home. It needs to be noted that this does not necessarily say anything about the levels of maltreatment experienced by a child.

Permanency planning and family reunification (see Brief no. 7)

Family reunification services

Family re-unification services aim to maintain the optimum link between the child and his or her family of origin and provide services to achieve this. As Ainsworth (1997) notes, there is considerable controversy around the issue of family reunification services. Ainsworth (1997) presents two somewhat dated studies (Borgman 1985, Fanshel & Shinn 1978) as evidence that family reunification enhances the child's wellbeing. The fact that most children are either returned home or renew contact with their family on their return to independent care, is given by Ainsworth (1997) as additional support for family reunification, although no evidence is given as to how this impacts on the child's wellbeing.

Training

To accomplish these system requirements, there is a need for enhanced collaboration and partnerships between all the components of the protective system. It is possible that there will be a need for an over-arching case manager to monitor the child's well-being and co-ordinate services (see Brief no.3), this person may or may not be a child protection worker.

There will be a need to reduce bureaucratic structures and allow for greater flexibility in the system. The inflexibility and procedures in many systems at present do not appear to be providing for adequate protection for some children presently under the protective services.

Underlying the system as a whole, Tomison (1999) recommends that the current over-reliance on risk assessment measures be dissipated and there be a stronger focus on the provision of comprehensive training for child protection staff (that is, a recognition that decision making aids are best used as prompts for workers who have been adequately trained to identify and evaluate cases comprehensively). This would fit with a 'specialist' rather than 'generic' social worker model of practice.

As noted above, there is also a need to 'professionalise' child protection work and reduce the (at times) negative impact of the shift to a relatively inflexible

bureaucratic and administrative child protection system that occurred in the 1980s and 1990s (Tomison 1999). Thus, there is a need for increased qualifications or training of protective workers, with an accompanying devolution of power to workers. In addition, as is often noted, there is a need to develop a work environment that encourages experienced workers to remain in the system, rather than lose valuable practice expertise via high worker turnover or promotions to administrative duties. Issues of employment conditions, supervision and management, and the development of a 'practice' career path are worthy of re-visitation and discussion.

Literature

Note: Because the topic of this Brief is so wide-ranging and some aspects have an extensive literature, this review contains selections from the literature.

Overview of system design

Australia

Cashmore (2001)

Increasing numbers of children have been reported to State statutory child protection authorities because of concerns about their safety and welfare. In this article the author looks at why this increase has occurred and discusses recent developments in policy, legislation and service provision concerned with child protection. She examines the problem of out of home care, the changing definitions of abuse and neglect, and the shift to a family support approach to child protection with a focus on prevention and early intervention.

Tomison (1996) (See Brief no. 1)

Tomison (1998a)

In a previous paper by the author (1996), it was contended that Australian state and territory child protection systems had begun to follow the international trend of shifting the balance between the 'forensic' investigation of suspected child maltreatment to one where a greater emphasis was placed on family support and the promotion of a 'needs' approach to the management of suspected child maltreatment cases. In this paper the author discusses some of the significant changes to child protection case management and child abuse prevention that have eventuated since 1996, partly as a consequence of the adoption of the 'family support' approach to child protection work. First, 'solution focused' and 'child centred, family focused' strategies have become popular methods of enhancing treatment outcomes for children and their families. There has also been acknowledgment of the need for child protection services to engage family support and other non-government services in meaningful case management partnerships. Three variants of child protection / family wellbeing strategies currently being piloted in various regions of Victoria by the Department of Human Services, are used to highlight these trends. The projects are: the Family and Neighbourhood Links (FANL) projects, the Enhanced Client Outcomes (ECO) projects and the Brimbank Pilot Family Outreach Service. Second, there has been growing recognition that child protection departments, in isolation, cannot adequately protect children and a subsequent re-emphasis on the value of child abuse prevention. Specifically, it has been recognised that the effective prevention of social ills like child maltreatment requires a truly cross-sectoral approach, and the development of a 'whole of community' strategy, such that prevention of child abuse is a shared responsibility between various professional sectors and the community at large. A number of innovative child abuse prevention approaches, such as the Inter-Agency School Community Centres Pilot Project, which is currently operating in New South Wales, are highlighted. (Author abstract)

Overseas

Crittenden (1996)

Difficulties in improving services for maltreated children can be attributed in part to misunderstanding of how the forces determining service availability and procedures operate. In this paper, a case study of an attempt to modify one service delivery system in a child protection team in Miami, Florida, is presented and analysed in terms of social ecological theory. The author makes recommendations for improving services to families, both directly and by means of system interventions.

Mitchell (1996)

Based in the main on interviews with key child welfare directors, administrators, practitioners and academics from 42 organisations in the United States in late 1994, this report presents an overview of American child welfare organisations in the 1990s, the difficulties they face in a changing world, and the implications for child welfare policy and practice in Victoria. Organisations operating under the auspices of the churches were of particular interest. There was emphasis on studying the impact of fluctuations in the economy and government policy upon management, policy and program development, service delivery and the relationships between non-government organisations and 1) government funding bodies, and 2) their parish constituencies. The report includes chapters focusing on family-focused residential care, kinship foster care, child welfare / protection responsibilities of federal and state government, family preservation and family support services, evaluative research in child welfare, recommendations for tertiary child welfare services, and preventative child welfare services in Victoria.

Dubowitz, H. & DePanfilis, D. (Eds), (2000)

This book has been compiled for professionals working in the area of child protection. It has been structured to follow the course of a child protection case from the time of the initial report, through the various pathways in the child protection system, to the final outcome. It includes sections on: best-practice principles for responding to child abuse reports; engaging children and other family members in the intervention; developing cross-cultural practice competencies; assessing risk, evaluating safety and conducting family assessments; defining outcomes and planning interventions; evaluating risk reduction; and making permanency decisions. It also discusses the unique legal, medical, ethical and other practice issues that are involved in the child protection field. Note, it merely provides a broad-brush overview, rather than a detailed assessment.

Services of the protective system

Family preservation

Blake, Carlus & Campbell (1995)

Families First is a service initially modelled on the United States

Homebuilders form of the intensive family based services that have been over almost two decades part of a major policy drive to arrest the rise of children entering substitute care and to shift the emphasis from funding substitute care services to funding those services which 'preserve families'. The theme of this presentation is collaboration between the state bureaucracy responsible for child protection and substitute care, non-government agencies also engaged with these families, and families themselves. It briefly tells of the development of the Families First program in Victoria, outlines characteristics of the program, and describes some of the experiences of the program and the issues confronting its development within the spectrum of services to children and families. An attachment focuses on tasks of cooperation, listing issues to consider at key stages in the interests of building trust, establishing mutual accountability, and assisting ethical behaviour.

Campbell (1998)

Victoria's Families First pilot intensive family preservation service was established with the intent of following the Homebuilders model of IFPS. This article presents an overview and evaluation of the pilot and its results, makes observations on subsequent developments, and highlights considerations in adapting such programs to different cultures and service systems.

Cashmore & Paxman (1996)

This study provides a review of selected literature and examines the models of home-based family preservation services which have gained prominence as an alternative to out-of-home care for children who are likely to be removed from home because of the risk of abuse and neglect. Factors which make such schemes attractive in the present climate of family centred ideology are identified. A detailed synthesis of the findings of evaluation studies conducted predominantly in the United States is provided. Issues explored include: how success is to be measured; the need for long-term follow up; evaluations which include genuine comparison groups; and how cost effective is family preservation. Findings highlight the need for further refinement in regard to outcome measures and identification of the aspects of the programs that are more or less effective with different groups of families. Serious questions are raised about the implications of importing programs which were not designed for the Australian social and cultural context. An overview of evaluation studies, their methodology and findings is provided.

Gelles (2000)

This paper examines the controversies over the use of family preservation policies to prevent and treat child abuse and neglect. Policies that aim to preserve families in which child maltreatment has occurred are at least a century old. However, there is renewed interest in such policies, given the dramatic rise in child abuse and neglect reports and a large number of children who spend time in out-of-home placements. New intensive family preservation services were advanced as able to assure the safety of children while working toward a lasting preservation of the family unit. The paper summarises the research on intensive family preservation services and reports that such programs do not reduce placements nor do they appear to enhance child safety. The paper concludes by proposing that risk assessments and assessments of readiness to change could improve decision-making regarding which families might be aided by family preservation and which children should be protected by terminating their parents rights. (Abstract from NISC and BiblioLine),

Hoffmann (1995)

The paper describes the range of services to young women under the age of 25 offered by Choices Centre for Young Women and their Children. The services all share the aim of family preservation. A case example is used to show how the program operates. The services include accommodation and support, group work, one-to-one home-based intensive work, pregnancy support, and peer education.

Reed & Kirk (1998)

This article answers criticisms of intensive family preservation services (IFPS), asserting that many evaluators and policy analysts have lost sight of the historical roots of IFPS, and are focusing only on recent fiscal and policy contexts when assessing program effectiveness. This article reviews the therapeutic and programmatic origins of IFPS, including desired treatment outcomes, and suggests that evaluators and policy analysts redirect their focus accordingly. Fundamental theories of family-based practice and the evolution of program models are described. Recommendations for program evaluations include: investigate the impact of different strategies for different families and areas of functioning; development alternative assessment methods; use non-experimental and quasi-experiment research designs; and identify independent and dependent variables in experimental research. 40 references. (Author abstract modified) (Abstract from NISC and BiblioLine),

Owen (1999) (see Brief no. 1)

Webb et al. (1995)

Keeping Families Together is an intensive family preservation program which works with families in which children are at imminent risk of placement in substitute care because of abuse, neglect or conflict. The model of service delivery is based on a model developed in Maryland USA in which social workers and family workers work in pairs. The paper explains why Anglican Community Services chose the model, and how the model has evolved over time. Experiences of working with families are related which illustrate aspects of how the program works. The authors explore the possibility that differences between models of intensive family preservation, agency contexts and social settings may create different outcomes for clients and for workers. Two sets of differences are focused on: the combination of a behavioural approach with a family systems based therapeutic approach; and the use of workers in pairs.

Permanency

Bath (2000)

This paper from the symposium on permanency planning held at the 7th National Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference focuses on the tension involved in any decision making process in child welfare where competing rights and realities need to be juggled. The concept of permanence with regard to child welfare is one of many principles that influence contemporary practice; others include normalisation, localisation, deinstitutionalisation, least restrictive or detrimental alternative, and family preservation. The competing principles are laudable in their own right when applied thoughtfully, suggests the author, but they may actually be inimical to the achievement of permanence. He reviews some of the legal and ethical impediments to promoting permanence; discusses some social and 'market' realities influencing out-of-home care practice; and reviews some of the relevant data and the implications of policy shift for indigenous children. Developmental realities include the role of identity issues in placement breakdown and the practice complications introduced by the arbitrary termination of parental rights where best practice suggests 'open adoption' and inclusive foster parenting. Ultimately, concludes the author, the right to permanence needs to be balanced against competing rights to a secure identity and open access.

O'Neill (2000)

A symposium on permanency planning was held at the seventh national conference of the Australian Institute of Family Studies in Sydney in July 2000. This paper from the symposium covers the following themes which are related to termination of parental rights and the movement of children from one family to another on the grounds of protecting them from abuse or neglect: whether birth parents are supported sufficiently to keep their children; how and when decisions should be made to remove children from their birth families; and the relationship between birth and permanent families. Overseas and Australian research, legislation and practice are examined, and the question of whether termination of parental rights is appropriate within the current Australian context is then looked at in the light of this literature.

Owen (1999) (see Brief no. 1)

Family re-unification services

Ainsworth & Maluccio (1998)

This article is about the family reunification of children who have been placed in out-of-home care. It provides a broad definition of family reunification and guidelines for reunification policy and practice. The focus is then on parent education and training and the research studies which suggest that this has to be a fundamental element of any reunification plans. Finally, it highlights key issues that still require resolution. (Journal abstract)

Woods (1997) (see Brief no. 1)

High-risk infant initiative

Clarke & Oakley (1995)

The Families First program of Oz Child operates in the context of other Oz Child family programs in the southern metropolitan region of Victoria. This paper describes Oz Child family services and the theoretical framework upon which the Families First program is based. The underlying belief is that for some families, a short-term program is unlikely to meet their needs. The paper provides case examples which demonstrate the effectiveness of the integrated model where families initially referred to the Families First program are linked into a longer term family preservation service and/or a group program at the beginning, or during or at the conclusion of the Families First program.

Monk et al. (1999)

In 1998 all nine regions of the Department of Human Services Victoria received new funds to develop Parenting Assessment and Skill Development Services (PASDS) as a key component of the High Risk Infants Initiative. This paper discusses the key components of the residential PASD program developed by Southern Metropolitan Region at the relocated Queen Elizabeth Centre; evaluation of this program; client profiles; and case studies of families with young babies identified as at risk.

System requirements for a holistic child protection system

Listening to children

Dalrymple (2001)

The political agency of children and young people is gaining ascendancy as government agendas prioritize the need to listen to children. Recent guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people takes account of new research, experience, and legislation concerning abuse. In the past, children and young people have been failed by the services designed to help them, and many have been silenced through the lack of a safe space where they will be listened to and taken seriously.

The development of advocacy services for children and young people has been actively encouraged by recent legislation, but many existing services tend to remain at the passive end of the advocacy continuum - advocating on behalf of rather than enabling them. This is inevitable as children continue to be marginalised in a powerful adult world. This paper examines the need for advocacy services to have clear policies of confidentiality if they are to be a credible option to young people, when services to safeguard them emphasise the importance of agencies working together and sharing information.

Flexibility and range in programming

Hess, McGowan & Botsko (2000)

Selected findings from a three-year study are reported regarding a prospective sample of 189 families served by the Center for Family Life preventive services program and the nature and results of the services the families received. The program combines elements of both family preservation and family support services to provide a comprehensive, individualised response to families in need and prevent the unnecessary placement of children in care. Four program elements correspond with those typically identified as characterising family preservation programs (family focus and orientation; development of a client-centred relationship between family and worker; day-to-day staff accessibility; and flexibility to develop individualised service plans), and three key program elements differentiate the Center's approach from other family preservation programs (broadly inclusive access to non-categorical services; comprehensive, integrated within-Center services grounded in the community; and flexibility in service duration and continuing accessibility to services over time). These latter characteristics are more typically found in family support programs and address limitations of current family preservation programs as identified in the literature. (Abstract from NISC and BiblioLine).

System reform

Department of Health (2001)

McCroskey & Meezan (1998)

This article examines the family-centred service approach to child protection, which encompasses family support services for families coping with normal parental stresses, and family preservation services designed to help families facing serious problems and possible out-of-home placement. The article describes the characteristics of family support and family preservation services, and discusses how these services are accessed and financed. It reviews available evaluation findings regarding the effectiveness of the two types of family-centred services, and considers the challenges faced when evaluating such services. Finally, the article reviews issues related to planning and service delivery, such as coordination and system reform, financing, targeting, relationships between workers and families, and efforts to strengthen entire communities. 70 references and 1 table. (Author abstract) (Abstract from NISC and BiblioLine),

Specialist services

Llewellyn & McConnell (1998)

Some of the concerns raised by service providers in relation to intellectually disabled parents are addressed in this paper through a discussion of two current projects: the Law Foundation of NSW study which investigates prevalence and outcomes for parents with a disability in the NSW Children's Court; and the NSW Parent-Child Health and Wellbeing Project, (funded jointly by the NSW Ageing and Disability Department and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services) which investigated the effectiveness of a specifically designed home learning program for parents with cognitive limitations and their children in the birth to three years age range. Some of the factors that influence child protection processes with parents with intellectual disability are addressed and the challenges for family support and child protection workers are considered.

West, Edwards & Moses (1998)

The Benevolent Society received a two year grant from the National Mental Health Project to trial a program called Families Together to work specifically with families where a parent has a long term mental illness and who are expecting a child or have young children. This chapter describes the program and outlines its basic principles, which are: monitoring the infant's physical care and safety; supporting and empowering adults particularly in their parenting role; encouraging and monitoring child development; facilitating attachment; maintain a collaborative, multidisciplinary response; and helping parents experience emotional rewards. The importance of evaluation as an ongoing part of the program is discussed and a case study is presented to illustrate how the program is implemented.

Leaving care

Maunder et al. (1999)

This research report to the National Youth Affairs Research Scheme aims to describe the experiences of young people discharged from State care and to identify factors which assisted and impeded their transition to independent living. The research objectives were: to provide an overview of Australian government youth policy as it relates to young people leaving care and protection arrangements; to provide an overview of care and protection exit arrangements; to identify the circumstances and needs of young people making the transition from State care; and to identify mechanisms or initiatives which could be set in place to improve levels of support to young people making the transition from State care to independence, with a view to minimising their risk of becoming homeless. In addressing the objectives, the research was required to examine assumptions of dependence and independence implicit in government policy, identify how the role of the family could be supported, and examine models of effective support to young people leaving care.

Wardley & Mackiewicz (1998)

A profile of the Leaving Care/ Aftercare Services, established in February 1997 is provided in this paper which explores the history and development of the services, with particular attention focusing on working partnerships. The findings of the study by Judy Cashmore and Marina Paxman's 'Longitudinal Study of Wards Leaving Care' are discussed as are the gaps in service provision identified via evidence given at the Wood Royal Commission. Partnerships with non-government sub care providers are outlined and areas of difficulty are considered. The Leaving Care Aftercare Forum, March 1998, is briefly reviewed.

Evaluation and research

Johnston (1998)

The aim of the research which is the focus of this brief overview was to examine child protection practice and how policy was interpreted into practice, to understand the extent of knowledge practitioners had of the principles for practice, and to gain information about factors that impacted on the implementation process. The qualitative case study approach used is described, with all children in the study subject to a care and protection (guardianship) order and placed in out-of-home placements.

Tomison (1998b)

The National Child Protection Clearing House is a strong proponent of the view that child abuse prevention programs require effective evaluation. Although in recent years there has been a greater recognition of the need to evaluate programs adequately, with more professionals attempting to implement program evaluations with some degree of methodological rigour, still relatively little is known about the effectiveness of current child abuse prevention initiatives. In part, this is due to the difficulties in applying experimental rigour to the realities of providing services to families. This article reports on an evaluation, conducted by the Australian Institute of Family Studies and Burgell Consulting on behalf of the Brimbank Community Health Service, which aims to evaluate a secondary prevention program, taking into account the complexities of real life family support work, and its effect on the evaluation process. (Journal abstract, edited)

Vinson & Baldry (2000)

Three studies by the authors are brought together in this paper to better inform understandings of the coincidence of poor social environments and child abuse. The first study brings into question the established operational definition of neighbourhood in terms of standard census units, such as urban Collector's Districts in the Australian system. The second study is a re analysis of the data from the first study, where confirmed instances of child abuse within a Western Sydney suburb were spatially plotted, revealing the clustering of child abuse cases.

The third study ranked postcode areas in New South Wales and Victoria by level of cumulative disadvantage using a set of social indicators. Issues discussed include: spatial patterning of social problems; clustering of child abuse; the new urban ecology; socially impoverished neighbourhoods; what contributes to low morale neighbourhoods; neighbourhood influences on child and adolescent development; neighbourhood cohesion; sense of neighbourhood fit; a place to raise children; and practitioner awareness of cluster areas. Implications of the results of the studies for child protection practice are considered.

Examples of overseas design innovations

Cook (2000)

While the state of Michigan passed legislation in 1997 (commonly known as the Binsfield reforms) aimed at reducing the risks to children between the time of termination of parental rights and adoption, the state's child protective system has not yet reached its goal of plugging the gaps in care. Those gaps appear to be particularly glaring at the post-termination stages because child advocates and trial courts can largely be powerless to change placements not in the children's best interests, despite Binsfield's goal of changing the child protective system from family reunification to termination of parental rights. This article illuminates those gaps and makes recommendations for closing them. Three gaps are identified: 1) the state's court system still typically denies the child's attorneys information about and access to visiting children in their proposed adoptive homes; 2) the legislation fails to prevent some state officials from interfering in the adoption process; and 3) the legislation fails to provide remedies to courts conducting post-termination review hearings to prevent wards from being placed into unsafe adoptive homes. Recommendations, in the absence of further legislative reforms designed to plug these gaps, include retooling the child protection blanket by encouraging children's attorneys to use the state's Juvenile Code to advocate for the children's best interests. (Abstract from NISC and BiblioLine)

Epstein (1999)

Reforms to the traditional child protection system are focusing on the whole family, creating an array of services to meet the varying level of risk to the child and the family environment. Support services for families at risk with no substantiated abuse or neglect finding are emphasised, as well as the involvement of friends and communities and outcome evaluation. This issue brief summarises reforms in these areas and describes state initiatives to improve response to children and families at risk. Programs include integrated service teams to promote interagency collaboration, referrals to community resources, a community support agreement, community public education and awareness, family support centres, home visits to new mothers, school social workers, neighbourhood assessments, neighbour-partners, and domestic violence screening. Evaluations of recent state initiatives found positive outcomes from some programs, but inadequate resources and confusion about requirements in other new services. Child advocates are encouraged to become involved in child protective reforms in their state. A checklist of considerations for reform initiatives is included in the article. (Abstract from NISC and BiblioLine)

Behrman (1998)

This edition of *The Future of Children* provides an overview of the status of child protection in the United States. Articles describe the historical and future role of public child protective services and review recent research about the prevalence and effects of child maltreatment. Trends in family-centred services, foster family care and kinship care, and welfare reform are analysed. The volume also includes essays that present new paradigms for service delivery, as well as recommendations for improving child protection. (Abstract from NISC and BiblioLine)

Besharov et al.

This article contains the recommendations of four child protection experts to improve the child protection system in the United States. The first commentary focuses on reforms needed in the reporting and decision making process. States are advised to make child abuse reporting laws more specific and to establish screening procedures. Reporting accuracy can also be improved by educating the public and mandated reporters about when reports should be made. Agencies should take a more realistic approach to families affected by drug addiction, and acknowledge the widespread effects of addiction.

Long-term counselling and supervision are necessary to ensure that a child who remains at home is not being abused. The second commentary addresses the need for more effective management of child welfare services. It argues that single operating principles, such as family preservation and child protection, are not extensive enough to make decisions about the complex problems of families. Litigation can be effective to achieve collaboration between child welfare administration and community members to improve procedures. The third commentary examines the organizational structure of child protective services. Parent- professional relationships and the politics of child welfare are specifically discussed. Emphasis is placed on the conflicts caused by the dual role of child protective agencies to help and also coerce parents. The commentary recommends that the investigative and foster care functions of child protective services be separated from the prevention and support functions. The final commentary advocates for community-based partnerships for the prevention and treatment of child abuse. These partnerships should increase the focus on prevention, with support services for all families and early intervention services to reduce the recurrence of abuse. (Abstract from NISC and BiblioLine)

Siegel et al. (1998)

This impact evaluation summarises the findings of the Family Assessment and Response Demonstration implemented in Missouri following a mandate in the state legislature in 1994. The bill required the Department of Social Services to test a supportive, non-accusatory intervention to child abuse reports which were screened and determined to be less threatening. The family assessment response offered needed services without the trauma, stigma, or delay of the investigative process, and involved the family in a collaborative response to problems and needs. The demonstration was piloted in 14 small and medium-sized counties across Missouri. The comparison area included 14 similar counties.

A quasi-experimental design was utilised to compare the baseline and demonstration period data for both the pilot and comparison areas. Findings revealed that child safety was not compromised; improvements were noted in family cooperation; fewer families moved away after cases were opened; fewer barriers to services were noted; and workers and families reported improved satisfaction. There was also a reduction in new reports of abuse and neglect (i.e. recidivism) evidenced, suggesting possible long-term preventive consequences. This demonstration highlights the importance of new initiatives involving collaboration between the child welfare agency and community organizations. An addendum examines cases of severe abuse or neglect that were subject to traditional investigations and analyses arrests stemming from those investigations. (Abstract from NISC and BiblioLine)

Schwartz & Fishman (1999)

This critical review of the child welfare system in Michigan highlights several problems with service delivery that are common throughout the United States. Data obtained from the management information system of the Family Independence Agency (the Michigan state Department of Social Services) were analysed to identify child welfare trends and the placement patterns of approximately 100,000 children placed from 1980 to 1992. Conclusions are also based on a review of previous research. The findings illustrate the political influences and limitations of family preservation services, the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act, permanency planning, adoption, and the impact of child welfare services on juvenile delinquency. The role of residential care is also discussed. The final chapter includes recommendations for reform, some of which are expected to generate controversy. The proposals address the elimination of child poverty; collaborations for the development of a more effective, proven child welfare model; a narrower mission for child welfare; re-allocation of family preservation funds to programs that prevent restrictive placements; transfer of investigative responsibilities to the courts and law enforcement system; regular review of the status of the Adoption and Safe welfare service delivery. (Abstract from NISC and BiblioLine)

Violence Against Children Study Group (1999)

Written for social work students, researchers, and practitioners, this book provides a multidisciplinary perspective of the political, moral, and social context of child protection policy and practice in Great Britain. The child-centred analysis identifies issues and makes suggestions for improvements in the system. The four parts explore the prioritization of children's issues, issues regarding gender and generation, multidisciplinary relationships and interagency collaboration, and the residential care system. The experience of black children in the child protection system, response to sexually abusive children, links with health, policy, and education systems, sexuality and sexual abuse in the placement setting, and the prevention of institutional abuse are specifically discussed.

Waldfogel (1998)

This article reviews efforts to reform the child protective services (CPS) system to better protect children's safety. Current reforms focus on the front end' of the system, in which reports of abuse and neglect are screened and investigated, and caseworkers recommend whether and when to close a case, provide in-home services, or remove a child from home. The article discusses the problems of the CPS system that are receiving attention, and it closely examines one proposal for reform- the community-based partnership for child protection. This approach emphasises targeting investigations by CPS toward only high-risk families, building collaborative community networks that can serve lower-risk families, and providing a differentiated response to both high- and low-risk families that are tailored to each family's situation. Early experiences implementing these ideas in Missouri, Florida, and Iowa illustrate the promise and challenges of reform. (Author abstract) (Abstract from NISC and BiblioLine)

Weil et al. (1992)

This briefing report, part of a series of reports on the services integration movement, reviews ways case management is being used as a method of integrating and coordinating service at the service delivery level. Part 1 identifies the goals of case management and discusses the scope of case management. The functions that case managers perform are described, including determining client or family identification and eligibility, conducting a comprehensive client or family needs assessment, developing a service plan, implementing the service plan, monitoring service delivery, individualising services, collecting data for use in evaluating program effectiveness, terminating a case, building a relationship with the client or family, and providing administrative support. In addition, the models that agencies use to assign responsibility for case management functions are identified, and tools and mechanisms to support and facilitate effective case management are outlined. Part 2 reviews the ways that case management services are being provided in relation to welfare reform, long-term care for the elderly, services for families whose children have severe emotional disturbances, family-centred service coordination for children with disabilities, and the operation of the Comprehensive Child Development Program. Part 3 summarises emerging issues in case management, focusing on control and power over resources, the assurance of quality services, training and caseloads, and client or family rights and autonomy. (Abstract from NISC and BiblioLine)

The process of changing system design

Krugman (1999)

This article reviews the history of child abuse policy in the United States and suggests that a new approach be implemented to address the problem. Four factors are identified as essential for effective political action: a clear agenda presented by a professional constituency; a knowledgeable media that can influence public opinion about an issue; support from leadership in the executive or legislative branches of government; and a bipartisan coalition to advocate legislative action.

Historically, policy makers have not had a defined agenda for policy regarding physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect. Efforts in the 1970s focused primarily on rescuing battered children, and later the criminal justice system became involved in responding to cases of sexual abuse. Recent policy activity has addressed investigation procedures and court processes for dealing with child witnesses and criminal prosecution. However, none of these actions have effectively reduced the incidence of child abuse. A National Call to Action should be implemented to obtain political support, by coordinating professional constituencies and testing different approaches to child protection before advocating use of one particular model. Policy consensus conferences should be held throughout the country to examine which forms of maltreatment are best addressed by a public health approach, by a civil child welfare system, and by the courts. Experimental approaches should then be encouraged among large cities and small states to evaluate different approaches to child protection and obtain empirical data to support widespread reform. (Abstract from NISC and BiblioLine)

General references on system design

Baistow & Wilford (2000)

This paper examines recent comparative studies between England and Germany on the help-seeking process in the child protection service in each country. In Germany help seeking and help giving are more straightforward than the current system in England. The authors suggest that England could learn valuable lessons from the German model.

Carter (2000)

The Community Care Review was commissioned to examine a series of issues connected with what was known as the YAFS Redevelopment (YAFSR), an exercise led by the then managers of the Youth and Family Services division of the Victorian Department of Human Services between 1997 and 1999 under the Kennett Government. Key questions were addressed during consultations, and much of this report is oriented to answering them. They were: What, if any, were the problems and weaknesses of the YAFSR? What, if any, were the positive aspects and strengths of the YAFSR? What should be the future principles for community care services in Victoria? What should be the relative balance of services, from prevention to statutory services? What are the opportunities and priorities for future community care services; and What strategies are required for building community and community infrastructure? Issues covered include: building resilient communities; characteristics of successful prevention; prevention and risk; prevention and programs; service structures; clusters and levels of intervention; child protection; out of home services; residential care; foster care; indigenous issues; families; schools; professionalism and its place; legislation; and accountability. Summaries and recommendations are provided at the end of each chapter and overall recommendations are presented in the final chapter.

Understanding the past to improve the future

Scott (1997)

In delivering the Twelfth W.J. Craig Memorial Lecture, Dorothy Scott examines the link between the past, the present and the future in the child protection field, drawing on her involvement in researching the history of the Victorian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, now the Children's Protection Society. The history of the child welfare reform movement is outlined and past and present trends in the child rescue movement are discussed, focusing on the role of the media. Press coverage of child abuse cases in Vienna last century are compared with current examples in Australia, including the cases of Daniel Valerio, Jaidyn Leskie, and Lindy Chamberlain. Theories of deviant behaviour are discussed with reference to Emile Durkheim and Sigmund Freud. Arguing that the present situation is a reconstruction of the recent past in child welfare history, the author examines issues of Aboriginal stolen children, the child migrants from Britain, the numbers of children in foster and institutional care; and the impact of these policies of removal on the children.

The question is posed as to whether current child welfare policies have gone too far in rejecting residential care for children at risk of abuse or neglect. Concerns are expressed over the possible unintended consequences of a heightened awareness of the problem of child sexual abuse. The question of how to maximise the potential of the major trends in the modern era of child protection and minimise the potential for harm, is addressed. These trends are: professionalism; bureaucratisation and politicisation. Directions for the future in the child welfare field are considered, particularly in relation to the privatisation of government services and the threatened autonomy of non-government agencies.

References

- Ainsworth, F. (1997), 'Foster care research in the US and Australia: An Update', *Children Australia*, Vol 22, No. 2, pp. 9-16.
- Ainsworth, F; Maluccio, A N (1998) The policy and practice of family reunification. *Australian Social Work* v.51 no.1: 3-7
- Audit Commission Report (1994), *Seen But Not Heard: Coordinating Community Child Health and Social Services for Children in Need*, London: HMSO.
- Baistow, Karen. & Wilford, Gerti. (2000) Helping parents, protecting children: ideas from Germany. *Children & Society* vol. 14 no. 5 Nov 2000: 343-354
- Baldry, E; Vinson, T (1999), Child protection: does community matter? In: Breckenridge, J. and Laing, L. eds. *Challenging silence: innovative responses to sexual and domestic violence*. St Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1999, p222-237
- Bath, H (2000) Rights and realities in the permanency debate. *Children Australia* v.25 no.4 2000: 13-17
- Behrman, R. E. (Ed) (1998) *Protecting Children from Abuse and Neglect. Future of Children, Volume 8:1*. Los Altos, CA, Center for the Future of Children <http://www.futureofchildren.org>
- Besharov, D. J.; Lowry, M. R.; Pelton, L. H.; Weber, M. W. (1998) Four Commentaries: How We Can Better Protect Children from Abuse and Neglect. *Future of Children*; 8(1): pp. 120-132; Center for the Future of Children, Los Altos, CA.
- Blake, M; Carlus, F; Campbell, L (1995) Families First Victoria: a collaborative program. In: *Conference papers: Second National Family Preservation Conference, 14-17 February 1995, University of Melbourne*. Melbourne, Vic: Canterbury Family Centre, p52-56.
- Borgman, B. (1985), 'The influence of family visiting upon boys' behaviour in a juvenile correctional institution', *Child Welfare*, Vol. 64, No. 6, pp. 629-638.
- Campbell, L (1998) Translating intensive family preservation services across national boundaries: an Australian experience. *Child Welfare* v.77 no.1: 79-93
- Carter, J (2000) *Report of the Community Care Review*. Melbourne, Vic: Department of Human Services, 2000.
- Cashmore, J (2001) Child protection in the new millennium. *SPRC Newsletter* no.79 May 2001: 1,4-5 and Online (whole issue 220K)
<http://www.sprc.unsw.edu.au/nl/NL79.pdf>

Cashmore, J; Paxman, M (1996) Family preservation services: what is their appeal? A review of selected literature. Adelaide, SA: South Australian Children's Interest Bureau.

Clarke, C; Oakley, L (1995) Families First - one of the family: Families First in a family services context. In: Conference papers: Second National Family Preservation Conference, 14-17 February 1995, University of Melbourne. Melbourne, Vic: Canterbury Family Centre, 1995, p83-90

Cook, K. G. (2000) When Will They Be Safe? Children Left at Risk Post Termination of Parental Rights. Michigan Child Welfare Law Journal; 4(1): pp. 25-32.

Crittenden, P (1996) The social ecology of treatment: case study of a service system for maltreated children. In: Proceedings: NSW Child Protection Council state conference: preventing child abuse and neglect: the way ahead, March 1996, Goulburn NSW. Sydney, NSW: NSW Child Protection Council, , p43-56

Dalrymple, Jane. (2001) Safeguarding young people through confidential advocacy services. Child & Family Social Work vol. 6 no. 2 2001 149-160

Dartington Social Research Unit (1995), Child Protection: Messages from Research, London: HMSO.

Cashmore, J; Paxman, M (1996) Family preservation services: what is their appeal? A review of selected literature. Adelaide, SA: South Australian Children's Interest Bureau.

Chipley, M., Sheets, J., Baumann, D., Robinson, D. & Graham, J. (1999) Flexible Response Evaluation, Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services, November.

Clarke, C; Oakley, L (1995) Families First - one of the family: Families First in a family services context. In: Conference papers: Second National Family Preservation Conference, 14-17 February 1995, University of Melbourne. Melbourne, Vic: Canterbury Family Centre, 1995, p83-90

Colclough, L., Parton, N & Anslow, M (1999) Family support, In C. Wattam & N. Parton (1999) Child sexual abuse New York : Wiley, 1999, pp. 159-180.

Crittenden, P (1996) The social ecology of treatment: case study of a service system for maltreated children. In: Proceedings: NSW Child Protection Council state conference: preventing child abuse and neglect: the way ahead, March 1996, Goulburn NSW. Sydney, NSW: NSW Child Protection Council, 1996, p43-56

Department of Health (2001) The Children Act Now: Messages from Research, London, The Stationary Office.

Dubowitz, H. & DePanfilis, D. (Eds), (2000), Handbook for child protection practice, Sage, Thousand Oaks, Calif.

Epstein, H. (1999) A Child Advocate's Guide to State Child Protective Services Reform. National Association of Child Advocates, Washington, DC., Winter 1999.

Fanshel, D. & Shinn, E (1978), *Children in foster care: A longitudinal investigation*. Columbia University Press, New York.

Gelles, R. (2000) Controversies in Family Preservation Programs. Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment and Trauma; 3(1): pp 239-252; 2000; p. 259

Hallett, C (1995) Interagency coordination in child protection, Studies in Child Protection, London, HMSO.

Hess, P. M.; McGowan, B. G.; Botsko, M. (2000) A Preventive Services Program Model for Preserving and Supporting Families Over Time. Child Welfare; 79(3): pp. 227-265.

Hoffmann, D (1995) Service approaches used by Choices Centre for Young Women and their Children in the task of family preservation. In: Conference papers: Second National Family Preservation Conference, 14-17 February 1995, University of Melbourne. Melbourne, Vic: Canterbury Family Centre, 1995, p68-71

Johnston, K (1998) An excerpt from 'A study of the implementation of intervention planning policy within the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care'. University of Queensland Family Centre Newsletter no.1 Mar 1998: 6-7, and Online <http://www2.psy.uq.edu.au/family/NewsMar98%20Newsletter.html>

Kelly, S. & Blythe, B.J. (2000), Family preservation: A potential not yet realised, Child Welfare, vol.79, no.1, pp.29-42.

Krugman, R. (1999) The Politics. Child Abuse and Neglect; 23(10): pp. 963-967.

Llewellyn, G; McConnell, D (1998) Working with parents with intellectual disability: current research and practice. In: 1998 ACWA Conference 'Improving services for children, youth and families': conference proceedings. Sydney, NSW: Association of Children's Welfare Agencies.

McCroskey, J. & Meezan, W. (1998) Family-Centred Services: Approaches and Effectiveness. Future of Children; 8(1): pp. 54-71.

Maluccio, A. & Anderson, G.R. (2000), Introduction: Future challenges in child welfare, Child Welfare, vol.79, no.1, pp.3-9.

Maunders, D; Liddell, M; Liddell, M; Green, S (1999) Young people leaving care and protection: a report to the National Youth Affairs Research Scheme. Hobart, Tas: Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies.

Mitchell, B J (1996) Report from America: child welfare and child protection services. Footscray, Vic: St Anthony's Family Service.

Monk, K; Papoutsoglou, A; Scully. L; Jones, W (1999) Pilot residential parenting assessment program for high risk infant families. In: 7th Australasian Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, Perth, WA, October 1999: conference proceedings. Canning Bridge, WA: Promaco Conventions, 1999, volume 2, p695-708

Nelson, K. (2000) What works in family preservation services, In Kluger, M, Alexander, G & Curtis, P. What works in child welfare, CWLA Press, Washington, DC.

O'Neill, C (2000) Support, timelines and hard decisions. Children Australia v.25 no.4: 7-10

Owen. L. (1999) Home based care, residential care and intensive family preservation, reunification and support services: a perspective from Victoria, Australia. Asia Pacific Families: APFAM Journal v.1 no.2: 3-22

Parton, N. (1997), 'Current debates and future prospects', in N. Parton (Ed.), Child Protection and Family Support: Tensions, contradictions and possibilities, London: Routledge.

Practice Leadership Unit, (2000), Decision-making, planning and case management in the Victorian child protection system – A discussion paper, Department of Human Services, Melbourne.

Pringle, K (1998) Children and social welfare in Europe, Buckingham, Open University Press.

Reed, K. B. & Kirk, R. S. (1998) Intensive Family Preservation Services: A Short History but a Long Past. Family Preservation Journal; 3(1): pp. 41-57; 1998

Scott, D (1997) Child welfare changes from past to present: a source of commiseration or celebration? Where to from here? Unpublished, Twelfth W J Craig Memorial Lecture

Schwartz, I. M.; Fishman, G. (1999) Kids Raised by the Government. Westport, CT, Praeger Publishers

Siegel, G. L.; Loman, L. A.; Sherburne, D. S.; Aldrich, D.; et al. (1998) Child Protection Services Family Assessment and Response Demonstration Impact Evaluation: Digest of Findings and Conclusions. Final Report, Institute of Applied Research, St. Louis, MO

Tomison, A M (1994) Case management of child sexual abuse in Victoria: a discussion of the findings from an in situ case tracking study. Unpublished, Paper presented at the First National Conference on Child Sexual Abuse, Melbourne.

Tomison, A.M. (1996), 'Child Protection Towards 2000: Commentary', Child Abuse Prevention, vol 4. no.2, Spring, pp.1-3, AIFS, Melbourne.

Tomison, A.M. (1997). *Overcoming Structural Barriers to the Prevention of Child Abuse And Neglect: A Discussion paper*. Sydney: NSW Child Protection Council.

Tomison, A M (1998a) 'Child protection towards 2000' revisited: trends in child protection and child abuse prevention. In: Changing families, challenging futures, 6th Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference, Melbourne, November 1998. Melbourne, Vic: Australian Institute of Family Studies, Online only <http://www.aifs.org.au/institute/afrc6papers/tomison.html>

Tomison, A (1998b) Targeting 'at risk' families: an evaluation of the Brimbank Family Outreach Service. Child Abuse Prevention: National Child Protection Clearinghouse Newsletter v.6 no.2 Spring 1998: 3-6 and Online <http://www.aifs.org.au/nch/newsletterspring98.html>

Tomison, A.M. (1999). Professional decision making and the management of actual or suspected child abuse and neglect cases: an in situ tracking study, vols. I & II, Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Monash University, Melbourne.

Tomison, A.M. (2000). *Exploring family violence: Linking child maltreatment and domestic violence*, NCPCH Issues Paper no.13. Melbourne: AIFS.

Tomison, A.M. & Poole, L. (2000). *Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect: Findings from an Australian Audit of Prevention Programs*. Melbourne: AIFS.

Tomison, A. & Wise, S (1999) Community-based approaches in preventing child maltreatment Issues in Child Abuse Prevention Number 11 Autumn

Vinson, T; Baldry, E (1999), The spatial clustering of child maltreatment: are micro-social environments involved?, Canberra, ACT: Australian Institute of Criminology, 1999, 6p, figures. (Trends and issues in crime and criminal justice no.119), and Online <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi/ti119.pdf>

Vinson, T; Baldry, E (2000), Cumulative disadvantage, child abuse and preventive and ameliorative actions. In: World Forum 2000 - Children First in the New Millennium: a New Commitment to Children and Young People, August 2000. Sydney, NSW: Association of Childrens Welfare Agencies (ACWA), 22p, tables, Online only <http://www.acwa.asn.au/wf2000/Papers/23VINSONBALDRY.doc>

Violence Against Children Study Group, (1999) Children, Child Abuse and Child Protection: Placing Children Centrally. John Wiley and Sons, New York, NY.

Virginia Department of Social Services, (1999), Final report on the multiple response system for child protective services in Virginia, author, December 10.

Waldfoegel, J. (1998) Future of Children; 8(1): p. Spring 1998; Center for the Future of Children, Los Altos, CA. <http://www.futureofchildren.org>

Wardley, S; Mackiewicz, P (1998) Specialist leaving care/ aftercare services. In: 1998 ACWA Conference 'Improving services for children, youth and families': conference proceedings. Sydney, NSW: Association of Children's Welfare Agencies, p118-125

Webb, D; Berry, T; Marling, L; Noble, P (1995) The difference that makes a difference? The Keeping Families Together Programme. In: Conference papers: Second National Family Preservation Conference, 14-17 February 1995, University of Melbourne. Melbourne, Vic: Canterbury Family Centre, 1995, p72-77

Weil, M.; Thomas, C.; Callahan, J.; De Carolis, G.; Ooms, T. (1992) Service Integration and Coordination at the Family - Client Level: Is Case Management the Answer? Family Centred Social Policy: The Emerging Agenda. American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, Washington, DC.

West, J; Edwards, J; Moses, S (1998) Families Together Program. In: Donnelly, S. and Edwards, J. eds. Inner worlds - outer realities: the prevention of child abuse and neglect through early intervention. Sydney, NSW: Benevolent Society of New South Wales, p105-118