

Research Forum

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Linking to Learn and Learning to Link. Building Integrated Systems of School-Based Support for Children and Families in a Disadvantaged Community

Professor Ross Homel and Dr Kate Freiberg, Griffith University
Tuesday 9 March 2010, 2.00pm – 4.00pm
Auditorium, 111 George Street, Brisbane

In 2001, Griffith University began a research partnership with Mission Australia and Education Queensland called the Pathways to Prevention project, with the aim of involving family, school and community in a broad set of planned interventions to prevent anti-social behaviour among children from disadvantaged backgrounds. The program targeted four to six year old children who were in transition to school focusing on enhancing their communication and social skills and empowering their families, schools and ethnic communities to provide supportive environments for positive development.

In Linking to Learn and Learning to Link, Professor Homel, Dr Freiberg and colleagues built on the findings of the Pathways Project, which highlighted the critical importance of family involvement with schools to effect enduring change and the difficulties of achieving this within current structures. Linking to Learn addressed this challenge by nurturing whole-school culture change, providing teacher professional development, and locating family support resources within schools to promote home-school partnerships, family functioning, and child well-being.

At this forum, Professor Homel and Dr Freiberg will present the key findings of Linking to Learn and Learning to Link, and discuss the challenges of up-

scaling service delivery without losing the guiding principles of the project.

Ross Homel is Foundation Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Griffith University, Brisbane, and Director of the University's Strategic Research Program in the Social and Behavioural Sciences. From 2004 - 2007 he was Director of the Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice and Governance at Griffith, and he also served as Head of the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice between 1993 and 1996 and in 2002 and 2003. He was editor of the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology* from 1992 to 1995, and was a part-time Commissioner of the Queensland Criminal Justice Commission from February 1994 to April 1999.

Dr Kate Freiberg is a Senior Research Fellow and Program Leader in Prevention and Developmental Pathways at Griffith University. Her research expertise includes developmental psychology, ecology of early childhood development, and early intervention and developmental prevention. Kate has been a chief investigator on both the Pathways to Prevention and Linking to Learn projects.

Please RSVP your attendance by Thursday 4 March to Sajida.Khan@deta.qld.gov.au
Refreshments will be available during the event.