



Children's rights, like human rights, are universal and indivisible. They are a domestic issue and a foreign policy issue. We are all in it together.

CHILDREN SHOULD BE SEEN AND HEARD

"Even if I disagreed with a child's views, I would always come down on the side of the child ...I am about helping children making their own decisions" said visiting UK Children's Rights Worker, Shane Ellis, at a public meeting arranged by the ACT Branch of DCI in Canberra, on October 20, 1993.

Shane Ellis came to Australia at the invitation of the Australian Association for Young People in Care (AAYPIC) and the Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA).

A passionate advocate for children in the care system, he spoke of his campaign to give children full information about their rights. "How can children know if their rights are being abused if they don't have the information in the first place." His first project was therefore, to produce a detailed booklet for children in care about their rights. The booklet includes a stamped addressed envelope for feedback, and enables young people to make complaints and assess for themselves the seriousness of the matter.

He spoke also about his campaign against bulk-buying for children's homes, which takes away the child's opportunity to shop and make choices. Shopping and learning to manage a budget helps to normalize the child's life and makes the transition from the care system to independence easier.

Having grown up himself in a series of care placements, Shane said that children's homes can be better at respecting the child's rights, for instance religious freedom, than foster families.

Helen Bayes
National Convenor

THE MONITOR

The *International Children's Rights Monitor* is the most widely circulated periodical on children's rights. It has readers in every continent and sixty countries, from Argentina to Zimbabwe.

It is read by human rights activists, lawyers, social workers, teachers, paediatricians, politicians, community workers, child care workers, academics, government policy makers, magistrates, commissioners for human rights and social justice, journalists, psychologists, diplomats.

It paints a broad vision, with theoretical discussion of issues, specific case reports, news of the activities of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and up-dates on DCI Section activities.

The Monitor is sent free to every member of DCI. Non-members and libraries can subscribe for \$20 per annum, which is a bargain considering the quality and coverage of this publication.



U.S.A. AND THE UN CONVENTION

Despite its adoption by the UN in 1990 and its ratification by more than 190 countries, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has yet to be adopted in the United States. The Convention awaits administrative action before it can be ratified by the U.S. Senate. The State Department currently has the UN Convention under study and, after its review, will send recommendations to the president. If signed by the president, the UN Convention can then be ratified by the Senate.

CONSUMERS' HEALTH FORUM OF AUSTRALIA

The Consumers' Health Forum of Australia Inc. formed in 1987, is a national consumer organisation which represents consumers on health care issues. It provides a balance to the views of government, manufacturers, service providers and other health professionals.

For information and membership write to: PO Box 52, Lyons, ACT 2606 or phone (06) 281 0811.