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Commissioner for Children Tasmania
annual report



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The Commissioner for Children is an independent, statutory office responsible to the Parliament of Tasmania. The Commissioner's functions include promoting the rights and well-being of children and young people, examining and advising Government on policies, practices and services provided for children and laws affecting their health, welfare, care, protection and development

10 September 2007

The Hon. Lara Giddings
Minister for Health and Human Services
Level 10, 15 Murray Street
HOBART TAS 7000

Dear Minister,

In accordance with the requirements of section 83 (1) of the *Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997*, I have the pleasure of enclosing the Annual Report of the Commissioner for Children for the financial year ending 30 June 2007 for presentation to the Parliament of Tasmania.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Mason
Commissioner

Commissioner for Children

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From the Commissioner for Children



I would like to acknowledge the commitment and achievements of my predecessor Mr David Fanning, who resigned as Commissioner for Children on 20 October 2006 to commence his appointment as the foundation magistrate in Australia's first Neighbourhood Justice Centre in Victoria. As Commissioner from 2004-2006 Mr Fanning laid a solid foundation for ongoing projects and initiatives commenced in the Commissioner for Children's office during 2006 – 2007. A number of reports were released, promoting the rights and welfare of children and young people, especially those more vulnerable children in the child protections system and the juvenile justice system. These publications are available on our website (www.childcomm.tas.gov.au) and further details will be discussed later in this Annual Report.

I would like to thank Dr Sue Jenkins, who acted as interim Commissioner from the 4 December 2006 to 20 April 2007. Dr Jenkins from her background in paediatrics and public health continued discussions with Government about a variety of issues, primarily to promote the interests and well being of children, their families and carers.

Current research into neural development shows the importance of maximising the development of neural pathways both in utero and in the first 5 years of life. This research shows that neural development is affected not only by poor nutrition, and exposure to toxic substances like drugs, alcohol and tobacco smoke but also by absence of love, and by exposure to fear and to family violence. These effects manifest later in life as learning difficulties, anti-social and criminal behaviour and inter-generational family violence and child abuse.

These years are called The Early Years and the Office of the Commissioner for Children has and will continue to encourage Government to optimise children's Early Years opportunities not only in child protection, but in education, primary health and in delivery of important services to families and children at risk in the community. This needs careful targeting as those families are often families who do not come to the attention of universal government services until significant harm has been done.

Dr Jenkins has performed significant service in the development of the Early Years Foundation and is to be congratulated on her appointment to the Chair of the Foundation Board. The Foundation sources private and Government funds for applied evidence-based research that will demonstrate tangible benefit to children in the 0-6 age group in the Tasmanian community. I am a member of that Board ex officio and the Commissioner for Children is engaged in providing statistical scoping and review work to enable those funds to be efficiently targeted.

Dr Jenkins and I have also been actively involved with the Child Death Review process, including membership and attendances at the Council of Obstetric and Paediatric Mortality and Morbidity meetings and the Sub Committee of Paediatric Mortality and Morbidity meetings. This engagement builds on the foundation set by David Fanning towards the establishment of a Child Death Review process for Tasmania. As incoming Commissioner I have sought to expand the role of a Child Death Review process beyond the examination of children and young people known to child protection services, to the examination of preventable deaths of all Tasmanian children.

A Complaints in Care and Community Visitors issues paper was completed and forwarded by the Commissioner for Children to the Minister for Health and Human Services, the Honourable Ms Lara Giddings for comment. Routine and frequent visits to children in State care appear to be best practice models of protecting both children and Government from the tragedies of abuse that international experience shows may arise within any system of State out-of-home care. My office has conducted an audit of a random sample of complaints in care as part of the Government's Complaints Monitoring Policy and I will continue to work with Government to devise models of record keeping that are functional and useable by child protection workers and models of contact with children not only to protect them but to improve the quality of their care.

Both Dr Jenkins and myself have continued to raise the profile of the Commissioner for Children's office and the needs of children and young people through attending and speaking at various youth sector meetings, forums, conferences and community events, and through the electronic and print media.

Dr Jenkins continued to promote the importance of establishing a screening or background checking process for people seeking to work with children. This office continues to receive inquiries from the public about this issue, however the government is awaiting clarification at National and Interstate level before a model is adopted by the Government. The less information agencies have about an individual's past the greater the risk to children; but the more information they have to protect children, the more cumbersome and slow the process becomes. Does one stop at a check of relevant convictions within Tasmania? Or nationally? Does one consider charges brought but not resulting in conviction? Does one examine the reasons an individual left previous employment, and what does one check?

Since my appointment I have tried to establish trusting and workable relationships between myself and Government as well as the major opposition parties in Parliament in pursuit of my goals to provide a bridge between parliament and the community, and to maintain the focus of these otherwise competing interests upon their common goal: the best interests of children. I have found the executive and staff of the Department of Health and Human Services to be accommodating, professional and welcoming to

me in my new role. All systems are capable of improvement and I endeavour to provide suggestions as useful input, not as barriers to communication.

I sincerely thank Mr Fanning and Dr Jenkins, two people who have worked very hard in the interests of children and their families. Finally I would also like to thank my staff for their ongoing commitment and enthusiasm in completing such a diversity of work with the primary focus of improving the health, welfare, care and development of children. I especially thank each of them for their warm welcome into this wide-ranging and challenging role.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Mason', with a stylized, flowing script.

Paul Mason
Commissioner

A Snapshot of Children and Young People in Tasmania

Population¹

- The total population of Tasmania, as measured by the 2006 Population Census, was 476,481.
- The total number of children and young people (aged 0 – 14 years) in Tasmania was 94,022 (19.7% of the population).
- 6,083 children (aged 0- 14 years) in Tasmania identified themselves as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (6% of all children in Tasmania)
- 494 teenage women (aged 15 – 19 years) in Tasmania had at least one child. This is a decrease from 1996 figures that indicated that 705 teenage women (aged 15 – 19 years) in Tasmania had at least one child.

Education²

- In 2006 there were 82,454 full time primary and secondary school students in Tasmania, including 5,177 Indigenous students.
- In 2006 approximately 75% of all full time school students in Tasmania attended Government schools.
- In 2006 the Year 12 retention rate for students in Tasmania was 64.8%. This is well below the national average of 74.7%, and is the second lowest rate of retention in Australia, with the exception of the Northern Territory.

Juvenile Justice³

- Between July 2006 – June 2007, 108 juveniles (aged 11 - 18 years) were held on remand, at least once, at the Ashley Youth Detention Centre.
- Two thirds (65%) of the remandees were aged between 15 and 17.
- Nineteen percent of the remandees were identified as Aboriginal.

¹ Population figures have been taken from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, *2006 Census of Population and Housing*

² Australian Bureau of Statistics, Catalogue 4221.0 (2006) Schools Australia 2006

³ Department of Health and Human Services, Tasmanian Juvenile Remandee Data (March 2007)

Child Protection

- Between July 2006 – May 2007, 10,448 notifications were made to Child and Family Services.⁴ Of these notifications:
 - 4,208 were referred for further investigation
 - 1,616 cases were finalised (38.4% of the notifications referred for investigation)
 - 685 were substantiated cases of child abuse or neglect.
- As at 30 June 2006, 833 children were on Care and Protection orders in Tasmania. This equates to 7.1 children per 1,000 (aged 0 – 17 years), higher than the national rate of 5.6 children per 1,000.⁵
- As at 30 June 2006, 5.8 children per 1,000 (aged 0 – 17 years) were in out- of- home care.⁶

Mission Australia Survey of Young Australians 2006

Mission Australia conducted a survey of 14,747 Australian young people (aged 11 – 24 years) in 2006, including 674 young Tasmanians.⁷ Of this sample:

- 93% of young people from Tasmania spoke only English at home. The most common languages spoken by the remaining 7% were Italian, Japanese and Spanish.
- 88% of young people from Tasmania were living with family, lower than the national rate of 92.1%.
- 60.2% of young people from Tasmania stated that parents/family were the main source of income, lower than the national rate of 69.3%. In contrast, 13.6% of young people from Tasmania stated that a Government allowance was the main source of income, higher than the national rate of 5.6%.
- 32.3% of young people in Tasmania were unemployed and looking for work, higher than the national rate of 24.9%.
- Issues that most concerned young people from Tasmania included bullying/emotional abuse (31.9%), alcohol and other drug issues (31.5%) and depression (27.6%).

⁴ Department of Health and Human Services, Monthly Data Activity (May 2007).

⁵ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2007) *Child Protection Australia 2005-06*, p44.

⁶ Ibid, p56

⁷ Mission Australia, *National Survey of Young Australians 2006*, p77 - 78.

Our Vision

A community where the interests of children are the paramount consideration in any decisions affecting their health, welfare, protection, development and education.

Our Objectives

Under Section 79 of the *Children, Young Person's and Their Families Act 1997*:

To promote the health, well being and development of children.

To promote the Government's responsiveness to the needs of children, especially those most vulnerable.

To promote children's involvement as active and contributing decision makers in their lives and their communities.

To support families and communities in the care and protection of children.

Our Strategy

The Commissioner for Children is an independent office responsible to the Parliament of Tasmania. In essence, the Commissioner's functions include promoting the rights and well being of children and young people along with examining and advising Government on policies, practices and services provided for children and laws affecting their health, welfare, care, protection and development. These functions are very broad and there is consequently a need to focus on matters that will make a real difference to the lives of children in Tasmania especially those more vulnerable children and young people.

What Does the Commissioner for Children Do?

The Commissioner for Children is an independent, statutory office responsible to the Parliament of Tasmania. The Commissioner's functions include promoting the rights and well-being of children and young people, examining and advising the Government on policies, practices and services provided for children and laws affecting their health, welfare, care, protection and development.

The Commissioner for Children was established under section 78 of the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997*, proclaimed in July 2000. The Act itself was informed by the United Nations

Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Commissioner aims to safeguard the rights of the children as set out in the Act and the Convention, insofar as they are expressed in legislative provisions and Government actions in this State.

Section 79 Functions of the Commissioner

s.79 (1) The Commissioner has the following functions:

- (a) on the request of the Minister, to **investigate** a decision or recommendation made, or an act done or omitted, under this Act in respect of a child, other than a decision or recommendation made by the Court;
- (b) to **encourage** the development, within the Department, of policies and services designed to promote the health, welfare, care, protection and development of children;
- (c) on the request of the Minister, to **inquire** generally into and report on any matter, including any enactment, practice and procedure relating to the health, welfare, care, protection and development of children;
- (d) to **increase public awareness** of matters relating to the health, welfare, care, protection and development of children;
- (e) on the Commissioner's own initiative or on the request of the Minister, to **advise** the Minister on any matter relating to the administration of this Act and the policies and practices of the Department, another Government department or any other person which affect the health, welfare, care, protection and development of children;
- (f) on the Commissioner's own initiative or on the request of the Minister, to **advise** the Minister on any matter relating to the health, welfare, care, protection and development of children placed in the custody, or under the guardianship, of the Secretary under this or any other Act;
- (g) any other functions imposed by this or any other Act.

Section 80 Powers of Commissioner

s.80 (1) The Commissioner has power to do all things necessary or convenient to be done in connection with the performance and exercise of his or her functions and powers under this or any other Act.

(2) Without limiting the powers of the Commissioner under subsection (1), the Commissioner may require any person to answer questions or to produce documents so far as may be relevant to the administration of this Act.

The *Children, Young Persons and their Families Act* recognises that under most circumstances, the child's best interests are served within the family. The philosophy of the Convention on the Rights of the Child is expressed in the fundamental principles of the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act*, namely:

- that the best interests of the child are paramount;
- that families are responsible for the care of their children; and

- that Government has an important role in supporting families to meet this responsibility.

The Commissioner's powers to act on his or her own initiative, that is not in response to a request from the Minister, are limited to (b) encouraging the Department, (d) raising public awareness and (e) and (f) advising the Minister, but include a power to require documents and information necessary to enable the carrying out of those functions.

It is the Commissioner's policy to use these powers persuasively rather than by compulsion of legal process in recognition of the general principle that the interests of children and young people are best served by the community acting collaboratively and with improved understanding of the paramountcy of those interests.

In carrying out these legislative functions, the Commissioner acts independently, impartially and in the public interest. Where there is a conflict between the interests of child and young persons and the interests of Government and other groups in society the current Commissioner considers it an obligation to advocate for the interests of the former. To assist the Commissioner in the performance and exercise of these functions under the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997*, the Children and Young Persons Consultative Council (children and young people) and the Children and Young Persons Advisory Council (adults) were established under section 81(1) (a) and (b) of the Act.

Enquiries from Government Agencies, Non-Government Organisations and the Public

In 2006-2007, the Commissioner for Children's office received approximately 146 enquiries from individuals, organisations and Government agencies. The office receives enquiries by telephone, email and letter. Some enquirers simply request general information on issues related to children and youth or the role of the Commissioner, while others wish to make a formal complaint about a service or agency.

The Commissioner for Children does not have the power to investigate individual complaints, other than when requested to do so by the Minister for Health and Human Services. Where the office is unable to assist, enquirers are referred to relevant Government agencies or non-Government organisations which are able to provide further information or have complaints handling functions. The office commonly refers callers to the following services:

- Tasmanian Ombudsman
- Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania
- Hobart Community Legal Service
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Education
- Tasmania Police

Requests from the Minister of Health and Human Services, the Honourable Lara Giddings

In July 2006, the Minister for Health and Human Services requested a report and recommendations regarding the need for a child death review under section 79 (1) (c) of the *Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997*. This advice was provided to the Minister in the Report titled Advice to the Minister for Health and Human Services: A Child Death Review Process for Tasmania, September 2006. The Minister accepted the recommendations of the Report to establish a statutory child death review process in Tasmania.

In June 2007 the current Commissioner submitted a further advice to the Minister concerning the scope, functions and model for such a process.

The Department for Health and Human Services is now responsible for recommending a final model for Cabinet's consideration and later in 2007-08 will be seeking Cabinet Approval to amend the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997* to establish the process. The Commissioner for Children will chair the Child Death Review Committee.

Initiatives Undertaken by the Commissioner for Children to Promote the Safety, Care and Protection of Children

Child Death Review Committee

An interim Child Death Review Committee consisting of Dr Sue Jenkins (interim Commissioner for Children), Ms Alison Jacob the Deputy Secretary of DHHS, Ms Ann Foot and other members of the Obstetric and Paediatric Mortality and Morbidity Council, has considered the circumstances of the deaths of certain children known or previously known to Child Protection Services. The Committee's report and recommendations will be presented to the Minister in the second half of 2007. The Department is currently examining the scope, functions and model of a legislated overall Child Death Review body best suited to Tasmanian conditions and the Commissioner for Children is involved in the development of that model.

Model for responding to Complaints in Care incorporating Community Visitors

The Report on Child Protection Services (Fanning, D. and Jacob, A. 2006) made a large number of recommendations, one of which (Recommendation 10.3) was to establish a formal process and model for responding to complaints and concerns involving the child protection service. Further work was done in this office by Colleen Moran and Jennifer Muirhead to develop a model, based on the system used in South Australia and incorporating a Community Visitors program similar to the successful Queensland model. The report 'A Model for Responding to Complaints in Care in Tasmania Incorporating a Community Visitors Program' was provided to the Hon. Minister Lara Giddings on February 26, 2007 and subsequently presented to the Division of Children and Families. A joint Complaints In Care Working Group with the Commissioner's Office and DHHS has been set up to progress this initiative. In June the Commissioner visited each of the three regional offices and conducted a confidential audit of files of children in out of home care where complaints about their care had been dealt with. The Commissioner will present this report of the audit to the Working Group and to the Director of Child and Families in August/September 2007.

Child Injury Prevention Coalition

The Child Injury Prevention Coalition (CHIP), chaired by Dr Sue Jenkins and subsequently by Paul Mason, met on 5 occasions and held a very successful Forum at Campbelltown on March 28th 2007, attended by the Hon. Minister Lara Giddings. The Forum generated a great deal of interest, resulting in an expansion of membership, the forging of networks, and recommendations for future activities including advocacy and further research into the causes of childhood accidents in Tasmania.

Paediatric Mortality and Morbidity Sub-Committee and Council of Obstetric and Paediatric Mortality and Morbidity Meetings

Dr Sue Jenkins attended these meetings prior to Paul Mason's appointment in mid April 2007. The Commissioner is a member of both the Paediatric Mortality and Morbidity Sub-Committee and the Council of Obstetric and Paediatric Mortality and Morbidity. Several recommendations to Government have emerged from the sub-committee meetings concerning product safety issues and road safety issues affecting children. One of the issues discussed with the Paediatric M & M Sub-Committee and the Council of Obstetric and Paediatric M & M is the establishment and operation of a cohesive Child Death Review process for Tasmania. The Commissioner for Children has been recommending a centralised child death review process for all deaths of children in Tasmania, not just those known to the child protection system.

Mental Health Act Review

Dr Sue Jenkins sat on the Steering Committee for this review from December 2006 to March 2007, with input to the Issues Paper which was released for public consultation in April 2007. The Steering

Committee has undergone a process of restructure and now consists of an Advisory Committee and Drafting committee. The Commissioner has made a submission to the Government Discussion Process focussing on the needs and rights of persons under 18 years of age with mental illness. The principal focus has been to ensure separation of minors from adults in the mental health system, as well as therapies responsive to developmental age.

Tasmanian Whole of Government Early Years Foundation

The Commissioner is an ex officio member of the Board of the Tasmanian Early Years Foundation, by virtue of s.7(2)(d) of the Tasmanian Early Years Foundation Act, 2005. The work of the Board is to allocate grant funds to bodies either researching or conducting targeted service projects that aim to achieve measurable results for children aged 0-6 against a baseline of current measures. The importance of the medical, psychological, educational and social environment of this age group cannot be underestimated both in economic terms for State and in terms of the wellbeing of individuals and communities, including the community of the State of Tasmania. The reader is referred again to the paper by J Fraser Mustard ⁸ which comprehensively summarises current knowledge about this topic.

The former interim Commissioner Dr Sue Jenkins is the inaugural chairperson of the Board which receives administrative support within the Department of Premier and Cabinet. The Board met once during 2006-07 for its inaugural meeting in April 2007. The Commissioner for Children is a member of the Research Sub-Committee of the board which was established to determine for the Board appropriate “outcomes” (aspirational goals) for Early Years children, “indicators” (statistical measures) to identify what sets of data already exist by which those outcomes can be measured against those indicators, and what sets of data are “missing” and need to be gathered by research. The original scoping of this work has been conducted by the office of the Commissioner for Children which offered the staff to undertake the work.

Screening of Individuals Who Work With Children in Tasmania

This issue was highlighted in the Commissioner for Children’s 2005-06 Annual Report. In January 2005 the then Commissioner for Children released a consultation paper titled *Screening Individuals Who Work With Children in Tasmania* which proposed a new system of screening (or “background checking”) for people who wish to work with children. Screening is an important measure to help ensure children in our community are protected from persons who may seek to cause them harm. The proposals put forward in the paper addressed the absence of a uniform, legislative based system of screening in Tasmania for all employees, volunteers and self-employed people who work with children in the Government and non-Government sectors. Similar systems have been developed or are in the

⁸ J Fraser Mustard, **Early Child Development and Experience-based Brain Development -**

The Scientific Underpinnings of the Importance of Early Child Development in a Globalized World, paper for The World Bank International Symposium on Early Child Development – A Priority for Sustained Economic Growth & Equity, September 27-29, 2005, published by The Brookings Institute, New York. Full paper available at <http://www.brookings.edu/views/papers/200602mustard.htm>

process of being developed in every other Australian jurisdiction. For example, since the release of the consultation paper in 2005, Victoria and Western Australia have both commenced operation of comprehensive legislative based screening systems in this area. Both the interim Commissioner, Dr Sue Jenkins and the present Commissioner, Paul Mason, have continued to advocate to Government for the development of a uniform system of screening individuals who work with children in Tasmania. However there has been no progress toward adopting the proposals put forward in the consultation paper.

Multicultural Youth Forum

On March 14 and April 12, 2007, the interim Commissioner for Children, Dr Sue Jenkins, hosted preliminary meetings to discuss a proposal to hold a Multicultural and Multifaith Youth Forum in National Youth Week, 2008. Representatives of key bodies involved in advocating for or delivering services to the multicultural community were invited to attend. A temporary Research Officer was employed by this office for a period of three months, to progress and research the Multicultural Youth Forum 2008. This was a short term contract to June 2007.

The shape of the youth forum has still not been decided by the steering group, primarily because there is yet to be consultation with young people as to how the forum would best suit them. The steering group has however discussed two possible purposes that the forum could take, one is to bring young people of diverse backgrounds together to discuss the issues that affect their lives, the other purpose could be to bring young people from all backgrounds to promote harmony within the community. The Red Cross will be the lead agency in the progression of the Forum, with the involvement of this office and other stakeholders. To date there have been 3 meetings related to the handover from the Commissioner for Children's office to the Red Cross, held on the 7, 14 and 30 May 2007. The Commissioner looks forward to seeing a successful outcome for our multicultural young people and their families and hopes that the Multicultural Youth Forum is of real benefit to young people.

Charter of Rights

Tasmania along with ACT and NT does not have a charter of rights that guides and protects the rights of children living in out of home care. The office undertook a project to research how other states have gone about creating their charter of rights and providing an analysis of these processes and individual charters. A background paper has been prepared to provide recommendations on the next possible steps for the office to begin developing a charter of rights for Tasmania.

The Commissioner will now consult with relevant stakeholders including children and young people in out of home care before submitting an advice to the Minister in 2007-08.

Reports Produced by the Commissioner for Children

The following reports were released by David Fanning former Commissioner for Children in November 2006 regarding the state of child protection in Tasmania. The reports are available on our website: www.childcomm.tas.gov.au

Report on Child Protection Services in Tasmania, Alison Jacob (Deputy Secretary, Human Services and David Fanning (Commissioner for Children)

Date & Location: Wednesday 8 November 2006 (Hobart)

The REPORT ON CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES IN TASMANIA Project was commissioned by the Honourable David Llewellyn, MLA, the former Minister for Health and Human Services, and undertaken between March and July 2006. The project was conducted by David Fanning, the then Commissioner for Children, and Alison Jacob, Deputy Secretary (Human Services) in the Department of Health and Human Services.

The Project involved extensive data collection, consideration of the findings of other recent reports and reviews and consultation with staff, stakeholders and non-government organisations. Expert advice was obtained from two international authorities in child protection: Professor Dorothy Scott and Dr Marie Connelly. Visits to Victorian services were conducted to view good practice services and meet with staff at state and regional level. A limited audit was also conducted of a sample of child protection files. The resulting report made comprehensive recommendations as a framework for major change to the child protection system in Tasmania.

Advice to the Minister for Health and Human Services, A Child Death Review Process for Tasmania

Date & Location: Wednesday 8 November 2006 (Hobart)

The purpose of the paper was to determine whether there was a need for a child death review process in Tasmania; identify desirable features of a child death review process; assess whether existing mechanisms for scrutinising child deaths are sufficient to answer the need for a child death review process; and propose a child death review model for Tasmania. The recommendations made in this paper were accepted by the Minister for Health and Human Services, Lara Giddings.

Who is listening to the children now? The Commissioner for Children's response to Recommendations 8 and 9 of the Tasmanian Ombudsman's Report: 'Listen to the children, review of claims of abuse from adults in state care as children'

Date & Location: Monday 13 November 2006 (Hobart)

In 2003, the Tasmanian Government announced that the Tasmanian Ombudsman would conduct an independent review of the claims of abuse of children while in out of home care. The Ombudsman's report, 'Listen to the Children, Review of Claims of Abuse from Adults in State Care as Children' made eleven recommendations to Government in response to the independent review.

Recommendation 8 recommended that the Commissioner for Children investigate twelve recent allegations of abuse in out of home care. Recommendation 9 recommended that the Commissioner provide advice on a number of practice issues relating to children in out of home care. The report arising Who is listening to the children now? The Commissioner for Children's response to Recommendations 8 and 9 of the Tasmanian Ombudsman's Report: 'Listen to the Children, Review of Claims of Abuse from Adults in State Care as Children', made recommendations for significant change to how out of home care services were provided to children and how children could better be supported in out of home care to mitigate against the abuse identified through the Ombudsman's Review continuing to occur.

Supplementary Advice to the Minister for Health and Human Services re Child death review process

This advice built on the first advice by David Fanning and discussed two areas the new Commissioner believed the process could become best practice for Tasmania. These were to expand its scope beyond the deaths of children currently on active Departmental child protection caseload or previously known to child protection, and to bring together the Departmental review process, the State Coroner and expert medical and management advice into the one jurisdictional framework. The Government is considering this proposal at the time of this Annual report.

Guidelines and Papers Provided to the Commissioner for Children for Advice and Comment

- *Review of the Complaints Handling and Dispute Resolution Provisions of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 Discussion Paper*
- *Review of the Mental Health Act 1996 Issues Paper*
- *Creating Safe Environments for Children – Organisations, Employees and Volunteers: National Framework, Community and Disability Services Ministers Council*

Commissioner for Children's Committee

Membership and Involvement

- Whole-of-Government Early Years Policy Framework (Member)
- Paediatric Mortality and Morbidity Sub-Committee (Member)
- Council of Obstetric and Paediatric Mortality and Morbidity (Member)
- Child Injury Prevention Coalition (Chairperson)
- Asia Pacific Association of Children's Commissioners (Member)
- Community Services Ministers' Advisory Council Child Safe Organisations Working Group (Member)
- Complaints Monitoring Group, DHHS (Member)

Comment Provided by the Commissioner for Children on Draft Legislation

- *Adoption Amendment Bill 2007*
- *Public Health Amendment Bill 2007*
- *Youth Justice Amendment Bill 2007*
- *Mental Health Review Act 2007*
- Draft Model *Family Provisions Bill*
- *Wills Bill 2007*
- Draft Cabinet Minute to amend the *Road Safety (Alcohol and Drugs) Act 1970*.
- *State Service Act 2000, Commissioners Direction number 5 'Procedures for the investigation and determination of whether an employee has breached the code of conduct', section 4.3 regarding interviewing a child, and Direction number 6 "Procedures for the investigation and determination of whether an employee is able to efficiently and effectively perform his/her duties", section 4.2 regarding interviewing a child.*
- *Human Services (Enhanced Service Delivery) Bill 2007 (Access Card exposure draft Bill – implications for children and young people).*

Children and Young Persons Consultative Council



Good bye Amy (centre) who has turned 18 years and is leaving the Council. GOOD LUCK!!

Paul Mason, Commissioner for Children and some Council Members (from left, Priya, Paul Mason, Amy Young, Anthea, Nathan), July 2007. Others who have also turned 18 in 2006-07 are Victoria and Tim and the Commissioner honours them for their contributions.

The Council is a group of people under 18 years of age who share their views with the Commissioner for Children on issues affecting children in Tasmania to help the Commissioner in his work. Members join from different schools, backgrounds and towns to share their thoughts and ideas.

The Council discusses issues the Commissioner is writing about, topics he has been asked to comment on and other topics of importance or concern to them. The Council have helped the Commissioner provide advice to the Tasmanian Government, Australian Government and other bodies around Australia and overseas on issues affecting children.

The Council met only once during the 2006-07 financial year. This was largely due to the delay in appointing a permanent Commissioner for Children, which occurred in April 2007. At this meeting the Council discussed the following:

Saturday 19 August 2006 (Launceston)

- Sharing of ideas for the development of a new Children and Young Persons Consultative Council webpage.
- Feedback from the Commissioner regarding the Council's views on domestic violence in video games which were shared with the Queensland Commissioner for Children and Young People and Child Guardian.
- Topics of interest and concern to Council members. Topics nominated for future discussion were:
 - Hygiene in schools, including standards of cleanliness students should be able to expect for bathrooms / toilets and whether these standards are being met.
 - The need for free health checks in schools, including high school.

- Prevalence and dangers of smoking and drinking alcohol amongst young people.
- The comparative dangers of cannabis and alcohol and using education as a prevention measure.
- Lack of entertainment venues for children and young people.

The Council is currently made up of 10 young people and is now recruiting for additional members. Advertisements have been circulated in newspapers and schools to attract children from all regions and backgrounds. At the date of this report 30 June, 27 young people have nominated to join the Council from 2007-08 and it is likely that modern technology will be used to keep the Council in touch more regularly.

Children and Young Persons Advisory Council

The Children and Young Persons Advisory Council consists of Members from the North, North West and South of the State. Their expertise and commitment in assisting the Commissioner in his role as Commissioner for Children is greatly appreciated. The 2006-2007 year has been quite eventful, with the Commissioner for Children's office having leadership of three Commissioners during this time, David Fanning from July 2006 to October 2006, Dr Sue Jenkins (Interim Commissioner) from December 2006 to April 2007 and Paul Mason from April 2007 onwards. This has, as a result had an impact on the number of times that the Advisory Council have met as one membership, although the Commissioner has had informal meetings with individual members during this time.

During 2006-07, the Advisory Council consisted of the following members:

Ken Abery	Ronda McIntyre
Ros Atkinson	Dr Arlette Mercae
Sheila Banks	Julian Punch
Rick Baxter	Margaret Reynolds
Dr Graham Bury	Karen Ritchie
Kerry Degrassi	Vicki Russell
Lorraine Donnelly	Ian Stokes
Jennifer Dunbabin	Yabbo Thompson
Catherine Edwards	Prof Rob White
Melody Finnerty	Dave Willans
Bernard Knight	Bernadette Zeeman
Tonia Kohl	

The Statewide Advisory Council have met on three occasions at the Commissioner for Children's office, Hobart. The following issues were considered :

23 January 2007

- Review of Juvenile Remandees at Ashley.
- Review of Complaints Protocol – Division of Children and Families.
- Screening of Individuals Who Work With Children.
- Child Protection – Unallocated cases.
- Staffing arrangements at the Commissioner for Children's office.
- Service Development and Operational Improvement Plan (Department of Health and Human Services).
- Referral of recommendation numbers 8 and 9 arising from the Ombudsman's review.
- Early Years Framework and Early Years Foundation.
- Child Death Reviews.

20 March 2007

- Update on the Legislative Council's Select Committee to inquire into and report upon the Ashley Youth Detention Centre.
- Update on the Complaints in Care Project and briefing paper.
- Child Protection – Unallocated Cases.
- Update on significant projects within the Commissioner for Children's office.
- Proposal for working group re children in out of home care.
- Proposal for Multifaith Multicultural Youth Forum.

28 June 2007

- Welcome and Address by the Commissioner for Children.
- Members thanked for their contributions and expertise in assisting the Commissioner for Children's office.
- All members released from Advisory Council and invited to reapply.
- Expression of Interest (EOI) advertised in local papers (Mercury, Advocate and Examiner 30 June 2007). If Members wish to reapply they can forward their Expression of Interest to the Commissioner for Children's office for consideration.
- The EOI also available on the Commissioner for Children website www.childcomm.tas.gov.au
The closing date for applications is the 30 July 2007.
- Brainstorm
 - Ideas and wish list for children and young people.
 - Format of council meetings, including venues.

Some existing members have renominated and several new members have joined bringing the total number of members for 2007-08 to 36. It is likely that after a preliminary State-wide meeting, the Advisory Council will provide advice and assistance to the Commissioner through working groups organised around specific projects.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

2006/07 Financial Statement – Commissioner for Children

	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Budget appropriated by Parliament 2006-07		444	
Recurrent Funding		<u>88</u>	532

EXPENDITURE (Direct Costs)

Salaries and Related Expenditure

Salaries and Wages	308		
Other Employee Related Expenses	<u>63</u>	<u>371</u>	

Operating Expenditure

Rent	33		
Other Accommodation Related	4		
Communications	12		
Travel and Transport	19		
Consultancies	2		
Information Technology	7		
Other Administrative Expenses	<u>26</u>	<u>103</u>	<u>474</u>

OPERATING SURPLUS			<u><u>58</u></u>
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Notes

1. All amounts are rounded to the nearest \$1,000
2. The Financial Statement has been prepared on a cash basis.

Prepared By:	Karen Shanahan, Business Analyst
Approved By:	Eleanor Patterson, A/Director Finance
Dated:	13 July 2007

APPENDIX 1

SPEECHES, MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, FORUMS AND WORKSHOPS ATTENDED, LAUNCHES ATTENDED AND PROJECTS

SPEECHES

YOUTH ACTION PRIORITIES (YAP) MEETING (D.FANNING)

Date & Location: Monday 3 July 2006 (Hobart)

CHILD PROTECTION PRESENTATION, NORTHERN SERVICE CENTRE (D. FANNING & A. JACOB)

Date & Location: Thursday 6 July 2006 (Launceston)

CHILD PROTECTION PRESENTATION, NORTH WEST SERVICE CENTRE (D. FANNING & A. JACOB)

Date & Location: Friday 7 July 2006 (Burnie)

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW (AIAL) TASMANIAN CHAPTER ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (D.FANNING)

Date & Location: Thursday 17 August 2006 (Hobart)

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE (D.FANNING)

Date & Location: Wednesday 18 October 2006 (Richmond)

FAMILY, CHILD AND YOUTH HEALTH CONFERENCE (DR S.JENKINS)

Date & Location: Saturday 17 March 2007 (Montrose Bay Yacht Club)

CHILD HOME INJURY PREVENTION (CHIP) (DR SUE JENKINS)

Date & Location: Wednesday 28 March 2007 (all day forum, Campbelltown)

INDUCTION OF CHILD AND FAMILY MANAGERS (DR S.JENKINS)

Date & Location: Thursday 19 April 2007 (Hobart)

ALLIANCE FOR CHILDHOOD CONFERENCE (P. MASON)

Date & Location: Saturday 26 May 2007 (Launceston)

1ST NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FOETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER: BUILDING COMMUNITY CARE (P. MASON)

Date & Location: Thursday 21 June 2007 (Launceston)

CHILDREN AND YOUTH SECTOR MEETINGS

YOUTH ACTION PRIORITIES (YAP) MEETING (C. MORAN-FORD)

Date & Location: Monday 5 February 2007 (Hobart)

GLENORCHY ACTION INTERAGENCY NETWORK (GAIN) MEETING (DR S.JENKINS AND A. FEARNLEY-SANDER)

Date & Location: Thursday 8 February 2007 (Glenorchy)

YOUTH ACTION PRIORITIES (YAP) MEETING (C. MORAN-FORD)

Date & Location: Monday 2 April 2007 (Hobart)

YOUTH ACTION NETWORK GLENORCHY (YANG) (PAUL MASON)

Date & Location: Thursday 26 April 2007 (Glenorchy)

GLENORCHY ACTION INTERAGENCY NETWORK (GAIN) MEETING (P.MASON)

Date & Location: Thursday 3 May 2007 (Glenorchy)

YOUTH ACTION PRIORITIES (YAP) MEETING (P.MASON)

Date & Location: Monday 7 May 2007 (Hobart)

ANTI POVERTY COALITION MEETING (P. MASON)

Date & Location: Tuesday 8 May 2007 (Battery Point)

COMMUNITIES FOR CHILDREN (P.MASON)

Date & Location: Thursday 10 May 2007 (Ouse)

ON THE MOVE, DHHS (C.VALENCIA)

Date & Location: Tuesday 22 May 2007 (Hobart)

OTHER PRINCIPAL MEETINGS

EARLY YEARS STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING (D.FANNING)

Date & Location: Tuesday 4 July 2006 (Hobart)

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW (AIAL) TASMANIAN CHAPTER MEETING (D.FANNING)

Date & Location: Monday 17 July 2006 (Hobart)

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW (AIAL) TASMANIAN CHAPTER ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (D.FANNING)

Date & Location: Thursday 17 August 2006 (Hobart)

EARLY YEARS STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING (D.FANNING)

Date & Location: *Wednesday 13 September 2006 (Hobart)*

COUNCIL OF OBSTETRIC & PAEDIATRIC MORTALITY & MORBIDITY MEETINGS

Date & Location: *Thursday 14 September 2006 (Hobart)*

Thursday 22 February 2007 (Hobart)

Thursday 24 May 2007 (Hobart)

PAEDIATRIC MORTALITY AND MORBIDITY SUB COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Date & Location: *Thursday 20 July 2006 (Hobart)*

Thursday 1 March 2007 (Hobart)

Thursday 31 May 2007 (Hobart)

CSMAC (COMMUNITY SERVICES MINISTERS' ADVISORY COUNCIL) CHILD SAFE ORGANISATIONS WORKING GROUP MEETING (J. MUIRHEAD)

Date & Location: *Thursday 21 September 2006 (Sydney)*

NATIONAL DIRECTORS OF WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS (J. MUIRHEAD)

Date & Location: *Friday 22 September 2006 (Sydney)*

EARLY YEARS DATA STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING (P.MASON)

Date & Location: *Friday 11 May 2007 (Hobart)*

MULTICULTURAL YOUTH FORUM (P.MASON & C.VALENCIA)

Date & Location: *Monday 14 May, 2007 (Hobart)*

MULTICULTURAL YOUTH ISSUES REFERENCE GROUP (C.VALENCIA)

Date & Location: *Wednesday 30 May, 2007 (Hobart)*

ASHLEY MEETINGS

ASHLEY VISIT: DAVID FANNING, COMMISSIONER AND ATTORNEY GENERAL STEVE KONS

Date & Location: *Tuesday 12 September 2006 (Ashley Youth Detention Centre, Deloraine)*

ASHLEY VISIT: DR SUE JENKINS, INTERIM COMMISSIONER

Date & Location: *Friday 2 February, 2007 (Ashley Youth Detention Centre, Deloraine)*

ASHLEY VISIT: PAUL MASON, COMMISSIONER & J.MUIRHEAD

Date & Location: *Wednesday 20 June, 2007 (Ashley Youth Detention Centre, Deloraine)*

CONFERENCES, FORUMS AND WORKSHOPS ATTENDED

ASIA PACIFIC ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER'S (APACC) FORUM (D.FANNING)

Date & Location: 10 & 11 August 2006 (Melbourne)

ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES CONFERENCE INCORPORATING THE 7TH INTERNATIONAL LOOKING AFTER CHILDREN CONFERENCE (C. MORAN-FORD)

Date & Location: Wednesday 16 August 2006 (Sydney)

TASMANIAN LAW REFORM INSTITUTE HUMAN RIGHTS FORUM (A. FEARNLEY-SANDER, J. MUIRHEAD & R. ANTHONY)

Date & Location: Friday 17 November 2006, (Hobart)

TASMANIAN MUSLIM COMMUNITY SYMPOSIUM (C.VALENCIA)

Date & Location: Tuesday 5 June, 2007 (Hobart)

MULTI-SYSTEMIC THERAPY SEMINAR (DR SUE JENKINS & J.MUIRHEAD)

Date & Location: Wednesday 21 March (Hobart)

BRINGING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER SYMPOSIUM ON AUSTRALIAN MUSLIMS SHARING OUR ACHIEVEMENTS (C.VALENCIA)

Date & Location: Wednesday 6 June 2007 (Hobart)

EARLY YEARS FRAMEWORK MEETING (P.MASON)

Date & Location: Thursday 14 June 2007 (Hobart)

PARENTAL SUBSTANCE USE AND CHILD PROTECTION : DEVELOPING NATIONAL GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES (P.MASON)

Date & Location: Monday 25 June 2007, (Melbourne)

DERWENT VALLEY WORKSHOP FOR YOUNG PEOPLE (P. MASON & C. MORAN-FORD)

Date & Location: Thursday 28 June 2007 (Derwent Valley)

PARENTAL SUBSTANCE USE AND CHILD PROTECTION: DEVELOPING NATIONAL GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES (P.MASON)

Date & Location: Monday 25 June 2007 (Melbourne)

LAUNCHES ATTENDED

DINNER AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE (D.FANNING)

Date & Location: Tuesday 4 July 2006 (Government House, Hobart)

EARLY YEARS DEGREE LAUNCH (D.FANNING)

Date & Location: Thursday 20 July 2006 (Hobart)

HOBART RELATIONSHIPS CENTRE LAUNCH (D.FANNING)

Date & Location: Tuesday 25 July 2006 (Hobart)

NAPCAN (NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT)
FORUM (D.FANNING)

(HOSTED BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN)

Date & Location: Monday 31 July 2006 (Hobart)

REPORT ON CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES IN TASMANIA, ALISON JACOB (DEPUTY
SECRETARY, HUMAN SERVICES AND DAVID FANNING (COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN)

Date & Location: Wednesday 8 November 2006 (Hobart)

ADVICE TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, A CHILD DEATH REVIEW
PROCESS FOR TASMANIA (D.FANNING)

Date & Location: Wednesday 8 November 2006 (Hobart)

WHO IS LISTENING TO THE CHILDREN NOW? THE COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN'S
RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS 8 AND 9 OF THE TASMANIAN OMBUDSMAN'S REPORT: '
Listen to the Children, Review of Claims of Abuse from Adults in State Care as Children'. (D.FANNING)

Date & Location: Monday 13 November 2006 (Hobart)

ANGLICARE PLACEMENT AND SUPPORT SERVICE PROGRAM (PASS) MEDIA CAMPAIGN
LAUNCH (C. MORAN-FORD)

Date & Location: Wednesday 29 November 2006 (Hobart)

LAUNCH OF THE SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT SERVICES, NEW PREMISES & EXPANSION OF
THE ADULT AND 24 HOUR/7 DAY CRISES COUNSELLING & SUPPORT SERVICES (DR S.
JENKINS & R. ANTHONY)

Date & Location: Wednesday 6 December 2006 (Hobart)

MISSION AUSTRALIA 2006 NATIONAL YOUTH SURVEY & YOUTH EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY
LAUNCH (C.MORAN-FORD)

Date & Location: Tuesday 27 February 2007 (Hobart)

MAKING CHOICES CONFERENCE (DR SUE JENKINS)

Date & Location: Friday 16 March 2007 (Hobart)

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES LAUNCH (J. MUIRHEAD)

Date & Location: Wednesday 21 March 2007 (Hobart)

NATIONAL FOSTER CARERS DAY (C. MORAN-FORD)

Date & Location: Sunday 25 March 2007 (Perth, Tasmania)

COMMUNITY DINNER (P.MASON)

Date & Location: Saturday 19 May 2007 (Longford)

DINNER IN HONOUR OF HIS EXCELLENCY MR BRUNO JULIEN, AMBASSADOR OF THE EUROPEAN UNION, AND MRS MONIQUE JULIEN (P.MASON)

Date & Location: Monday 28 May 2007 (Government House, Hobart)

PROJECTS

CHILD INJURY PREVENTION COALITION (CHIP) MEETING

Date & Location: Thursday 28 September 2006 (Hobart)

Thursday 25 January 2007 (Hobart)

Thursday 1 March 2007 (Hobart)

Wednesday 28 March 2007 (all day forum, Campbelltown)

Wednesday 16 May 2007 (Hobart)

MENTAL HEALTH STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING (DR S.JENKINS)

Date & Location: Wednesday 7 February 2007 (Hobart)

EARLY YEARS STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING (DR S.JENKINS)

Date & Location: Friday 9 February 2007, (Hobart)

MENTAL HEALTH STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING (DR S.JENKINS)

Date & Location: Wednesday 21 February 2007 (Hobart)

MULTIFAITH MULTICULTURAL YOUTH FORUM MEETING (DR S.JENKINS)

Date & Location: Wednesday 14 March 2007 (Hobart)

AUSTRALIAN LAW REFORM YOUTH CONSULTATION – YOUTH PRIVACY WORKSHOP
(DR S.JENKINS & R.ANTHONY)

Date & Location: Thursday 29 March 2007 (Hobart)

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION BOARD MEETING (DR S.JENKINS)

Date & Location: Wednesday 11 April 2007 (Hobart)

EARLY YEARS JURISDICTION ACTION PLAN MEETING (DR S.JENKINS)

Date & Location: Thursday 12 April 2007 (Hobart)

MULTIFAITH MULTICULTURAL YOUTH FORUM WORKING GROUP MEETING (DR S.JENKINS & C.VALENCIA)

Date & Location: Thursday 12 April 2007 (Hobart)

TASMANIAN EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION MEETING (P. MASON)

Date & Location: Monday 30 April 2007 (Hobart)

MULTIFAITH MULTICULTURAL YOUTH FORUM MEETING (C.MORAN-FORD, C.VALENCIA & K.PENMAN)

Date & Location: Monday 7 May 2007 (Hobart)

MULTIFAITH MULTICULTURAL YOUTH FORUM MEETING (P.MASON & C.VALENCIA)

Date & Location: Monday 14 May 2007 (Hobart)

MULTIFAITH MULTICULTURAL YOUTH FORUM MEETING (C.VALENCIA & K.PENMAN)

Date & Location: Wednesday 30 May 2007 (Hobart)

APPENDIX 2

MEDIA RELEASES, LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

The following is a list of Media Releases from this office, letters to the Editor and newspaper articles relating to the Commissioner for Children's office:

MEDIA RELEASES BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN

4 September 2006

Perceived conflict of interest.

26 September 2006

Resignation of Commissioner David Fanning.

25 May 2007

Submission – Mental Health Review Act 2007

Submission – Public Health Amendment Bill 2007

6 June 2007

Attachment Therapy

27 June 2007

Child safety on the Agenda

27 June 2007

Little children are sacred

28 June 2007

Tasmanian Child Protection and Out of Home Care

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

20 September 2006: "Children in crises" by B.Donovan, Advocate, page 16.

28 September 2006: "Step forward and a setback" Editorial, Mercury, page 26.

11 November 2006: "Good man missed" by B.Marris, Mercury, page 29.

14 November 2006: "Champion of the young" , Mercury, page 31.

15 November 2006: "Child Protection" by C.Chandler, Examiner, page 20.

22 November 2006: "Commissioner for Children" by D.Palmer, Examiner.

22 November 2006: "Making a stand for two great men: by P. Evans, Mercury.

28 November 2006: "No escaping responsibility" , Editorial, Mercury, page 22.

6 December 2006: "Neglected children" by Dot Boxhall, Examiner.

6 December 2006: "Reflecting on children at risk" by Dot Boxhall, Advocate.

19 March 2007: "Ashley matters to all of us", Editorial, Mercury, page 14.

8 May 2007: "Children's commissioner" by M.Harris and B.Thompson, Examiner.

11 May 2007 : "Child Protection" by Paul Mason, Commissioner for Children, Mercury, page 40.

11 May 2007: "New commissioner" by Mark Harris, Advocate, page 23.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

8 September 2006: "Investigation plan for child deaths" by Chris Pippas, Advocate, page 3.

9 September 2006: "Probe into death of baby boy" by Phillipa Duncan, Mercury, page 13.

11 September 2006: "Child abuse comp time bomb feared" by Phillipa Duncan, Mercury, page 8.

- 11 September 2006: "Child abuse compo time bomb feared" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 8.
- 15 September 2006: "The week that was" by Chris Pippas, Advocate.
- 27 September 2006: "Child welfare chief resigns" by Anne Mather, Mercury, page 7.
- 28 September 2006: "Giddings in review of baby drug death" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 9.
- 28 September 2006: "Welfare chief's loss prompts concern" by Michael Stedman, Examiner, page 60.
- 24 October 2006: "State left without children's commissioner" by Chris Pippas, Advocate, page 5.
- 24 October 2006: "System report to be made public" by Nic Price, Examiner, page 7.
- 24 October 2006: "Watchdog hunt amid child crises" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 11.
- 31 October 2006: "Lennon facing a torrid time" by Michael Stedman, Examiner, page 10.
- 1 November 2006: "Child protection cases increase" by Michelle Paine, Mercury, page 38.
- 8 November 2006: "Criticism expected in child report" by Nic Price, Examiner, page 12.
- 8 November 2006: "Child woes for airing today" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 16.
- 9 November 2006: "Baby death shame files" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 1.
- 9 November 2006: "Critics push for cash fix" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 4.
- 9 November 2006: "State's child protection breaks down" by Matthew Denholm, The Australian, page 7.
- 9 November 2006: "Failure to act still over child abuse" by Alison Andrews, Examiner, page 13.
- 9 November 2006: "System failing children" Editorial, Mercury, page 26.
- 9 November 2006: "No more funding for failing system" by Angus Livingston, Advocate, page 3.
- 9 November 2006: "State admits child protection failure" by Michael Stedman, Examiner, page 6.
- 10 November 2006: "New children's chief quits-one day blunder" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 1.
- 11 November 2006: "Children's official an 'abuser'" by Matthew Denholm, The Australian, page 7.
- 11 November 2006: "Diamonds and rust" by Wayne Crawford, Mercury, page 31.

11 November 2006: "Giddings says sorry. Wybra casts shadow in appointment row" by Gill Vowles and Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 3.

11 November 2006: "Choice shocked abuse survivors" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 3.

13 November 2006: "Charm can't disguise the crises" by Greg Barnes, Mercury, page 16.

14 November 2006: "Abuse shows failure of foster care" by Matthew Denholm, The Australian, page 7.

14 November 2006: "Blast at failure to help children" by Michael Stedman, Examiner, page 4.

14 November 2006: "Commitment to fix abuse questioned" by Angus Livingston, Advocate, page 8.

14 November 2006: "Kids trapped in abuse cycle" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 1.

14 November 2006: "Daniels says he saw no abuse at Wybra" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 2.

15 November 2006: "Protection of children not yet a priority" by Michael Stedman, Examiner, page 11.

15 November 2006: "Family outraged by care failings" by Alison Andrews, Examiner.

15 November 2006: "Abuses blamed on lack of help" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 11.

16 November 2006: "Resolve child protection failings", Examiner, page 22.

16 November 2006: "Abuse list baby dies" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 5.

17 November 2006: "Warning over tragedy baby" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 1.

18 November 2006: "Giddings on the rack" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 5.

20 November 2006: "Babies born on 'ice' drug" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 1 + 2.

22 November 2006: "No progress on screening for paedophiles" by Chris Pippas, Advocate, page 3.

22 November 2006: "Calls for checks of all adult workers" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 5.

22 November 2006: "'Stalling' on laws to protect children" by Matthew Denholm, The Australian, page 3.

22 November 2006: "Calls for child protection cash ignored" by Emily Bryan, Examiner.

28 November 2006: "Charter of rights 'needs teeth'" by Charles Waterhouse, Mercury, page 10.

29 November 2006: "Funding loss", Mercury, page 13.

1 December 2006: "New state watchdog on kids' welfare" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 5.

23 January 2007: "Shake-up for child services" by Chris Pippas, Advocate, page 5.

8 February 2007: "Clarifying audit" by Mike Blake, Mercury, page 22.

18 February 2007: "The rush to resign" by Simon Bevilacqua, Mercury, page 12.

19 April 2007: "Optimism on child protection" by Michael Stedman, Examiner, page 10.

19 April 2007: "New chief's child reform target" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury page 7.

15 May 2007: "Locked up like Hicks" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 1 + 2.

16 May 2007: "Home bid for youth detainees" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 15.

23 May 2007: "New smack law push" by Philippa Duncan, Mercury, page 7.

7 June 2007: "Children's commissioner attacks 'hugs therapy'" by Kathy Grube, Mercury.

28 June 2007: "Call for child services department" , Mercury, page 16

