

Newsletter

Issue 01, 2009

CAPRA Dinner Launch

August 7th 2008 saw the successful launch of CAPRA and the 'Protect and Respect the Child' Campaign', held at a dinner at the Park Hyatt Hotel in East Melbourne.

400 guests attended the launch, including special guests, His Excellency the Governor of Victoria David de Kretser AC, Justice Philip Cummins, Dr Alan Finkel AM, Chancellor Monash University and Prof Richard Larkins AO, Vice Chancellor Monash University.

Entertainment was provided by composer songwriter Richard Lipp and singer Ariela Jacobs who performed a moving rendition of 'All we want', composed especially for the event. A short film produced by Mind, Film and Publishing further emphasized the importance of research into the area of child abuse prevention. Pot Pourri performed a medley of inspiring songs and Allan Zavod concluded the evening's performances with a dazzling rendition of George Gershwin numbers. I would like to gratefully acknowledge and again thank the performers for donating their services and helping to create this exceptional event.

I would especially like to thank our generous Major Sponsors, Park Hyatt Hotel, Kay & Burton and Allens Arthur Robinson who contributed to the raising of in excess of \$200,000 for research into the prevention of child abuse. Highlights of the evening were the live auction and a raffle raising \$30,000 and \$16,500 respectively. Monies raised have been allocated to a number of special projects including a hospital study of child abuse and neglect and evaluating therapies for children who have been abused.

I would like to extend my most hearty congratulations to the CAPRA Board, and the Fundraising and Event Committee for all their hard work, enthusiasm and dedication in ensuring the CAPRA 'Protect and Respect the Child' Campaign was such a success.

Jasmine Dindas, Chairman Fundraising Committee



L-R: Prof Chris Goddard, Prof Leon Piterman, Jasmine Dindas, Dr Alan Finkel

Patron

Professor David de Kretser AC
Governor of Victoria

Chair

Dr Alan Finkel AM
Chancellor, Monash University

Board

Prof. Chris Goddard (Executive Director)
Assoc. Prof. Ken Coghill
Ms Tania de Jong AM
Ms Jasmine Dindas
Ms Kirsty Hamilton
Mr Jamie Perrott
Prof. Leon Piterman AM
Dr Joe Tucci
Dr Allan Zavod



Protect and Respect the Child
QuickTime movie
(4.10min, 26mb)

In this issue...

- Fund raising report
- Chairman's report
- Director's report
- Our research
- Our staff

Chairman's Report



Five years ago I was blissfully unaware of the extent of the problem of child abuse. I was running a scientific devices company and responding to the challenges of a globally competitive market place.

My lack of awareness came to an end when Leon Piterman, Deputy Dean of Medicine at Monash University, invited me to join the Board of the child abuse research centre. I was horrified to learn of the breadth of the problem, in every sector of society. I was surprised to learn of the ideological belief of some workers in the field that preservation of the family was more important than preserving the life or welfare of the child. But most of all, coming from my background as an engineer and as a businessman, I was shocked to learn how little research is funded to underpin the huge expenditure on child protection and welfare services. Across Australia, industry spends about 2% of its revenue on research and development. In Australia, state governments spend less than 0.1% of their child protection and child welfare budget on research.

How can they improve their services if they don't know how effective their current practices are? I took it as a personal challenge to help Professor Chris Goddard, Director of Child Abuse Prevention Research Australia, find the

people, and the physical and financial resources to undertake the research that will eventually help to guide policy and practices towards effective prevention and harm minimisation.

Our major achievements have been:

Organisational: Chris Goddard was supported by the university to become the full time director, and CAPRA was given dedicated premises in a Monash University facility in Clayton.

Financial: Through the efforts of the Board we have managed to raise sufficient funds for CAPRA to expand its research agenda. Most visible of these efforts was the extraordinarily successful gala dinner. Less visible has been the generosity of CAPRA board members and friends of CAPRA making donations as individuals or through foundations.

Publications: CAPRA has received international and national recognition for its research.

Positioning: CAPRA is regarded as Australia's foremost research centre into the prevention of child abuse.

Our Board members have worked hard on fund raising, strategizing and networking. My thanks to every one of our Board members, in particular the current Board members: Allan Zavod; Chris Goddard; Jamie Perrott; Jasmine Dindas; Joe Tucci; Ken Coghill; Kirsty Hamilton; Leon Piterman; and Tania de Jong.

What are our biggest challenges?

Firstly, funding is always an issue. Your financial support is essential and enormously appreciated. Secondly, government engagement is essential. Sometimes our messages are hard hitting, but academic integrity and the power of transparency argue for us to put our case strongly. To the extent that you can argue the case for more government support for research to underpin service delivery, please do so.

We are looking forward to a productive year. This is our first report to our supporters; please write to Chris Goddard or me with your suggestions and comments.

Best wishes,
Alan Finkel AM



First international collaboration

A major research development is the establishment of a research agreement with Professor Elaine Farmer in the School of Policy Studies at Bristol University.

The research partnership will contribute to better placements for children who cannot remain at home, and a clearer understanding of the supports needed for those who care for them. Professor Farmer has conducted extensive research into child abuse and child protection,

and she has agreed to take part in a replication and extension of her study into kinship care and foster care. Her recent study compared kinship care and foster care in order to ascertain which children are placed with kin, in what circumstances, how they progressed, and how the placements disrupted. The study explored which children fared better, what services were provided and what were needed, and how such care is experienced by the carers and children.

The research in Australia will be led by CAPRA in partnership with Dr Ben Mathews of the Faculty of Law at Queensland University of Technology, and negotiations have commenced with Queensland's Department of Child Safety. Professor Goddard is exploring opportunities to extend the research into other states and to explore other forms of care for children who have been abused.

Research



The Cost of Child Abuse

The financial cost of child abuse is ten times the financial cost of obesity in Australia. A landmark report by Access Economics, Australian Childhood Foundation, and Child Abuse Prevention Research Australia.

[The Cost of Child Abuse In Australia](#) is the first comprehensive report of its kind in Australia. The research found that the number of cases in our community may be five times higher than the official figures. The report found that the real cost of child abuse to the Australian community in 2007 was \$10.7 billion, but could be as high as \$30.1 billion.

“This is the first comprehensive, national study of the costs of child abuse and neglect in Australia. It clearly demonstrates the importance of accountability and transparency. To spend so much and know so little defies belief. There also needs to be greater investment in research and evaluation,” said Professor Goddard.

“The cost of child abuse... is staggering” said Dr Joe Tucci of Australian Childhood Foundation.

Minister praises the report

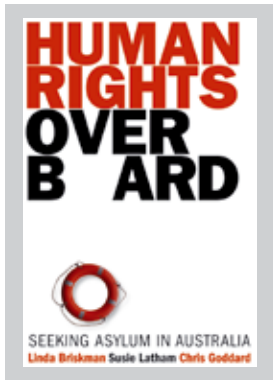
Minister Jenny Macklin, speaking in Parliament House, Canberra, just after the launch, described the report as:

“a very significant contribution to our understanding of the very very significant burden that child abuse and neglect puts on children and families and on the community more broadly... it is a very important opportunity for us all to remember the terrible impact of child abuse and neglect on children...”

Reviews

[Goddard, C., & Tucci, J. \(2008, November 18\). Secretive system doesn't bear scrutiny. *The Australian*, p. 12.](#)

[Lunn Stephen, \(2008, November 18\). Child abuse costing community \\$11bn. *The Australian*.](#)



Human Rights Award

Professor Chris Goddard, the Director of Child Abuse Prevention Research Australia, was recognised by the Human Rights Commission for research into Australia's immigration and detention processes.

Professor Goddard, together with Linda Briskman and Susie Latham (both of Curtin University), wrote the book [Human Rights Overboard: Seeking Asylum in Australia](#) (published by Scribe) which received the Commission's literature non fiction award for 2008.

Professor Goddard, who has written extensively in the broader media about the plight of children in detention, said the book had been difficult to write and research because the stories were filled with such sadness: “It's a bitter-sweet award. To win something for describing the pain and suffering of so many is really a mixed achievement”. Following the book's success in Australia, the book will be launched in the US in June, 2009.

Reviews

[Goddard, C., Latham, S., & Briskman, L. \(2008, September 1\). Unwarranted cruelty. *The Australian*, p. 8.](#)

[Scribe Publications](#)

 **THE AUSTRALIAN**
Less than human
WALEED ALY

 **THE AUSTRALIAN**
A NEGLECTFUL SYSTEM
Adoption or institutional care would help many children



Child abuse costs \$30b
for pain and protection

The Canberra Times
Abuse of
children
'costs ACT
millions'

From the director



This has been a very exciting period in the development of our research centre.

The centre is the result of a unique collaboration between the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences at Monash University and a national child welfare organisation, the Australian Childhood Foundation.

In a short space of time, our research has been acknowledged as nationally and internationally significant, has been published in Australian and overseas journals, received extensive coverage in the media, and won a prestigious award.

At CAPRA we believe that much child abuse and neglect can be prevented. We also believe that children and young people who have been abused can be better cared for and more effectively treated. The research being undertaken by our staff will make a major difference to many children's lives.

Thank you for your support, Chris Goddard

chris.goddard@med.monash.edu.au

Staff



Dr Bernadette Saunders

The generous support of the Hecht Trust, the Fred Archer Trust, and other philanthropic donations has enabled the Centre to conduct

in Victoria (Monash Medical Centre) and to extend to Queensland (Royal Children's Hospital) much-needed research at two major hospitals.

The study explores the experiences of children with indicators of child abuse and neglect. It will assist in developing cost-effective prevention and intervention services, and positive changes to policy, practice and legislation.



Dr John Frederick

Dr Frederick has started a major study into the murder of children. This project will examine the homicide records held by Victoria Police gathered during their

investigation of all child death cases over the past 20 years. It aims to review and reform the practices of the child protection system, with an emphasis on health, welfare and police procedures in responding to notifications of child abuse.

CAPRA believes that many child abuse deaths are preventable. This research with the Victoria police will make a major contribution to safeguarding children.



Dr Jan Coles

CAPRA's first medical staff member.

Dr Jan Coles joined the staff at CAPRA as a senior research fellow in 2008. Jan's background is academic general

practice, and she brings a health perspective to the CAPRA team. Her research documents the experiences of women survivors of childhood sexual abuse in mothering and breast feeding. She was awarded the Vera Scantlebury Brown Maternal and Infant Research Fellowship in 2006 to continue her research on the primary care clinical encounters between young mother/survivors and their primary care provider. Her current research project investigates how general practitioners recognise and respond to child abuse, and their experiences when reporting.



Dr Neerosh Mudaly

is Senior Research Fellow and also teaches at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. She is a clinical consultant at the Australian Childhood Foundation and has held a

number of managerial positions in welfare organizations overseas and in Australia.

Dr Mudaly has developed particular expertise in clinical work with children who have been abused and research that promotes the voices of children. She has published articles in scholarly journals and is author, with Professor Chris Goddard, of [*The Truth is Longer than a Lie: Children's experiences of abuse and professional interventions*](#). (2006, Jessica Kingsley, London).

Journal articles

Frederick, J. & Goddard, C. [in press] 'School was just a nightmare': childhood abuse and neglect and school experiences. *Child and Family Social Work*.

Briskman, L., Latham, S., & Goddard, C. (2009). Social work exposes human rights abuses. *National Bulletin: The Newsletter of the Australian Association of Social Workers*, 19(1).

Saunders, B., & Goddard, C. (2008). Some Australian Children's Perceptions of Physical Punishment in Childhood. *Children and Society*, 22, 405-417.