



Child custody inquiry: further public hearings - Wollongong & western Sydney on Monday 1 September -

The House of Representatives Family and Community Affairs Committee's inquiry into child custody arrangements will hold further public hearings this **Monday, 1 September** in Wollongong and western Sydney. Details of each of these hearings appears below.

The hearings will each be followed by about an hour for community statements, each of about three minutes duration. All those who would like to speak are invited to attend. Participants will be chosen on the day. The three minute time limit should be adhered to so the committee can hear from as many people as possible within the hour.

Please note that due to the nature of the inquiry the committee may need to move into an in camera (confidential) hearing for some witnesses and the program could be subject to change.

WOLLONGONG, NSW

Monday 1 September: 9am – 12 noon

Venue: WIN Entertainment Centre, Captains Room, Cnr Crown & Harbour Streets

Program

9am – 10am	Three individuals
10am	Fairness in Child Support
10.20am	Illawarra Legal Centre
10.40am	Fatherhood Foundation
11am – 12 noon	Community statements (1 hour)

BLACKTOWN, WESTERN SYDNEY

Monday 1 September: 3pm - 6pm

Venue: Blacktown City Council, Nirimba Room, 62 Flushcombe Rd, Blacktown

Program

3pm	Uniting Care Burnside
3.20pm	DaDS Australian Inc
3.40 pm	Immigrant Women's Speakout Association
4pm – 5pm	Three individuals
5pm – 6pm	Community statements (1 hour)

FUTURE HEARINGS: The committee will hold further hearings this Thursday, 4 September (Gold Coast & Brisbane) and Friday 5 September (Cairns). Further detail on all these hearings will be issued closer to the events. Public hearings will be held in every State and Territory (hearings have already been held in Geelong, Melbourne and Launceston on Thursday and Friday this week).

More than 1500 submissions have been received by the inquiry so far. This is a record for an inquiry by this committee, and amongst the highest ever for a House of Representatives Committee.

For media comment from the Chair, please contact:

Mrs Kay Hull, MP (Chair), via tel: (02) 6921 4600 or 0428 211 591

For further details on the inquiry, including terms of reference, background documentation and committee membership,

contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4566 or visit the inquiry website at

www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/fca/childcustody/

CHILD CUSTODY INQUIRY TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee is to investigate and make recommendations for action on the following matters:

- (a) given that the best interests of the child are the paramount consideration:
 - (i) what other factors should be taken into account in deciding the respective time each parent should spend with their children post separation, in particular whether there should be a presumption that children will spend equal time with each parent and, if so, in what circumstances such a presumption could be rebutted; and
 - (ii) in what circumstances a court should order that children of separated parents have contact with other persons, including their grandparents.
- (b) whether the existing child support formula works fairly for both parents in relation to their care of, and contact with, their children.
- (c) with the Committee to report to the Parliament by 31 December 2003.

The Committee has been asked to have regard to the Government's recent response to the report of the Family Law Pathways Advisory Group. A link to this report is available on the inquiry website.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Chairman Mrs Kay Hull MP

Members	Hon Alan Cadman MP	Mr Chris Pearce MP
	Ms Trish Draper MP	Hon Roger Price MP
	Mr Peter Dutton MP	Mr Harry Quick MP
	Ms Jennie George MP	Mr Cameron Thompson MP
	Mrs Julia Irwin MP	