The Valuing Children Initiative

17th August 2016
The Valuing Children Initiative (VCI)

- The VCI is a joint project funded by Centrecare and Parkerville Children and Youth Care (Inc.) that commenced in January 2016.

- The VCI is an ambitious project that seeks to inspire Australian’s to value all children, understand that a child’s wellbeing is the shared responsibility of the entire community and ensure children are at the forefront of our considerations.
“Australia is a wealthy nation that ranks well in comparison with other developed countries on many measures of health and wellbeing. However, evidence indicates that many children and young people face a range of issues including behavioural and emotional problems and mental health issues, living in jobless families, witnessing or experiencing violence in their family, starting school poorly equipped to learn and being homeless.”
PRESENTING

THE HECKMAN EQUATION

INVEST in early education for disadvantaged children

+ DEVELOP cognitive skills, social abilities and healthy behaviors early

+ SUSTAIN early development with effective education through to adulthood

= GAIN a more capable and productive workforce

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It is timely then to consider if there are other contributing factors, ‘….embedded in the cultural attitudes and behaviours of the community…conscious or unconscious,’ about how we value children.

Have our attitudes to children evolved to keep pace with what we want for children, what we believe they deserve and have a right to expect?
Antecedents of complex problems affecting children and young people are common: they begin with our (societal) values.

Need to focus here
According to repeated nationwide surveys,

More Doctors Smoke CAMELS

than any other cigarette!
‘I am not prepared to look back at my time here in this Parliament, doing this job and say to my children's generation... I'm sorry. We knew there was a problem with sugary drinks. We knew it caused disease. But we ducked the difficult decisions and we did nothing.’
An Ambitious Project

• The objectives of the VCI resonate with many people as we search to find another part of the puzzle that will help to ensure children have the safe, caring and supportive childhoods they deserve.

• Translating the idea into something more tangible, and articulating why it is necessary, is not simple.

• The VCI Foundation Paper provides the rationale for the initiative and a starting point to help engage with as many other organisations and individuals as possible. Broad support is essential for the success of the VCI.
So far the VCI has….

- Published and distributed the VCI foundation paper

- Consulted with stakeholders to seek their feedback, support and input.

- Carried out baseline research into Australians attitudes towards children.

- Called on Party Leaders to prioritise children and Future Generations.

- Launched the Valuing Children Initiative.
You can help us by….

• Promoting understanding that how we value children has a direct impact on our regard and behaviour towards them, and the priority we give their needs and rights.

• Providing whatever platforms you can to enable the VCI to promote their objectives.

• Distributing the VCI’s publications and resources at your discretion, and following the VCI on social media.
You can help us by….

• Providing public support for VCI activities that you support such as the VCI’s call for a Minister for Children and Future Generations.

• Incorporate the language of the VCI and the Foundation paper in publications where appropriate. The VCI has already been quoted in the West Australian parliament during debates and in a recently released Joint Standing Committee Report.

• Making contact with the VCI to exchange ideas and in the event of joint opportunities to collaborate and promote the goals of the VCI.
Sharing ideas....

Today we would welcome your thoughts.......
Contact Information

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Thank you.

“…. a greater societal awareness of children and their needs, as well as the importance of ensuring that all children are loved, safe and able to maximise on their potential and wellbeing.”