

WHEN ONE IS TOO MANY

Despite the decrease in youth suicide rates since 1997, suicide remains the second biggest cause of death for young people, accounting for almost a quarter of deaths of men between 15 and 25.

In a new report – *Before it's too late* – the House of Representatives Health Committee has called for more programs to improve mental health literacy among young people, so they have the knowledge to help each other and themselves.

The committee has recommended mental health courses in the national curriculum and training for teachers in recognising suicidal risk.

“Even though the numbers are dropping, even one is too high,” committee chair Steve Georganas (Hindmarsh, SA) said.

The report is at www.aph.gov.au/haa/youthsuicide or for more information email haa.reps@aph.gov.au or phone (02) 6277 4145.



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END OF THE TUNNEL: *More can be done to prevent youth suicide*



TALKING CULTURE: *Improving education through language*

LEARNING INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

The House of Representatives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Committee is examining the role of Indigenous languages in education and culture and the effectiveness of policies to promote Indigenous language learning.

The committee will look at how Indigenous language learning could support educational outcomes and the benefits of recognising Indigenous languages.

“By examining how we can give attention and proper recognition to Indigenous languages in Australia, we are also walking the path of reconciliation by giving attention and proper recognition to Indigenous cultures and identities,” committee chair Shayne Neumann (Blair, Qld) said.

For more information visit www.aph.gov.au/atsia or email atsia.reps@aph.gov.au or phone (02) 6277 4559.

RENTAL DILEMMA FOR MIGRANTS

Recent migrants are hardest hit by tight rental markets in Australia's cities, according to evidence presented to federal parliament's Migration Committee.

The Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland told the committee language ability, transport, lack of references, discrimination and cost were all barriers affecting migrants and refugees struggling to find appropriate housing.

Migrants faced stiff competition to secure a tenancy, often ending up living in disadvantaged areas poorly served by transport and employment opportunities. They were forced to move much more frequently than the Australian average.

For more information visit www.aph.gov.au/mig or email jscm@aph.gov.au or phone (02) 6277 4560.



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LOCKED OUT: *Migrants face tough search for housing*



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PREFERENCE DEAL: *Changes proposed to voting system*

ELECTORAL SHAKE-UP

Australia's electoral system could be in for a shake-up if the recommendations of a recent parliamentary inquiry are accepted.

The Electoral Matters Committee was concerned that 20 per cent of potential voters were not on the roll, failed to vote or voted informally.

The committee has recommended that the AEC be allowed to accept electronic signatures for enrolments and enrol voters or update their details by relying on information from other sources such as the tax office.

The committee has also called for changes that would allow for votes without all preferences numbered to be considered valid. This would have saved as many as 307,156 votes from being declared invalid in the 2010 election.

Opposition members of the committee presented a dissenting report arguing that the risk of fraud justified maintaining the status quo.

The report is at www.aph.gov.au/em or for more information email jscem@aph.gov.au or phone (02) 6277 2374.