



MENTIONS

WIN IN DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION TEST CASE

After a lengthy hearing last year, HREOC handed down a decision on 21 July finding that the Hills Grammar School had unlawfully discriminated against Scarlett Finney in rejecting her application for enrolment on the basis that she had spina bifida. The school argued that accepting Scarlett's enrolment would have involved unjustifiable hardship. It based this on suggestions that Scarlett would have special needs in terms of mobility, toileting arrangements and, possibly, the curriculum, which would involve significant costs. Commissioner Graham Innes found that any changes the school would need to make in these areas were minimal and that some hardship was justified in the context of the *Disability Discrimination Act*. He said that the school's decision was based on negative worst case scenario assumptions.

The first of its kind in relation to school enrolment, the decision will have major implications for schools across the country. Schools will not be permitted to exclude children with disabilities in reliance on assumptions based on stereotypes but will have to make detailed, realistic assessments of a child's needs and whether they can be met. The decision has been welcomed by disability groups.

The full decision is available from HREOC's website at: www.hreoc.gov.au/disability_rights/FINNEY_dec.htm.

(Information courtesy of Public Interest Advocacy Centre, NSW, tel 029299 7833, email: piac@fl.asn.au)

MARRICKVILLE LEGAL CENTRE TURNS 20

As part of our 20th anniversary celebrations, MLC is preparing a web history project in conjunction with the UTS Shopfront. We are desperately seeking any former workers, volunteers, clients, interpreters etc who would like to be part of this exciting living history. As part of the continuing celebration, MLC will be holding an open day and taking part in the Marrickville Fair on Sunday, 19 September. On the open day we will be conducting interviews to help us form part of the history project. If you would like to be involved or

know someone who would, please contact either Tim (02 8577 5107) or Janet (02 9559 2899). We look forward to hearing from you soon.

PUBLICATIONS

Job Watch, a specialist community legal centre that focuses on employment law and issues for workers in Victoria recently published two booklets:

New Apprentices: Your Rights

This booklet explains the post-1998 apprenticeship system in Victoria and looks at problems that may arise under it together with ways of dealing with the problems. Cost \$15.

People and Work

This booklet, again relevant to Victorian workers, was produced to help workers understand their rights and responsibilities. Produced in collaboration with Victoria Legal Aid. Cost: free.

Contact: Job Watch
tel 1800 33 16 17 or 03 9662 1933.

Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice Papers

The Australian Institute of Criminology publishes a series of Papers designed to explore, describe and explain policy related to crime and the criminal justice system. Each paper is approximately 4000 words, presented in six A4 pages. The target readership is an informed lay audience.

The full text of papers 1-95 is available in PDF format on the Institute's web site at: www.aic.gov.au/publications/.

Or phone for a brochure and order from: tel 02 6295 4897 or toll free 132447.

VIRTUAL WOMEN

The Virtual Centre is an initiative of the National Women's Justice Coalition. Combining the talent, energy and resources of organisations around the country, The Virtual Centre aims to:

- promote women's use and proficiency with new communication technologies by creating a friendly environment to learn and practice
- focus strongly on encouraging virtual communities and networks particularly among those in regional Australia, and
- actively help in forming new links and partnerships for research, information exchange and peer support.

The centrepiece is the large-scale application of advanced email list management technology using an intensive community development approach. The project draws on leading education models and successful grass roots capacity building projects undertaken by major international non-profit organisations.

In year one the Centre will provide about 150 email lists, including electronic bulletins and email and web-based discussion groups, on self-initiated topics from all regions in Australia. Email lists will be self directed and list facilitators will be mentored in list facilitation techniques. Facilities for on-line training and public and private on-line conferences will be added as the Centre grows.

CONFERENCES

Community and Action

20th Annual Conference of Community Legal Centres

Date: 7-9 September

Venue: Brisbane Convention Centre

Contact: tel 07 3254 1811

email: naclic@fcl.fl.asn.au or

The Organiser
tel 07 3254 1811

Restoration for Victims of Crime: Contemporary Challenges

Australian Institute of Criminology

Date: 9-10 September

Venue: Carlton Crest Hotel, Melbourne

Contact: Conference Coordinators,
PO Box 139, Calwell, ACT 2905, tel
02 6292 9000 fax 02 62929002,
email:

conference@netinfo.com.au

2nd National Conference Justice for Everyone

Intellectual Disability & the Law

Date: 12-13 November 1999

Venue: University of Wollongong

Contact: Jan May or Marg Bowen
tel: 02 4228 4500 fax: 02 4227 2540
email: idt@enternet.com.au