



National Child Wellbeing Symposium

25 February 2016, 9.30am – 4.30pm

National Convention Centre, 31 Constitution Avenue, Canberra

About the Australian Child Wellbeing Project

The Australian Child Wellbeing Project (ACWP) is a nationally significant study that has used the perspectives of young people in their middle years (ages 9–14) to conceptualise and measure their wellbeing. The views of a broad range of young people informed the design of a national survey of 5,440 students in years 4, 6 and 8 in 180 schools across Australia.

Findings from the survey, integrated with in-depth interviews with over a hundred young people, indicate that overall, most young people are satisfied with their lives, enjoy school, and report good health.

However, young people who are often seen as marginalised in the Australian context – for example, young people with disability, young carers, materially disadvantaged young people, and Indigenous young people – often experience lower levels of wellbeing than young people in the ‘mainstream’ – those who are not in a marginalised group. They often report higher levels of physical and psychological health complaints, they experience more bullying, and are absent from school more frequently than young people in the mainstream.

Young people with a family member who has a disability, mental illness or drug/alcohol addiction, and young people who experience significant pressure from schoolwork also report high levels of physical and psychological health complaints. The analysis also shows that indicators of severe poverty among young people in their middle years are associated with lower levels of engagement at school and learning. On the other hand, in-depth interviews with young people suggest that support networks comprise a protective factor for their life satisfaction and wellbeing.

The ACWP is funded by the Australian Research Council through a Linkage Grant (LP120100543), in partnership with the Australian Government Departments of Education and Training, and Social Services, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, and the Australian Bureau of Statistics. More information on the project can be accessed at www.australianchildwellbeing.com.au.

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Program

9.00am	Registration Welcome tea and coffee
9.15am	Welcome Welcome to country from Mrs Agnes Shea (on behalf of the Ngunnawal people)
9.20am	Young people's wellbeing in context <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professor George Patton, Centre for Adolescent Health, Royal Children's Hospital
9.40am	Australian Child Wellbeing Project – An introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Associate Professor Gerry Redmond, Flinders University
10.15am	Morning tea
10.45am	Panel session – Young people's wellbeing and poverty <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professor Peter Saunders, University of New South Wales• Dr Cassandra Goldie, Australian Council of Social Service• Associate Professor Sharon Bessell, Australian National University
11.45am	Panel session – Young people's wellbeing and learning <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr Jen Skattebol, University of New South Wales• Dr Sue Thomson, Australian Council for Educational Research• Dr Petra Lietz, Australian Council for Educational Research• Associate Professor Gerry Redmond, Flinders University
12.45pm	Lunch
1.30pm	Panel session – Young people's wellbeing and protective factors <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr Jen Skattebol, University of New South Wales• Mr Bill Wilson, Chair, Moorundie Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service, Murray Bridge, SA• Mr Dan Jarrad, Principal, Elizabeth Grove Primary School, SA• Mr Patrick Burford, Australian Government Department of Education and Training
2.45pm	Afternoon tea
3.00pm	Panel session – Young people's health <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Associate Professor Gerry Redmond, Flinders University• Professor Jonathan Bradshaw, University of York (pre-recorded presentation)• Professor Fiona Brooks, University of Technology Sydney and University of Hertfordshire, UK• Dr Ben Edwards, Australian Institute of Family Studies
4.00pm	Launch of ACWP Report and Survey Database <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ms Megan Mitchell, National Children's Commissioner• Introduced by: Professor George Patton, Centre for Adolescent Health, Royal Children's Hospital

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