

FOREWORD

Issue 34 of the Social Policy Journal of New Zealand contains three themes:

- paid parental leave and other family-friendly policy initiatives
- the repeal of Section 59 of the Crimes Act
- programme evaluation.

The last theme emerges from a post-graduate course for professional evaluators at Massey University. Robin Peace, who is a member of the Journal's International Advisory Board, is Guest Editor for these papers from her course.

Heather Nunns writes about the pressure on evaluators to provide ever speedier evaluation findings and proposes a matrix that is designed to conceptualise the timeliness issue and help communicate these to stakeholders. Mathea Roorda and Robin Peace discuss the Social Policy Evaluation and Research Committee (SPEaR) *Good Practice Guidelines* and review an anonymised programme evaluation against the expectations of the guidelines regarding evaluations with Māori in order to explore through their case study some of the challenges that evaluators face in trying to meet these expectations.

Heading the theme of parental leave, Paul Callister and Judith Galtry provide a comparison between New Zealand's parental leave provisions and Australia's "baby bonus", addressing issues of eligibility criteria and middle-class capture in particular. Kat Forbes compares New Zealand's parental leave provisions with those currently found in the United Kingdom. Joanne James also looks at the family-friendly workplace, including a comparison between Australia's Family Tax Benefit package and New Zealand's Working for Families.

The campaign for the repeal of Section 59 of the Crimes Act, which succeeded in removing the defence of "reasonable force for the purpose of correction" from parents accused of assaulting their children, was the inspiration for two research projects covered in this issue. Sophie Debski, Sue Buckley and Marie Russell write about their analysis of submissions on the bill to repeal Section 59, examining the underlying viewpoints and the implications for parent education. In a study of the role professionals play in helping families resolve disciplinary practices, Julie Lawrence and Anne Smith convened focus groups of social workers, nurses and early childhood teachers to explore their understanding of the issues and their preparedness to address them in the course of their work.

Another paper that deals with aspects of child protection is contributed by Ian Hyslop, who explores the historical and philosophical underpinnings of care and protection social work practice in New Zealand. On the topic of child safety, Maxine Campbell discusses the risks posed by the use of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), citing recent child figures for ATV-related injuries and fatalities in the context of the popularity of these machines, particularly in the rural sector.

Alison Towns has contributed a discussion paper on Police-initiated protection orders for women experiencing domestic violence. The paper identifies the assumptions that underlie the use of these orders, incorporating data on police interventions, how women act to protect themselves, and how the Courts respond to breaches of these orders.

In their study of media attention and public attitudes around the first tobacco litigation trial in New Zealand, Judith P. McCool, Becky Freeman, George Thomson and Sneha Paul found

that despite the media tending to be either neutral or supportive of the defendant, the public tended to favour the tobacco companies. Their paper discusses some of the issues around public awareness in this arena.

Warren Smart, in his study of the impact of the Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF), finds that university researchers have become significantly more productive since the introduction of the PBRF.

In their paper on the availability of drugs in New Zealand, Chris Wilkins and Paul Sweetsur explore population-level data over time to look at changes in availability. The authors explain some of the changes and discuss policy options for influencing the availability of drugs.

I hope you find this issue of the Social Policy Journal of New Zealand to be interesting and stimulating.

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