



Successful Leaders.....Successful Schools.....Successful Futures

Level 1/41 Bagot Road Ludmilla Primary School Ludmilla NT 0820
PO Box 39945, Winnellie, NT 0821
Ph 08 8941 1655 Fax 08 8941 1855 Web www.antsel.org

Association of Northern Territory School Educational Leaders (ANTSEL)

The Committee
Inquiry into the Child Protection System in the Northern Territory 2010
GPO Box 1708
Darwin
NT 0801

5 March 2010

Dear Sir

ANTSEL members wish to bring the following to the attention of the Committee:

- One of the biggest issues is the huge group of people that do not qualify for support because there has been no physical or sexual abuse. However, the home conditions are horrible but the students come to school in a reasonable condition, usually with some kind of food, so from the reporting aspect they are not a priority. When the school does make reports of this kind we are informed the Child Protection have taken note but no further action will be taken. It is soul destroying for the school because we know that conditions at home do not improve and that these children are at risk and unfortunately have to simply 'put up with their lot in life'.
- Once a family does come under Child Protection orders the department appears to be helpless to actually enforce some changes in the family – for example as a school we would like to see mandatory parenting programs . such as 1,2,3 Magic, parents entering drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs, counselling for both children and parents etc. However, it appears that Child Protection have their hands tied and are not able to enforce some real change.
- FAC's advising School Counsellors that they do not want to take notification of student neglect or concern as they are not high enough priority, which makes an absolute mockery of a school's responsibility with regards 'duty of care'.

- Burgeoning youth crisis in Alice Springs. Youth Diversion brings children to school but the school has limited capacity to deal with this happening on a regular basis and the effect in the playground.
- Urgent need for youth crisis accommodation and family accommodation.
- Child Protection ignoring warnings from family and community members with regards the ability of the family to look after the children – overworked and under staffed.
- Some Child Protection officers being less than discrete by sharing information with school staff.
- Experience has lead many members to the realisation that Child Protection officers do not have the ability to find well thought through solutions in many cases.
- Lack of support forthcoming from Child Protection in what this school believes to be a needy case
- Lack of follow up – communication is woeful.
- General feeling of frustration that one of the most vulnerable groups in our society ie children are being let down by those with the delegation to protect them

Denise F Wilkowski
 President
 Ph: 8941 8724 Mobile: 0437 919 029