

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Playing for Success

Dr Janette Perz, Dr Yasmin Hawkins and Professor Jane Ussher from the School of Psychology are exploring the benefits of play in supporting children at risk of antisocial behaviour through funding from Panthers on the Prowl.

'It is generally accepted that interventions that enhance social skills, improve self-esteem and build confidence can have a positive effect on children who may be at risk of being involved in criminal activities and violence' says Dr Perz. 'Recognising this potential, Panthers on the Prowl has developed a school-based program called *Playing for Success - Tackle it Now*, which aims to use team sports and play activities to encourage social interactions, and develop physical and cognitive skills in children. This research project will evaluate the success of the Panthers on the Prowl intervention, to determine the program's benefits for current well-being and future life outcomes of the participants.'

Working closely with participating schools, the research team will conduct an online survey, interviews and focus groups with students, parents and teachers before and after they have involvement in the *Playing for Success – Tackle it Now* program. The data collected will be analysed statistically and also through qualitative methods to determine how being part of the scheme has affected the participants' social skills, self-confidence, school engagement, family life and general well-being.



This project will provide Panthers on the Prowl with valuable evidence of the worthiness of their early intervention scheme. This will allow them to refine and extend the scheme to improve the current and future lives of children and their families in Western Sydney.

Project Title: Playing for Success – Tackle it Now: An examination of the effects and impact of a support program for children at risk of developing antisocial behaviour

Funding has been set at: \$35,400

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March 2008