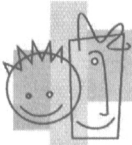


From
the
Inside:

Children's Protection in Immigration Detention Centres



nsw commission for
children & young people

Two detainees attempted suicide. They took some pills and taken to hospital. A few detainees climbed trees. One of the detainees in the basketball court took a razor and wanted to cut himself in the basketball court, cut his neck (*Unaccompanied teenage boy*).

A new publication that provides an extraordinary account of children's experiences of coming to Australia as refugees, their treatment within immigration detention centres and their views on how detention can be improved has recently been produced by the NSW Commission for Children and Young People.

The *Ask The Children* publication focuses on children who have been recognised under Australian and international law as refugees and who spent an average of 140 days in immigration detention during 2000 and 2001. The children were originally interviewed as part of a submission to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's national inquiry into children living in immigration detention. The publication is one of very few that allows us to hear about refugee children's experiences in their own words.

The kids' experiences show that, among other rights, the children's right to protection is not being met. Although none of the children the Commission spoke to alleged that they had been physically or sexually abused, they did speak about the general atmosphere of the camps as one of violence, conflict, threat and intimidation. They also raised issues of physical protection such as the large number of snakes in the camp and their resultant fear.

Ask the Children — Kids Speak out about Immigration Detention is being sent to people and organisations to raise awareness about the children's unique and frequently traumatic experiences. It is hoped that children's views will be considered in future policies about asylum seeker children and Australia will conform with our obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

order

To order copies of the publication telephone 02 9286 7276
or visit the Commission's website at
www.kids.nsw.gov.au/ourwork/immigrationdetention.html