



Curb youth violence – new report calls for a national strategy

The House of Representatives Family and Youth Committee will release its report on youth violence tomorrow (Friday 16 July). The report, ***Avoid the Harm – Stay Calm***, recognises there are many factors - personal, social and environmental - that can influence the risk of a young person experiencing violence. Factors include the nature of relationships with family and friends and levels of engagement with education and community. Added to these are other influences such as alcohol and drugs, as well as cultural influences which shape community attitudes toward violence and young people.

“While often seen primarily as the perpetrators of violence, young people aged 15 to 24 years are in fact nearly twice as likely to be victims of assault compared to the general population,” Chair of the Committee, Annette Ellis MP said. “In view of this, it is hardly surprising that so many young Australians are concerned about violence and its impact on their daily lives.”

The report recommends that the Australian Government - in consultation with state and territory governments and other interested parties, including young people themselves - develop and implement a coordinated and comprehensive national youth violence and rehabilitation strategy.

“With so many factors at play, it is evident that multiple interventions will be needed to tackle the complex issues associated with escalating levels of youth violence,” Ms Ellis said. “Although a large number of interventions already exist, not all have been evaluated with the same degree of rigour.”

“By developing a more robust evidence base, the Committee believes policy makers and people working in the youth sector will be better able to make informed choices about the most effective interventions to curb youth violence and reduce its impact on young people and the wider community.”

Embargoed copies of the report will be available to members of the Federal parliamentary press gallery from Suite R1-116 from 8:00 am on Friday 16 July 2010. The report may be accessed from the inquiry website after 11:00 am on 16 July 2010 at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/fchy/youthviolence/report.htm>

A media launch will be held in Committee Room 2R1 at 11:00 am on 16 July 2010. This will be webcast live at: <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

For media comment, please contact the Committee Chair, Ms Annette Ellis on (02) 6293 1344 (electorate office).

For all other inquiries please contact the Inquiry Secretary by phone on (02) 6277 4566 or by email fchy.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the Committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/fchy