

Programs for Indigenous Australians

Indigenous-specific programs or policies that are improving the resilience of communities and providing choices for families and children include:

- **Indigenous Community Coordination Pilots** -The Council of Australian Governments' Indigenous Community Coordination Pilots involve cooperation and collaboration between Commonwealth and state and territory government agencies in working with Indigenous communities. FaCS is the lead agency for the pilot in Wadeye, NT. Since 2002/2003, the Family and Community Network Initiative budget has given priority to funding ICCP related projects (up to \$1.776 million per annum).
- **Aboriginal Rental Housing** program provides \$100 million annually to the states and territories for maintaining and upgrading existing housing stock, and training community housing organisations to manage and maintain their stock.
- **Fixing Houses for Better Health 2** program provides \$9 million over four years from 2001-2002, to assess and fix 1500 Indigenous houses.
- **Indigenous Parenting and Family Wellbeing** program provides \$1.9 million annually to community organisations. The aim of this initiative is to recognise and promote the importance of strong families among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.
- **Aboriginal and Islander Child Care Agencies (AICCA)**, which receive approximately \$3 million per annum. AICCA's are involved with the placement and fostering of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and related family support.
- **Indigenous Child Care**, part of the Child Care Support Program, provides in excess of \$23 million to support some 270 Indigenous child care services such as Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services, other centre based services, outside school hours care, vacation care services Indigenous playgroups, enrichment programs, and nutrition programs.

National Agenda for Early Childhood

The Government has committed \$10 million to a range of early childhood initiatives. A number of these projects will target Indigenous communities, including \$1.2 million to improve childcare facilities in remote Indigenous communities.

Other Indigenous initiatives under this agenda include services under the **Child Abuse Prevention Program**, **Specialised Family Violence** services, **Intensive Support Playgroups**, and **Early Intervention Parenting Program**.

The Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC)

FaCS is managing the Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC) in close consultation with Indigenous people, communities and organisations. The study will help in understanding the links between early childhood experiences and later life outcomes for Indigenous children.

People with disabilities

Three rural and remote pilots have been set up for Indigenous people with disabilities, testing modifications to the funding model for disability employment assistance services. Disability employment services have moved to DEWR. However, FaCS maintains responsibility for the implementation of operational policy and program management for the suite of programs relating to employment assistance, access and participation for people with disabilities.

Family Violence Partnership Program (FVPP)

This program provides \$37.3 million over four years to build on the Government's commitment to tackling family violence and child abuse in Indigenous communities.

Family Violence Regional Activities Program (FVRAP) – In 2004-05 \$3.8 million was provided under this program to provide practical and flexible support for grassroots projects that have been identified by Indigenous communities as a local priority to address family violence, sexual assault, child abuse and/or child protection. The FVRAP also seeks to trial new/innovative approaches to reduce family violence in Indigenous communities, including:

- activities that focus on early childhood, impact on children and adolescents, families and breaking the cycle of family violence;
- activities that compliment and not replace state and territory funded activities;
- activities that centre on early intervention; and
- activities that aim to effect change by treating causal factors of family violence rather than symptoms.

Other FaCS programs that include services and projects targeted at, or managed by, Indigenous people include:

- The **Stronger Families and Communities Strategy** (\$365.8 million for 2004-2008) includes significant funding for Indigenous projects.
- The **Secretariat for National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC)** will receive \$4 million over four years to establish and manage a national resource service that provides direct assistance to communities, service providers, family-centred organisations and other stakeholders involved in the development and implementation of early childhood development for indigenous children.
- The **Family and Community Networks Initiative**, the **Reconnect** program, the **Supported Accommodation Assistance Program**, and the **National Illicit Drugs Strategy** each fund a number of Indigenous-focused projects or services.