

A NEW DEAL FOR AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN

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Children are now a minority of the population and there are powerful social forces at work that reduce the efficacy of children's policy. Individualistic values and the privatisation of family life, together with the discovery of children as a commercial market, undermine a sense of community responsibility for children. The separate structures of government and family services, their non-responsive, top-down approach to services for children, plus the language of crisis and prevention used by policy-makers and service-providers result in a piece-meal, categorical treatment of children, in contrast to an integrated approach to designing child-friendly communities. A new image of modern childhood is needed and a whole New Deal required for Australian children.