

## tv previews PAT SHEIL

### Risking Our Kids

ABC1, 8.30pm

Both fascinating and disturbing, *Risking Our Kids* looks at the work of scientist and children's health researcher Fiona Stanley, a woman who has devoted much of her life to trying to work out why kids get sick. More to the point, she is looking for reasons why an ever-increasing number of young Australians suffer from diseases that were either very rare in the past or are traditionally associated with much older patients.

From the phenomenal increase in asthma, through diabetes and on to depression and suicide, the numbers are all bad. Stanley sums it up well early in the piece when she makes the blunt prediction that unless we get to the bottom of it all, her generation "may be the last to live longer than their parents".

The subject is so enormous and the underlying causes so diverse, it's a credit to the producers that it flows so well. Many professionals are quoted but edited straight to the point and with a minimum of waffle.

The star turn is Stanley herself. Her passion for the subject and determination to find answers are contagious, if that's the appropriate word. Maybe it is - she makes that point herself when she says, "Give me polio any day. You get the bug, find a vaccine, end of problem. How do you vaccinate against youth suicide?"

### Hot Docs: Shot In Bombay

SBS, 10.05pm

This could have been so good but it isn't much good at all.

The tale of a Bollywood film star busted for supplying guns to terrorists and the seedy gangland underbelly of Mumbai in the 1990s follows the making of a movie that was ankle-tapped when the star in question was charged and jailed mid-shoot.

What could have been an intriguing look at the kickbacks, corruption and



Risking Our Kids

stand-over antics of the Mumbai gangs is drowned in endless footage of actors and a production crew hanging around less-than-interesting film sets doing not much, really.

Making movies is one of the duller activities on earth but the art involves making it look exciting. The producers of *Shot In Bombay* should have availed themselves of that great cinematic institution - the cutting-room floor. At 90 minutes, it's almost unwatchable.

### Cutting Edge: Letter To Anna

SBS, 8.30pm

Don't avoid SBS documentaries tonight entirely. *Letter To Anna* is everything *Shot In Bombay* isn't - straight to the point, sharply cut and genuinely horrifying.

Today is the second anniversary of the murder of Anna Politkovskaya, a Russian journalist who annoyed a lot of heavyweight Kremlin types and was taken out in the stairwell of her Moscow apartment

building. Politkovskaya really began to irritate the authorities after several visits to Chechnya, after which she described the war there as genocide.

In 2004 she flew to Beslan in an attempt to mediate between Chechnyans who had taken hundreds of school children hostage and the special forces surrounding the school.

By the time she arrived she was almost dead - her tea on the plane had been poisoned.

She had also tried to resolve the 2002 stand-off at the Moscow cinema where hundreds of patrons were held hostage but she was moved on before police gassed the place, leaving hundreds dead.

Old habits die hard in post-Soviet Russia and crusading journalists take enormous risks. Director Eric Bergkraut filmed hours of interviews with Politkovskaya in the two years before her death.

That material forms the backbone of this piece, which reveals a brave and passionate woman who knew she was a target but kept at it until the end.