

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND**  
**INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO**  
**2010-11 Additional Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number: 1**

**Question No: 38**

**Topic:** Educational outcomes of children on guardianship or custody orders

**Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator Siewert** asked:

**Background:** A report by AIHW, Educational outcomes of children on guardianship or custody orders: a pilot study, stage 2, presents a snapshot of the academic performance of children on guardianship/custody orders from 2003 to 2006, and changes in their performance over this period. This concludes a two-stage pilot study, the first of its kind in Australia.

A considerable proportion of children on guardianship/custody orders are not meeting the national benchmarks for reading and numeracy (ranging from 4% to 68% across states and years), and Indigenous children within this group are particularly disadvantaged.

1. Is the department aware of this report?
2. If so, is there concern about the findings?
3. How is the Department responding to this report?

**Answer:**

1. Yes.
2. Yes.
3. In particular, two of the **National Standards for out-of-home care** agreed by the Community and Disability Services Ministers Conference in December 2010 aim to improve the outcomes and experiences of children and young people unable to live with their families. **Standard 6** (Children and young people in care access and participate in education and early childhood services to maximise their educational outcomes) and **Standard 7** (Children and young people up to at least 18 years are supported to be engaged in appropriate education, training and/or employment) have a particular focus on improved educational and vocational outcomes for children in out-of-home care.