Project Subject Area(s):- Understanding parental (mis)trust in childhood vaccinations

Brief Outline of Project:
Childhood vaccination is one of the most successful and cost effective global public health programs to reduce disease-related mortality. Whilst Australia has a high childhood vaccination rate compared with many countries, vaccination coverage rates conceal significant variations between: individual vaccines, vaccine uptake at difference ages, social and cultural groups and geographic areas. Pockets of low vaccination coverage decrease the protection achieved through herd immunity, leaving non-vaccinated children, unborn babies and non-immunised adults vulnerable to infectious preventable diseases. Recent systematic reviews identify a need for research aimed at understanding parental mistrust in vaccinations.

The main aim of the proposed qualitative study is to understand (mis)trust around childhood vaccinations and develop ideas for trust-building strategies. We will interview 'vaccine hesitant' parents to understand their (mis)trust - not just in 'the vaccination' but in broader social systems and institutions that may foster a generalized mistrust. The Honours project will link with our ongoing NHMRC funded study.

Link to more information about researcher or research group:
Prof Ward is Head of Public Health and undertakes numerous qualitative research studies. His recent study with parents who choose not to vaccinate their children was a pilot study for a successful NHMRC project and lead to the following publication (more are in the pipeline):