

**Question on Notice
No. 842
Asked on 24 May 2006**

MS JULIE ATTWOOD MP asked the Minister for Child Safety (MR REYNOLDS) -

QUESTION:

“What is his department doing to remain at the forefront of research and policy development on child protection issues?”

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Mount Ommaney for her question and for her longstanding interest in child protection issues. I am pleased to advise that to assist in developing a world class child protection system, the Department of Child Safety recently launched the inaugural *Child Safety Research Strategy 2006-2009* (strategy). This strategy aligns with the government's recently approved Queensland research and development priorities, which are:

- Enabling Sciences and Technologies;
- Environmentally Sustainable Queensland;
- Health and Wellbeing;
- Safeguarding Queensland;
- Smart Industries and Tropical Opportunities, and

will enhance links between research, policy and practice in child protection.

The strategy has four focus areas for research:

1. Service Delivery;
2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People;
3. Partnerships; and
4. Organisational Capacity.

The strategy will extend and strengthen the evidence base for future policy and practice development in child protection in Queensland by proactively focussing investment of financial and human resources into supporting rigorous and relevant research and ensuring that research findings inform ongoing policy and practice development. The strategy includes priority research questions of interest to the department to ensure departmental policies and work with children, young people and families are based on the best research evidence available.

A significant number of research projects are being supported by the department through in-kind assistance, financial support and access to departmental information, staff, clients and data subject to strict confidentiality. A research framework has been developed that incorporates an efficient research approval process which meets departmental legislative and strategic obligations.

The department has developed a suite of research dissemination strategies, including:

1. quarterly research forums that are video linked to at least six sites across the state;
2. an annual research conference; and
3. a recently published research newsletter “Horizons”, which is designed to make recent international and Australian research on relevant child protection issues readily available to government and non-government child protection practitioners throughout Queensland.

Additionally, in 2004, I established the Child Safety Research Advisory Group (group) which consists of 11 senior researchers and academics from around Australia with expertise and knowledge across disciplines related to child protection issues. Meetings of the group are held quarterly and are chaired by my Director-General, Dr Robin Sullivan. Members of the group have established linkages with Australia's key research centres and have demonstrated their interest in supporting a concerted effort to build the knowledge base around child safety public policy and practice.