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Respect & listening

New resources help children and young people in residential care have a say
These resources provide children and young people in residential care with information about their right to make a complaint and be heard and tools to assist them to raise issues that concern them. The resources were developed in response to Recommendation 136 from Commissioner Margaret Nyland's 2016 report *The Life They Deserve*. More >

'Silent citizens' - reflections on children's civil and political rights
Ours is a world run by adults with rules set by adults, but it's today's children who will inherit the consequences in years to come of adults' political choices, despite having had no say in how those choices were made. This article examines the current state of children's civil and political rights, the terminology we use to describe them, and questions if we're doing justice or wrong to children. More >

State of Child Health &Us: views from the RCPCH &Us network
This UK report shares the views of children, young people and parents on health topics such as hidden illness, LGBT+ health needs, youth friendly services, children's rights and mental health. More >

The importance of diversity in children's books
Children learn about themselves and the world through the books they're exposed to. Importantly, children can learn understanding and respect for themselves and for those who are different to them. But a lack of diverse books means children from minority backgrounds rarely see themselves reflected in the books they're exposed to. More >

Multicultural Youth Australia Census status report 2017/18
Australia's young people are more mobile and culturally diverse than ever before. While this brings many advantages, multicultural young people face challenges that are not well understood by the community or government, such as discrimination, intergenerational conflict and insecurity. More >

Health & wellbeing

Worry over kids' excessive smartphone use is justified
New research has found brain changes among children using screens more than 7 hours a day and lower cognitive skills among those using screens more than 2 hours a day. Time spent using digital media also limits time spent on other activities, such as interacting with friends face to face, reading or going out. More >

Urban planning is failing children and breaching their human rights
Children are becoming less healthy, physically and mentally, and spend more time indoors than previous generations. Society is so caught up in discussing children's health, education, safety and social media use, that little time is spent looking at the effect urban planning has on their lives. More >

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Introducing the Power Threat Meaning Framework
In traditional mental health practice, threat responses are sometimes called 'symptoms'. The Power Meaning Threat Framework report offers a new perspective on why people experience mental distress. More >

What is epigenetics? And how does it relate to child development?
Epigenetics is an emerging area of scientific research that shows how environmental influences - children's experiences - actually affect the expression of their genes. More >

The digital noise of today's silence
All children need sense experience for the development of cognitive and emotional abilities such as motor skills, executive functions, balance, touch, smell, and so on. Recent research indicates that language learning requires a context of social interaction, and that babies do not develop language without interacting with another human being through speech. More >

Living without the essentials: report sheds new light on young Australians and poverty
This study exploring poverty and disadvantage through the lens of young Australians has found a significant number are missing out on items and experiences deemed essential for living a normal life such as fresh fruits and vegetables every day, internet access at home, school excursions, family holidays and some money of their own. More >

Understanding Motivation: Building the Brain Architecture That Supports Learning, Health, and Community Participation
A healthy, engaged community depends on people achieving their potential, contributing actively to the economy and public wellbeing, and helping the next generation to thrive. Understanding how the brain's motivation systems work is key to improving school achievement, community participation, and lifelong health. More >

Working out what makes a good community where young children can thrive
Stimulating and positive environments early in life provide optimal foundations for children's ongoing development into adulthood. This in turn makes a difference to the productivity of society at large. This research has identified a promising set of factors that lay the foundations of a good community for early childhood development. More >

'Traditional masculinity' and mental health: Experts call for gendered approach to treatment
The Australian Psychological Society will consider developing new practice guidelines for psychologists working with boys and men after the American Psychological Association (APA) recently updated its guidelines. The APA guidelines, say that 'traditional masculine ideology has been shown to limit males' psychological development...and negatively influence mental health'. More >

Move to outlaw 'conversion therapy' in Victoria
Victoria has become the nation's first jurisdiction to move to outlaw activities commonly referred to as 'gay conversion therapy'. More >

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Closing the Gap Report 2019

As four of the seven targets were due to expire in 2018, the Australian Government has worked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and state and territory governments to develop the Closing the Gap Refresh. This new framework builds on the original Closing the Gap targets and represents a continued commitment in effort and accountability from all governments for a further ten years. More >

Safe & nurtured

11 key readings on children's data and privacy online

New research on privacy in the digital environment in recent years includes some focusing specifically on children. These studies provide valuable insights into how children conceptualise privacy, their interactions with digital environments as they negotiate privacy, their understandings of data, and the role parents play. More >

Helping children with learning disabilities recover from sexual abuse

Letting the Future In (LTFI) provides therapeutic support to children who have experienced sexual abuse. Findings from this evaluation include: practitioners with previous LTFI experience were able to deliver a similar service for children with learning disabilities with training and support; more time is needed to deliver LTFI to children with learning disabilities; parents and carers appreciate the flexible approach taken in delivering the service. More >

Legislative amendments set to protect family violence victims in Family Court proceedings

The Federal Parliament recently passed the *Family Law Amendment (Family Violence and Cross-examination of Parties) Bill 2018* which effectively prohibits family violence perpetrators from being able to directly cross-examine their victims in Family Court proceedings. More >

Jersey politicians vote to outlaw smacking children

Jersey joins 53 other countries, including Ireland, to have outlawed smacking children, with Scotland expected to follow suit later this year. More >

What really is safety for traumatised children and young people?

Safety is more than the absence of risk. At its core, it occurs in relationships which engage the neural circuits underpinning physiological renewal and growth. When formal and informal systems of care and support around children who have experienced abuse become organised around disconnection, defensiveness and control rather than collaboration, empathy and care, safety goes missing. More >

Doli incapax – an odd word with profound significance for South Australian children

In South Australia if a young person aged 11-14 years is charged with an offence, it is up to the prosecution to prove that, at the time of the offence, they understood what they did was seriously wrong, and not just naughty. Such an obligation is designed to take into account the considerable variation in intellectual and emotional maturity in young people. More >

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Safeguarding during adolescence – the relationship between contextual safeguarding, complex safeguarding and transitional safeguarding

During adolescence the nature of risks faced by young people, and the way that they experience these risks, often differs from earlier childhood, as do their needs. Specifically, young people may be faced with a new set of complex risks, ones not posed by families, but instead by peers, partners and adults unconnected to their families. More >

Serving teen survivors: A manual for advocates

Being a teenager can be one of the most wonderful times of a person's life, but facing violence during this already complex time brings unique issues and challenges. This manual is designed to help those providing services to survivors of sexual violence serve teens using a trauma-informed approach. More >

National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020 — Fourth Action Plan 2018–2020

The Fourth Action Plan places the best interests of each and every child at its heart. The Plan will: deliver place-based initiatives nationally to ensure a more collaborative and integrated approach to early intervention and prevention; support children in out-of-home care by improving permanency outcomes; support the implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations; deliver key activities from the Third Action Plan. More >

NZ using less stringent welfare practices to support child wellbeing

Ahead of a report from the Welfare Expert Advisory Group, the NZ Government is taking a less harsh approach to supporting those who are most in need, as punitive measures that reduce already meagre incomes are likely to have devastating impacts for children. More >

Children's personal privacy online – it's neither personal nor private

Attempts to recognise children's right to privacy on its own terms are relatively new and important gaps remain in our knowledge of how children experience privacy online, raising questions about informed consent and children's rights. More >

Out of the shadows: Shining light on the response to child sexual abuse and exploitation

A 40-country benchmarking index examines how countries, including Australia, are responding to the threat of sexual violence against children. It explores the environment in which the issue occurs and is addressed; the degree to which a country's legal framework provides protections for children; whether government commitment and capacity is being deployed to equip institutions and personnel to respond appropriately; and the engagement of industry, civil society and media in efforts to tackle the problem. More >

What works and why: Centre launches new Evidence Store

Reviews published include the following topics: child mental health, sexual abuse recovery, substance misuse and child maltreatment. They review global evidence of how specific interventions work, in what contexts, and what is known about how to implement them. They are also rated in relation to the strength of the evidence and reported effectiveness. More reviews will be published in the future. More >

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Our internet, our choice: understanding consent in a digital world

How do young people understand and practice consent online? This report reveals just how integral sharing and viewing online content is to young people's lives, and how vital it is that we all understand the needs that young people have in navigating how to ask, give and receive permission online. More >

COAG endorses National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations form a national benchmark for organisations working with children and young people across sectors and the country to develop and maintain a child safe culture. More >

Enjoying & achieving

Why is school connectedness so important?

When students feel disconnected from school, their learning and health can suffer. Connectedness reduces risk-taking behaviour, violent and antisocial behaviour, as well as the likelihood of emotional problems. But, in many schools, the focus on curriculum and educational outcomes like NAPLAN results over valued relationships and worthwhile experiences means that for some students, school is an experience to be avoided and devalued. More >

Post-school education

This report looks at the large and growing gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous university attendance and attainment of qualifications at degree level and above. More >

Unique nature primary school 'pioneers' new way forward for outdoor education in Australia

The Nature School Primary in New South Wales is one of a handful of schools in Australia based on an outdoor learning model, popular in Europe but in its infancy here. The school fosters children's authentic experiences in nature and learning from and within nature as much as possible. More >

Creating relevant playgrounds in a tech-driven world

Through play, children develop physically, creatively, cognitively, socially, and emotionally. If free to pursue their own interests, they will not only learn all they need to know, but do so with energy and passion. More >

Disability Strategy: Improving outcomes for children and young people, and their families

This document outlines the aspirations of the NSW Department of Education to build an education system in which children with disability thrive academically, develop good physical, mental and emotional health, and gain the skills to live a fulfilling, independent life post-school. More >

Education Guide For Carers of Children Living In Out-Of-Home Care in Victoria

This guide provides carers with information about supports and services to assist them and the children in their care to be connected and engaged in education and where to get the support they need when they need it. More >

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Participation

Children's voice in advocacy—lessons from Canada
Dr Cindy Blackstock, Executive Director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada, believes giving children a voice in advocacy is 'the responsible thing to do', and that it is important 'not to have adults be intermediaries for children, but to have adults interact and hear from children directly'. More >

Engaging children and young people in your organisation
This resource, published by the New South Wales Advocate for Children and Young People, aims to help organisations involve children and young people in decision making. More >

Prepared for adult life

Stories of aftercare services and support needs after leaving care: A snapshot from the Stories of Resourcing and Resourcefulness project
Many young people who leave out-of-home care struggle to access the resources they require for independent living. The findings in this snapshot are part of a larger three-year study that aims to provide new evidence on the way young people with complex service needs use formal and informal resources over time. More >

Future ready career education: a student focused national career education strategy
To prepare students for their future careers, Future Ready focuses on the importance of building the skills and general capabilities they will need in the workplace, strengthening school and employer collaboration, and developing students' career management and navigation skills. More >

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