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Reconceptualising child protection

Thursday 25 October 2012 1 – 2.30pm

Ms Tahira Jabeen Crawford School of Public Policy, ANU

Seminar Room 5 Level 2, JG Crawford Building 132, Lennox Crossing, ANU



Child protection is one of the most contested areas of public and social policy. Research and evaluation of state policies around the world, particularly in the Global North, highlight the challenges that policymakers face in dealing with child protection. There is a struggle between too little state intervention resulting from a very narrow definition of child abuse and too much intervention based on 'all inclusive' child protection goals. The challenge is to formulate and implement child protection policies which address potential and actual risks to safety and well-being of children in situations ranging from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect, and homelessness, to economic exploitation and abuse due to broader socioeconomic and structural factors. The challenges are even greater for countries in the Global South.

Using examples from recent field work, Tahira Jabeen argues that it is necessary to reconceptualise child protection in ways that take account of children's familial and societal contexts, as well as national and international standards around child protection.

Such a reconceptualisation is critical if child protection policy is to take account of children's needs and right to protection and their specific environment.

Tahira Jabeen is a PhD student at the Crawford School of Public Policy at ANU, researching child protection policy in Pakistan. Prior to these studies, Ms Jabeen was a lecturer in Social Policy and Administration at the University of Punjab in Lahore. She has worked for various Pakistani government departments and conducted research and provided training for a number of international agencies including UNICEF, the UN Development Programme, the German Technical Cooperation Agency and Church World Service. Her research has looked at children in especially difficult circumstances such as lost, kidnapped, runaway, homeless and street children in Pakistan and also at children, communities and social inclusion in Australia with Dr Sharon Bessell.

This seminar is presented by the Children's Policy Centre, at the Crawford School of Public Policy at The Australian National University.

Further information about the Children's Policy Centre: cpc.crawford.anu.edu.au

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This seminar is free and open to the public

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