

## Boys' Research

Jennifer's *Issue Analysis* paper, *The Puzzle of Boys' Educational Decline* (released in November), was very well received and continued to generate public and media interest several months later. The monograph that continues on this theme, *Boy Troubles: Understanding rising crime, rising suicide and educational failure*, is due for release early June. In between times, Jennifer has begun working with Barry on a new research project looking into the differences between public and private schooling. She has also begun preliminary research on a paper dealing with the issue of educational standards, benchmarking and the reporting of school and student performance.

Jennifer Buckingham



## Welfare Reform

Lucy Sullivan was invited to contribute a chapter to the forthcoming Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) book, *Reforming the Welfare State*, due to be published in June as a contribution to the government's inquiry into welfare reform. The article draws on statistics prepared for the *Caught in the Net* series of monographs on welfare reform, the first of which, *Behavioural Poverty*, was released in May.

Much of the material in the AIFS chapter will also be the subject of the second monograph. An important finding is that the funding of the costs of children in families has declined over the last three decades, while expenditure on all other welfare has increased dramatically. The analysis provided in the still forthcoming *Tax and the Family* shows how this has come about.

Time trend data from *State of the Nation* continue to be picked up from time to time, and the authors contacted for information and comment. A recent example is a tabloid article on the rise in anti-depressant medication in the last decade.

Lucy Sullivan



## Parents and Education

Alison is currently investigating the educational disadvantages faced by children living in disordered families. After a successful application to the Board of Studies, HSC performance data for certain Sydney postcode areas is being analysed to determine whether or not there are differences in areas with high and low proportions of sole parents.

In the meantime, she has written an *Issue Analysis* paper, *Trailing the Class: Sole Parents and Educational Disadvantage*, due out late June. Alison is also interested in the broader issue of families and educational outcomes, and has written a paper exploring parental influences on the education of children. This paper, *Beyond the Classroom: How Parents Influence Their Children's Education*, is due for release in July.

Alison Rich

