



Australian Government

Australian Institute of Family Studies

Office of the Director

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30 May 2014

Ms Megan Mitchell  
National Children's Commissioner  
Australian Human Rights Commission  
GPO Box 5218  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Commissioner,

**Re: Intentional self-harm and suicidal behaviour in children**

Thank you for the invitation received on 9 May 2014 to make a submission relating to your examination of how children and young people under 18 years can be better protected from intentional self-harm and suicidal behaviour.

Although the Institute has not recently undertaken specific research focussed on teenage suicide, I would like to draw your attention to the work that the Institute has historically done. A selection of AIFS research abstracts can be found at Attachment A.

Supplementary to the work that the Institute has conducted, we have access to a number of publications which may provide useful background material relevant to your investigation at Attachment B.

In 2009, The Australian Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee Inquiry into Suicide in Australia called for submissions. The Institute provided a submission to this Inquiry which is at Attachment C.

The Institute's work highlights the need for coordinated approaches to data collection, research and evaluation, policy and practice. Integrated family support, alongside assessment and appropriate interventions, are increasingly evident in best practice responses to children and young people in need and initiatives aimed at promoting child and family welfare and wellbeing.

While we are not providing a formal submission, our previous research on topics related to the terms of reference of the current Inquiry might be a useful resource.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alan Hayes'.

**Professor Alan Hayes AM**  
**Director**

Attachment A: Selected relevant AIFS research papers  
Attachment B: Selected relevant supporting research papers from external sources  
Attachment C: AIFS 2009 Submission to the Inquiry into Suicide Australia

