

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2011-2012**

[Portfolio of the Prime Minister and Cabinet]

**Department/Agency:** Australian Institute of Family Studies  
**Outcome/Program:** Australian Institute of Family Studies  
**Topic:** Research on Gender Equality

**Senator:** Kroger

**Question reference number:** 114

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 8 July 2011

**Number of pages:** 2

**Question**

1. Can AIFS advise on whether the agency has completed any research on Gender Equality, eg. workforce participation, family responsibilities etc?
2. If not, does AIFS believe this research would be useful for policy

**Answer**

Gender Equality, particularly in relation to workforce participation and family responsibilities has been a strong focus of research undertaken at AIFS throughout its history. AIFS contributes to the agenda of advancing gender equality by undertaking high-quality, policy-relevant research in areas such as transitions in the structure of the family, factors affecting work–family balance, the impact of children on women’s workforce participation and financial wellbeing, trends in the gendered division of labour and the structural, cultural and situational determinants of violence against women and men.

AIFS has undertaken a number of projects that examine factors related to women’s economic wellbeing. Current work examines the dynamics of work and family life for women, specifically:

- the labour market participation of mothers in the period immediately following childbearing, including timing of mothers’ return to work, their use of leave, and the perceived value of a range of work–family approaches;
- the paid and unpaid work of mothers, the time they spend with children and various aspects of parenting, and how this compares to that of fathers;
- analyses of the employment transitions of lone and couple mothers, and factors associated with their increased retention in employment, or increased likelihood of taking up employment;

- mothers' experiences of the interaction between paid work and the income support system;
- the impacts of different types of jobs and working conditions on mothers' wellbeing, such as whether particular work conditions or patterns of work are associated with mothers continuing breastfeeding; and
- labour market participation of parents with young children and their child care arrangements.

As well as relevant publications, The Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault (ACSSA) within AIFS is the national information and resource hub on sexual assault. The centre has a strong focus on gender equality and provides research support and expertise to local, state and federal policy agencies working to reduce violence against women.

**Some examples of publications released in the last financial year relating to Gender Equality are listed below:**

Baxter, J., & Renda, J. (2011). Lone and couple mothers in the Australian Labour Market: Exploring differences in employment transitions. *AIFS Research Paper No. 48*. Melbourne, Australian Institute of Family Studies.

Allimant, A., & Ostojewicz-Piatkowski, B. (2011). Supporting women from CALD backgrounds who are victims/survivors of sexual violence. *ACSSA Wrap No.9*, Melbourne, Australian Institute of Family Studies.

Weston, R., Qu, L., Gray, M., Kaspiew, R., Moloney, L., & Hand, K. (2011). Care time arrangements: patterns and developmental outcomes: studies of two risk groups. *Family Matters No. 86*, Melbourne, Australian Institute of Family Studies.

Millward, Campo, M., Fehlberg, B. (2011). Mothers who are liable to pay child support. *Family Matters No. 86*, Melbourne, Australian Institute of Family Studies.

Baxter, J. & Smart, D. (2011). *Fathering in Australia among couple families with young children*. (Occasional paper No. 37). Canberra: Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) .

Clark, H., & Quadara, A. (2010). Insights into sexual assault perpetration: Giving voice to victim/survivors' knowledge. *AIFS Research Report No. 18*, Melbourne, Australian Institute of Family Studies.

Parkinson, D. (2010). Supporting victims through the legal process: the role of sexual assault service providers. *ACSSA Wrap No. 8*, Melbourne, Australian Institute of Family Studies.