

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2007-08 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome 8

DEEWR Question No. EW73_08

Senator Wortley provided in writing.

Question

Attendance and Enrolment Measures

What national or international evidence or research is the Department aware of in this area?

Answer

In terms of Australian research, the Department had regard to the Cape York Institute's 19 June 2007 report 'From Hand Out to Hand Up' which identified poor school attendance as one of seven dysfunctions leading to social breakdown in Indigenous communities in Cape York. It recommended that an obligation be attached to welfare payments to require that parents/carers ensure their children attend school regularly.

The Department also had regard to the results of the Halls Creek Engaging Families Trial, in which 30 Parenting Payment recipients received intensive services to help them engage in employment and increase their child(ren)'s school attendance.

The Department also looked at the overseas experience for the effects of welfare conditionality on behavioural change. Evidence showed that welfare conditionality linked to school attendance works best when embedded in other support services, especially a direct case management approach.