

sleeping babies on their back or side, clean water and waste disposal is not something companies who produce antibiotics are interested in hearing about.

For the sake of the next generation we should be supporting campaigns that encourage immunisation, inform parents on best practice in child care and educate the medical profession to use technology appropriately.

### **AMENDMENTS TO LAW AFFECTING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE VICTIMS 1994**

This important amendment which defines sexual intercourse as penetration of the labia majora, not only the vagina makes it absolutely clear that penetration includes interference with the outer female genitalia and not the vagina alone.

Following a High Court decision (Holland 1993) that vagina means vagina and then prosecution in sexual offences must prove that the accused penetrated the vaginal canal, the SA Government moved quickly to close this legal definitional loop hole, recognising that in many cases of sexual interference, digital and other penetration is prevalent. The legislation is not retrospective.

### **FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION**

The subject of female genital mutilation assumed national importance late last year following a much publicised Victorian Child Protection case during which the mutilation of two Eritrean girls was discovered. While the act itself was probably carried out in Eritrea a group of lawyers sought leave to intervene on the grounds that female mutilation constituted sexual abuse.

Both the Queensland Law Reform Commission and the Family Law Council of Australia released research/discussion papers on the subject (and in the case of Queensland, that of male circumcision as well).

The need for a national approach particularly in education has been emphasised and agreed on. A major problem is the difficulty in changing customs which date back thousands of years. Parental opposition to female genital mutilation is often unable to withstand family pressures.

### **"CHILDREN IN CONFLICT" WORLD-WIDE EVENT**

An international awareness campaign is planned to take place in September 1995 which will focus on the needs of children who are **victims of conflict**. The event will serve to highlight the basic rights that the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child protects - in particular, **article 19 on protection from abuse and neglect**.

Beijing, Cape Town and New York will host the three "live" concerts with satellite link-up and a world-wide broadcast; interwoven with documentary footage, cartoon characters, and with telethon link-up. People all over the world will have the opportunity to give donations towards selected projects which support the goals of the Convention on this issue.

The "Children in Conflict" organisers have asked the **DCI International Secretariat** in Geneva to select the appropriate projects which will be publicised during the event. **DCI Australia** has been invited by the International Secretariat to submit suitable projects which will support the event.