

# CONFERENCES

## Permanency planning research worker for Australian Foster Care Conference

Dr Janet Lahti, the keynote speaker for the National Foster Care Conference to be held in Brisbane from the 16-21 September 1984, is a person of wide education, experience and interests.

Presently she is the Principal Investigator, in a study of Preplacement Prevention and Re-unification of Child Welfare Services, at the Regional Research Institute at the Portland State University, Oregon.

For the past ten years she has been engaged in research on families and child welfare. The Regional Research Institute for Human Services was established in 1972 and has undertaken about 40 projects in the fields of youth welfare, family and child care, employment and mental health.

The aim of the Institute is to improve Human Services.

Janet Lahti's projects have centred around permanency planning in the main and it is anticipated that her participation in the Brisbane Conference will give a significant impetus to the issue of permanency planning in Australia.

Those interested in attending this conference can contact:

Dr Gary Embelton,  
Brisbane College of Advanced Education,  
Box 284,  
Zillmere, Queensland, 4034.  
Telephone (07) 263 6222.



DR. JANET LAHTI – Keynote Speaker

## 1985 International Foster Care Conference in New Zealand

In 1979 two New Zealanders — a foster parent and a social worker — travelled half way round the world to attend the first international foster care conference, at Oxford, England. New Zealanders have attended the second and third international conferences, both in Europe. In January 1985 New Zealand is to host the fourth international foster care conference.

'We feel that holding a conference in New Zealand will help to make the new International Foster Care Organisation truly a world-wide one,' says conference organiser, Anne-Marie Pike, a foster parent and teacher from Christchurch. 'People in Australia, New Zealand and countries around the Pacific will at last have an opportunity to participate.'

The conference is to be held at Lincoln College, a delightful self-contained university campus ten miles from Christchurch International Airport. January is high sum-

mer in New Zealand, and the organisers are hoping that some fostering families from the Northern Hemisphere will take the holiday of a lifetime in beautiful New Zealand. Tours before or after the conference can be arranged at the time of registration.

Planning has been under way since mid 1982, and the well known British author Jane Rowe has agreed to come as keynote speaker. The conference is being sponsored by the New Zealand Foster Care Federation, a national organisation of foster parents and social workers established in 1976. The Federation has made a reputation as a radical and energetic body fighting for a better deal for children and young people in care. It has developed a good working relationship with the Department of Social Welfare, the state agency which placed the majority of children in care. The Department is closely associated in organising the conference, and the New Zealand Government has contributed \$5,000.

The organisers believe that New Zealand has something special to offer. 'New Zea-

land is a small, friendly country,' says Mrs Pike. 'It is an ideal setting for an informal conference where a wide range of people can get together and share experience and expertise. We believe that the secret of success in our Federation has been the whole-hearted participation by foster parents, social workers, academics, administrators and other professionals. Our conference aims for the same sort of participation.'

This conference will be an important one for New Zealand. Overseas experience and ideas have been important historically in helping to shape and reform New Zealand's child care services. This conference will bring new ideas and expertise to New Zealand.

*Conference Planning Committee*  
Mrs A. Pike, 17 Mottram Street,  
Christchurch 5, New Zealand  
Jane Thomson, 30 Perth Street,  
Wellington 4, New Zealand  
John Burns, 113 Waipapa Road,  
Haitaitai, Wellington 3, New Zealand.