

MEDIA RELEASE

Queensland Family & Child Commission



22 February 2018

QFCC hosts leading youth research event

Reducing youth suicide was the topic of the Queensland Family and Child Commission's (QFCC) latest Research in the Round forum.

The event was held to highlight the valuable research occurring in this area and to make it more accessible to policy makers and practitioners.

Representatives from Queensland State Government, the legal profession, as well as community and non-government organisations were among the 250 people attendees at the event held in Brisbane on 22 February 2018.

Following presentations by leading researchers, an interactive panel discussion was held to explore ways to reduce youth suicide and more effectively incorporate youth suicide prevention into Government policy and practice.

QFCC Principal Commissioner Cheryl Vardon said the first Research in the Round event for the year was prompted by the slowly increasing trend in youth suicide rates since 2004.

"There is a strong need to identify prevention strategies to address this issue," Ms Vardon said.

"The event covered a wide range of topics including ideas for government representatives to enhance protective factors for young people experiencing life stressors such as family relationship problems, cyber bullying and mental health problems."

"This subject, in particular has seen extensive media coverage of late and must be addressed."

Three papers were presented, each exploring different approaches to preventing youth suicide. Dr James Scott from the University of Queensland's Faculty of Medicine and member of the QFCC's Advisory Council presented findings from a recent study on the QFCC's Child Death Register.

yourtown senior researcher Dr Samantha Batchelor presented findings from an online survey of children and young people which highlighted programs and services which could contribute to suicide prevention.

Clinical psychologist and a member of the Australian Indigenous Psychologists' Association Ms Leda Barnett presented insights gained from The Life Promotion Project which explored the involvement of a regional community in responding to a cluster of youth suicides.

The next Research in the Round event is scheduled for May 2018 in Townsville.

Media contact:

Linda Stevens, QFCC Senior Media Advisor
07 3900 6079, 0476 839 467

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