

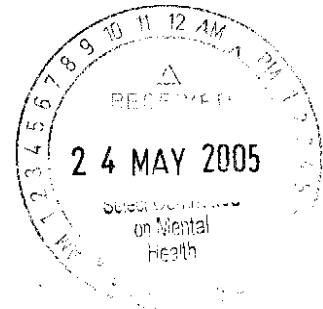
Professor Marian Pitts

VicHealth Professor of Research
Director

Australian Research Centre
in Sex, Health and Society
Faculty of Health Sciences

20 June 2005

Senator Lyn Allison
Chair
Senate Select Committee on Mental Health
Department of the Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600



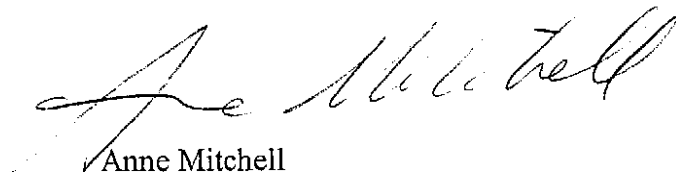
Dear Senator Allison

I am writing to you in your capacity as Chair of the Senate Select Committee on Mental Health which I believe currently has a focus on young people. I am enclosing some copies of a report released last month by the Australian Research Centre In Sex, Health and Society at La Trobe University In Melbourne. This report documents the experiences of 1749 same sex attracted young people between the ages of 14 and 21 from all over Australia.

It clearly demonstrates the extent of the verbal and violence they experience regularly in their everyday lives in school, in the street and in their social world as a result of their sexuality. More importantly, it is able for the first time to link the severity of the violence to poorer mental health outcomes such as increased risk of self harm. It is also able to demonstrate the impact of support from a teacher, counsellor, youth worker or local support group in ameliorating the impact of the violence.

I am hoping that our capacity to provide you with this important data will enable you to include the needs of these young people in your deliberations. We would be very happy to provide you with additional copies of the report or to discuss these issues with you at any time.

Yours sincerely



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