

# Marketing and Communications

**The Marketing and Communications unit promotes the Australian Institute of Family Studies to the community through the marketing and distribution of Institute research products, media liaison and public information dissemination, and through the administration and promotion of Institute conferences and seminars.**

## Media liaison

The print and electronic media are a major forum for discussion of family issues in Australia. They are also an important means by which Institute research findings are communicated to the community.

Contact with the media is undertaken in accordance with the Institute's internal Media Policy, and generally takes three forms: direct comment by an author about the substance of Institute research; provision of information about current or past Institute and other research on families; and referral to relevant agencies and researchers outside the Institute. The principal points of contact with the media are the Marketing Manager, the Institute's Family Information Centre, and researchers.

In 1999–2000, media outlets made over 800 requests for information or comment from the Institute. More than 200 reports or articles that made use of Institute research findings and expertise were recorded in print and electronic media during the year. It is pleasing to note the continuing and increasing use of Institute research by feature writers and columnists.

The Institute is regarded as a source of research and expert commentary on aspects of marriage and family breakdown. The release in July 1999 of the Institute's Working Paper, *Towards Understanding the Reasons for Divorce*, provided some answers to the most commonly asked media question – 'why do people divorce?' In the month after the paper was released, in excess of 90 newspaper articles, features and opinion columns, radio interviews and talkback interviews were held with the Institute's Australian Divorce Transitions Project researchers.

Each edition of *Family Matters* contained at least one, and in some cases several articles which elicited reports and radio interviews. The ongoing publication of articles from the Australian Divorce Transitions Project, particularly the Autumn 2000 special edition of *Family Matters*, generated a great deal of interest in the Institute's work on divorce, child support and marital property settlements.

The Institute's work on marriage education, child care, fertility, welfare reform and young adults also attracted media interest during the year. There was also a good deal of interest in defining 'the family' at the turn of the millennium, with library and research staff kept busy gathering information on and explaining family trends.

## Institute conference

Planning for the Seventh Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference, *Family futures: issues in research and policy*, to be held at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, 24–26 July 2000 was well in hand at the end of the financial year.

With over 180 applications to present material, and 120 accepted for presentation, the program promises to be of interest to a wide range of people involved in family research, policy and service provision.

A number of strongly represented themes have emerged in the program, and the conference will contain a series of papers and symposia addressing the changing nature of the welfare state as it relates to families, the effects of divorce on family members, and parenting and supporting families and communities.

## CommunityLink partnership

The relationship between the Institute and the conference sponsor, the National Australia Bank, progressed to another level with the signing of a partnership agreement between the Institute and the National CommunityLink program. Thus far, the partnership has included the sponsorship of the Institute's biennial conference, and the Institute's distribution of the *CommunityLink* magazine to community organisations which subscribe to *Family Matters*. The Director of the Institute is also on the judging panel for the annual CommunityLink Awards.

## Marketing, sales and distribution

The year 1999–2000 saw two new titles for sale (as distinct from free publications). These were: *The UK Looking After Children Approach in Australia*; and *Social Capital and Public Policy in Australia*. Total revenue from book sales was \$24,178.

Subscriptions to *Family Matters* ended the year above their 1998–1999 level. Four thousand copies of *Family Matters* are distributed each edition, with 2,500 of these representing paid subscriptions. In addition to the copies distributed via subscription, the Institute also distributes *Family Matters* to all parliamentarians, to key policy-makers within government, to the media, by exchange with other publishers, and by legal deposit into state and university libraries. This free distribution counts for almost 1,500 copies per edition.

A number of significant changes were made to *Family Matters* in 1999–2000 and these are reported in the Publishing chapter in this Section. Alongside the changes to the magazine, changes were also made in the marketing area. Chief among these was to move away from annual subscriptions, to a more flexible three-edition subscription system. The change to a more standard subscription was accompanied by an edition-by-edition marketing strategy, the development of new brochures, and closer targeting of marketing materials. These changes have resulted in quite considerable savings in the cost of marketing *Family Matters*, while at the same time giving us greater capacity to respond to market conditions.

**Table 4.1 Distribution, media and advertising 1999 – 2000**

	\$
<b>Direct mail and distribution</b>	
College Printing & Graphics	9,584
CSME Threshold Treasurer	959
Impact Printing	19,935
Mailcare Systems P/L	25,415
National Direct Response	3,528
Nicholson Media Group P/L	2,500
Salmat Mailing Services	12,598
The List Bank	9,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>83,519</b>
<b>Media</b>	
AAP Information Services	2,204
Media Monitors Victoria P/L	5,678
Newset P/L	511
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,393</b>
<b>Advertising</b>	
Bendigo Advertiser	100
David Syme and Co P/L	268
Specialised Press Agency	2,230
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,598</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>94,510</b>