

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2015-16 Supplementary Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 2.1 Families and Communities

Question No: SQ15-000948

Topic: National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children

Hansard page: 57

Senator Helen Polley asked:

Are you aware of the campaign that has been run over a number of years involving a public campaign against a certain retail outlet that was using clothing in a way that was not conducive to young children and was considered to be sexualisation of them as young children, from babies through to five-year-olds? I was hoping that that too would be included in the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children. If there is further information about the digitalisation of photos, particularly when it comes to advertising, if there is anything more that you can add to this, I would appreciate it.

Answer:

The Department of Social Services is aware of the campaign against the sexualisation of children.

As noted in SQ15-000947, under the Responding to Sexual Abuse priority, the Second Action Plan of the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children committed to 'explore ways to respond nationally to the sexualisation of children' (Action 13.4).

Two projects have been undertaken in relation to this action;

- an Issues Paper on the Sexualisation of Children, which was prepared by the Department of Social Services; and
- a project titled 'Responding to the Sexualisation of Children and Young People: Creating Safe, Equitable and Respectful Identities' which was undertaken by Our Watch in partnership with the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS).

The Issues Paper uses a rights-based framework to identify the problems associated with the sexualisation of children, particularly in relation to impacts on wellbeing, health and self-image. The paper presents an overview of domestic and international responses to the issue and highlights some possible policy approaches. It informs further work to address sexualisation of children and young people nationally, including the project by Our Watch and AIFS.

As a result of the 'Responding to the Sexualisation of Children and Young People' project undertaken by Our Watch, a resource package 'Discussing Gender Stereotypes' has been released on The Line website for parents and teachers to use with nine to 11 year olds.