

CDFWRe@der

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Perpetrator intervention systems

Summary of practice standards

Perpetrators of domestic and family
violence – database summary



Director's message

As we slip towards the end of another year, ready or not, it is customary to reflect on the year that was. Like most other years and, I expect, in most other fields, there have been some significant achievements, some frustrating challenges and some promising developments in domestic and family violence policy and programs.

At a national level, the report of the Australian Law Reform Commission and the New South Wales Law Reform Commission, *Family Violence—A National Legal Response*, was launched by the Attorney-General, Robert McClelland, on 11 November. The report is the result of extensive national consultation on the interaction between the family law system and state-based child protection and domestic violence law and practice, and was commissioned on the recommendation of the National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children in *Time for Action* (2009). *Family Violence—A National Legal Response* includes 187 recommendations for reform to ensure that the interaction of law and practice in these three jurisdictions do not conflict or otherwise jeopardise the safety of women and children affected by domestic and family violence. While it is very pleasing to see such an outcome of *Time for Action*, it is very disappointing that the COAG-endorsed national plan had not been released by mid-2010, as anticipated, and it seems very doubtful now that it will be achieved before the end of the year.

Also on 11 November, the Attorney-General had released an exposure draft Family Law (Family Violence) Bill 2010. The draft Bill proposes amendments to the *Family Law Act 1975*, in response to reports from the Australian Institute of Family Studies, Professor Richard Chisholm AM and the Family Law Council. In releasing the Bill, Mr McClelland said "The reports illustrate that the family law system has some way to go in effectively responding to issues relating to family violence." The amendments address the following five key areas for reform:

- prioritising the safety of children explicit reference to the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- changing the meaning of 'family violence' and 'abuse' to better capture harmful behaviour;
- strengthening the obligations of lawyers, family dispute resolution practitioners, family consultants and family counsellors;
- ensuring courts have better access to evidence of family violence and abuse; and
- making it easier for state and territory child protection authorities to participate in family law proceedings where appropriate. (Submissions in response to the exposure draft close on 14 January).



Here at CDFVR, the year has been productive and rewarding. At the end of April, we signed a further funding agreement with the Department of Communities and convened a face-to-face meeting of the CDFVR Advisory Group to contribute to our strategic and operational planning for the three-year period 2010-2013. Since April, various members of the Advisory Group have also contributed advice, through sub-group membership, to CDFVR staff on specific projects.

In May, we delivered the national Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum in partnership with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group, the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and Charles Darwin University. The energy and generosity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers in the field of domestic and family violence prevention is staggering and it is an absolute privilege to have so many gather here in Mackay each year to celebrate and share their work, to learn from each other and to renew their energy for, and commitment to, the work ahead. We look forward to the 2011 Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum (see date claimer in this edition), which will return to a Queensland-focussed agenda. We were also privileged to have research seminars presented by Dr Ang Jury and Associate Professor Moira Carmody. We currently have four research projects underway, each at various stages of implementation, and had four peer-reviewed publications during the year, in addition to the quarterly Re@der.

Finally, and as is customary for us at the end of the year, we are evaluating our outputs and processes and we're asking for your help with this. Please take a few minutes to complete our on-line survey and complete and return your free subscription form.

I wish you all a safe and happy festive season!

Heather Nancarrow

Inside this issue

Domestic Violence - Working with men	3
Perpetrators of domestic and family violence: a summary from CDFVR's Domestic and Family Violence Database	5
Research seminar - Shame on who? An exploration of the constitution of women's shame within abusive intimate relationships	8
Thursday in black	9
Perpetrator intervention systems - Reviewing evaluated perpetrator intervention systems in California, USA	11
Working with men who perpetrate domestic and family violence: A summary of practice standards for state funded programs	14
Research seminar – Educating young people about ethical and respectful relationships	17
Workshops, conferences, date claimers and seminars	18

Centre News

CDFVR Director contributes to legal issue

Centre Director, Heather Nancarrow, recently attended the joint launch of the UNSW (University of New South Wales) Law Journal General Issue (33,3) and Forum (16,2) on *Family Violence*. This timely Forum on *Family Violence* covers a wide range of themes including responding to family violence in a federal system, family violence and homelessness, child protection, legal responses to family violence in New Zealand and challenges to restorative justice.

It includes Heather's article on the implementation of law and justice actions identified in *Time for Action: the National Council's Plan for Australia to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children*. Many other contributing authors also attended the launch.

Pictured from left to right are UNSW Law Journal Forum authors: Karen Wilcox, Heather Nancarrow, Professor Hilary Astor, Professor Julie Stubbs and Dr Jane Wangmann.



New-look website goes live

On 14 November 2010, the new-look website for the Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research went live.

The website www.noviolence.com.au has undergone a complete overhaul of its visual appearance and navigation structure. In addition, the site now utilises Google Custom Search to provide a more robust search engine solution. New jQuery code embedded into the site will allow us to provide more advanced features like the new tabbed interface seen on many of the new pages. It will also allow for the integration of upcoming video streams of CDFVR research seminars.



We would appreciate your feedback on our new-look website and other CDFVR products by completing our annual on-line survey at <http://www.noviolence.com.au/annualsurvey/survey.html>



Domestic Violence - Working with men

Reviewed by Jude Marshall, guest contributor

One of the more important directions in recent strategies for dealing with the effects of domestic and family violence is the innovation of integrated responses - the multi faceted strategizing for delivering services in a community setting that accepts that domestic and family violence is a community problem.

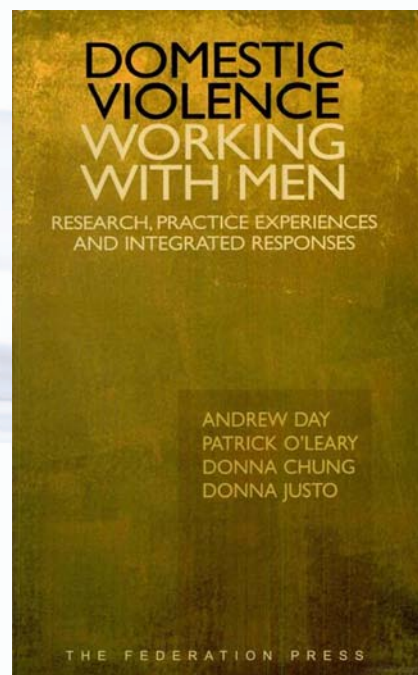
In this publication, several agencies discuss how they have accepted responsibility for delivering parts of an integrated response to the problem of domestic violence on the Gold Coast.

Domestic violence affects our communities in many ways. For the adult victim, it results in physical, emotional, financial, social and spiritual harm. For the children exposed to it, the effects invade their psyche and can be life-long in various ways. The perpetrators of domestic and family violence are no less affected and these effects and causes are what this book seeks to discuss and address.

The book begins with a chapter that puts the problem in context. Donna Chung and Patrick O'Leary outline the disjointed response that has been applied historically, before the recognition of a need for victim safety, alongside perpetrator accountability, led to shared principles and linkages between women's domestic violence services and the criminal justice system. As the authors note, changes in community perceptions and tolerance of domestic and family violence led to alliances with police and courts with women-focused domestic violence services and the exploration of strategies to deliver integrated services to all directly affected by domestic violence.

The next chapter, by Donna Justo, Di Lucas, Joan Salizzo and Lesley McCartney, from the Gold Coast Domestic Violence Prevention Centre, outlines their journey toward the development of an integrated response to domestic violence. The Gold Coast Domestic Violence Prevention Service has been instrumental in the development of Project SAFER (Safety Assessment for Every Response), along with the Queensland Police Service (Gold Coast District). The chapter includes the Gold Coast Integrated Response vision for an increased criminal justice response to domestic and family violence in the region.

An important consideration in any integrated response is the effect such programs have on women victims. Donna Justo and others discuss the role of the women's advocate which role includes monitoring women's safety through



ongoing risk assessments, and giving them a voice that has been previously denied. The chapter concludes with a significant challenge to politicians and funders:

“There has been enough research consultation and rhetoric - action is required” (p. 42)

In a later chapter, Susan Moore provides information on the Men's Domestic Violence Education and Intervention program run as part of the integrated response at the Gold Coast DVPC. This program uses the Duluth model as a framework for the program and the authors explain the way that this places the emphasis on responsibility and support for the women (ex) partners of the participants.

The role of Queensland Correctional Services (QCS) is vital in the integrated response model. Rosemary O'Malley, a supervisor of high risk offenders, discusses QCS' primary role in risk management and community safety. Probation and Parole officers administer the assessment procedure to participants who are on “community based orders such as probation or intensive corrections orders” (p.83). They also continue involvement with case management and assessing the progress of participants. QCS funds one facilitator position and provides the venue. The program runs for 24 weeks and failure to attend constitutes a breach of the order. Programs are co-gender facilitated by two trained workers; a male and female.

Unfortunately, the authors do not clearly define the role of the facilitator, despite providing a discussion about various approaches and no clear examples are provided. The continuing debate around program content and delivery leads to the conclusion that more

differentiated programs may be useful for a diversity of male offenders. The Duluth model is utilised by GCDVIR, while Tony Fletcher bases his practice model on various feminist theories, and Maggie Woodhead discusses an alternative model to psycho-educational groups. She discusses the need to address perpetrators' childhood trauma, which she states would lead to a position where perpetrating further violence "would become incompatible with the empathetic understanding of what it feels like to be hurt and abused" (p.138).

Magistrate Annette Hennessy has contributed a chapter on the specialized Domestic and Family Violence courts, including the one she presides over at Rockhampton. After listing the goals, achievements and stumbling blocks encountered so far, she promotes mandated offender programs as an important part of a therapeutic outcome. The Rockhampton experiment has several goals, including streamlining appearances, reducing inconsistencies among various orders, providing better access, support and knowledge, and improving safety for aggrieved spouses.

Later chapters discuss the 'incubation' of perpetrators of violence (referring to childhood trauma and its consequences on adult perpetrators) and the comparative usefulness of programs based on the Duluth model of group work in comparison to others. Maggie Woodhead discusses ex-perpetrator led programs, while Tony Fletcher contributes a reflective chapter on a group he is involved with in Adelaide. Common to each discussion is the challenge of perpetrator resistance and the issue of feigned compliance by perpetrators for pragmatic reasons. This illustrates the difficulty in perpetrator programs leading to real change in participants' long term attitudes.

The last section covers research, including risk assessment, characteristics of GC program participants, readiness for those coming to offender programs and self reported change at the end of the program, alongside reports from partners and facilitators. The authors acknowledge that this method of evaluation is potentially flawed due to attendees self interest in being seen to have changed. The experiences of women involved in the partner contact portion of the integrated response show that, while their level of fear is lowered, it is not obliterated. However, they did report personal benefits such as support and the acquisition of knowledge.

In the final chapter, the authors point out that in many ways domestic violence programs are at the forefront of what have been termed "therapeutic jurisprudence initiatives" (p. 233). They note that future directions for interventions for male perpetrators of domestic violence must centre around more research into identifying what will lead to real change in perpetrator behaviour,

development around what is the ideal relationship between program providers and perpetrators, and further community attitudinal change.

The book is a helpful contribution to the debates over preventing and dealing with the problem of domestic violence. A number of issues are discussed, including the tension between women centred domestic violence services working with men, and the allocation of resources detracting from the core business of working with victims, to men's programs, although this is denied by funders. The criminal justice system is sometimes seen to take a 'soft' line with perpetrators, as breaches are often ignored or allowed to accumulate before action is taken. The discussion of community attitudes toward domestic violence being a gendered issue is helpful and succinct.

In reviewing this book from a practitioner's viewpoint, I looked particularly for more information about the role of perpetrator program facilitators and perhaps more anecdotal material about group dynamics and depicted problems. I also looked for more analysis of the needs of indigenous and immigrant communities. While the book does not address these issues, it offers other useful insights.

The chapter from the GCDVPC was particularly illustrative of what a feminist service prioritises, in relation to the women's advocate. Several writers, particularly Tony Fletcher, gave useful analyses of the gendered nature of violence. Donna Justo emphasizes the priority of such programs keeping women safe from further violence.

"Domestic Violence: Working with Men", is a valuable contribution to the debate on creating real change to the horrific statistics around the incidence and effects of domestic violence on women and their children. The hope is that further research will lead to effective responses and, even more importantly, primary prevention strategies to deal more effectively with the perpetrators of domestic violence.

References

Day A, O'Leary P, Chung D & Justo D 2009, Domestic Violence: Working with Men. The Federation Press Sydney.

For copies of the book see

<http://www.federationpress.com.au>

or email info@federationpress.com.au

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Perpetrators of domestic and family violence: a summary from CDFVR's Domestic and Family Violence Database

by Leda Barnett, CDFVR

This article provides a summary of the data related to people who had contacted a service because they had perpetrated domestic or family violence. The data was collected by non-government domestic and family violence prevention services participating in CDFVR's state-wide Domestic and Family Violence Database.

Introduction

This data includes information about the "client's primary reason for contacting the service". In addition to contacting a service because of current or past victimisation, a client may also have contacted a service because: 1) they were using violence in a current relationship; 2) they were using violence against someone with whom their relationship had ended; or 3) that they had previously used violence either in a current relationship or in a past relationship. The data does not represent the prevalence of violence in domestic and family violence situations throughout Queensland, but the number of new client matters¹ that are recorded by service providers in the Domestic and Family Violence Database.² These matters relate to people in relationships covered by the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 1989, which are; spousal relationships (including current or former married or de facto relationships and the biological parents of a child), intimate personal relationships (including couples who are engaged, betrothed or 'promised'), family relationships and informal care relationship (where one person is dependent on another for help in a personal care activity).

Sample

The sample for this analysis was drawn from 89 757 new client matters recorded between 1 January 2007 and 31 December 2009. Of those, a total of 17 214 (19.2%) fell within one of the three categories related to the current or past use of violence, as discussed above, and collectively represent the number of new client matters for perpetrators of domestic and family violence recorded during the period under consideration.

Overview of perpetrators of domestic and family violence and their use of support services

The analysis reported in this article includes an overview of the primary reason perpetrators of domestic and family violence contacted a service, the location where the last violent incident occurred, the primary type of service provided to the client, the client's gender, and the client's cultural identity. Most new client matters for perpetrators involved 'using violence in a current relationship' (n= 13 566; 78.8%) and the majority of all recorded perpetrator matters related to violence towards a female (n=10 580; 61.5%). Clients who had previously used violence in a relationship accounted for 2 115 (12.3%) of the recorded new client matters while those currently using violence against someone with whom a relationship had ended comprised 1 533 cases (8.9%).

Location of last incident of violence

For each new client matter, the recorded postcode was classified in accordance with the Australian Standard Geographic Classification – Remoteness Areas (ASGC-RA) system (ABS, 2010). Each reported new client matter was coded as happening in a major city, an inner regional location, an outer regional location, a remote location or a very remote location. While most matters related to violence which occurred in Queensland, there was a small number of recorded matters where the violence had occurred interstate.

Between the five regions the most common client situation was 'using violence in a current relationship' in major cities (n=5 259; 30.6%), followed by outer regional locations (n=3 578; 20.8%) then inner regional locations (n=2 938; 17.1%). Clients were 'using violence in a past relationship' in 2 115 of the new client matters in predominantly outer regional locations (n=823; 4.8%), with the second highest number in major cities (n=651; 3.8%) followed by inner regional locations (n=395; 2.3%). Clients that had previously 'used violence in a relationship' constituted 8.9 percent (n=1 533) of the overall total of new matters recorded for perpetrators of domestic and family violence. Within these situations, most

¹ A person is a 'new client' if they: use the service for the first time; stop contact with the service as planned (e.g., an exit interview) then initiate contact again; or stop contact with the service unexpectedly and return after six months. An existing client presenting with a 'new client matter' refers to that client's changed circumstances and consequent additional or new requests for assistance which are recorded separately in the Domestic and Family Violence Database.

² Ongoing monitoring of the database attempts to maintain data integrity while accommodating the needs of service providers.

happened in outer regional locations (n=463; 30.2%), then inner regional locations (n=437; 28.5%), then major cities (n=403; 26.3%).

Table 1: Geographic distribution by primary reason for contact

	Using violence in a <u>current</u> relationship		Using violence in a <u>past</u> relationship		Previously used violence (current or past relationship)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Major city	5259	38.77	651	30.78	403	26.29
Inner regional	2938	21.66	395	18.68	437	28.51
Outer regional	3578	26.37	823	38.91	463	30.2
Remote	347	2.56	40	1.89	64	4.17
Very remote	45	0.33	4	0.19	2	0.13
Not included	1399	10.31	202	9.6	164	10.7
TOTALS	13 566	100	2 115	100	1 533	100

Cultural composition of Australian clients

The highest number of recorded new client matters related to clients who identified as Australian (n=12 466; 72.4%). Of these, the primary reason for contact was 'using violence in a current relationship' (n=9 738; 78.1%) followed by 'using violence in a past relationship' (n=1 645; 13.2%) and 'used violence in a relationship' (n=1 083; 8.7%). The second highest number of new client matters related to Australian Aboriginal people, Torres Strait Islanders, or both, collectively numbering 1 391 (i.e., 8 percent of the total number of perpetrators in the sample). Australian Aboriginal people had the second highest number of new client matters represented (n=1 194; 6.9%), within which those related to 'using violence in a current relationship' (n=944; 79.1%) outnumbered both those that 'used violence in a relationship' (n=110; 9.2%) and those 'using violence in a past relationship' (n=140; 11.7%).

Type of relationship and gender

In total, as would be expected, there were more male clients (n=14 606; 85.6%) across all three categories of perpetrator behaviour when compared with female (n=2 449; 14.35%) and transgender clients (n=6; 0.04%). Spousal relationships were the most common relationship type recorded for all new client matters (n = 11,570; 67.2%) in the sample. Relationship type was recorded for 14 972 of the total 17 214 new client matters related to the perpetration of violence.

Table 2: Relationship type by gender

Relationship type	Total		Male		Female		Transgender	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Spousal	11 570	67.2	10 259	88.7	1 308	11.3	3	0
Intimate personal	1 355	9	1 139	84	214	15.8	2	0.1
Parent/child (child respondent)	706	4.7	540	76.5	166	23.5	-	-
Other	464	2.7	272	1.8	192	1.3	-	-
Parent/child (parent respondent)	355	2.4	227	64	128	36	-	-
Same sex spousal relationships	279	1.9	216	77.4	63	22.6	-	-
Receiving informal care	98	0.6	59	60.2	29	29.6	-	-
Grandchild/grand-parent respondent	66	0.4	40	60.6	26	39.4	-	-
Same sex intimate personal relationships	50	0.3	32	64	18	36	-	-
Grandparent/grand-child respondent	22	0.1	63.6	81.8	8	36.4	-	-
Informal care provider	16	0.1	8	50	8	50	-	-

Males in spousal relationships recorded the highest number of new client matters (n=10 259; 68.5%) while females in spousal relationships recorded 1 308 (8.7%). Intimate personal relationships were the second most common relationship type recorded, totalling 1 355 (9%). Of these relationships 1 139 (7.6%) related to male clients and 214 (1.4%) to female clients. Transgender client matters involving spousal relationships numbered three and two for intimate personal relationships.

The total number of recordings for parent/child relationships where the child was the respondent was 706 (4.7%) of the sample. This was the third highest situation with males (n=540; 3.6%) and the fourth highest with females (n=166; 1.1%). The 'other' relationships circumstance was the third highest for females (n=192; 1.3%) and the fourth highest for males (n=272; 1.8%). The fifth highest relationship category was parent/child parent respondent relationships numbering 355 (2.4%), with 227 (1.5%) new client matters for males and 128 (0.9%) for females.

The remaining 521 (3.5%) new client matters comprised: same sex spousal relationships (n = 279); receiving informal care relationships (n = 98); grandchild/grandparent respondent relationships (n = 66); same sex intimate personal relationships (n = 50); grandparent/grandchild respondent relationships (n = 22); and 16 informal care provider relationships (n = 16).

Primary type of service provided

Most new client matters for perpetrators involved accessing the services for court support (n=10 256; 72%). Of the male clients in outer regional locations (n=3 890; 27.4%), the type of service provided second to court support (n=2 093; 53.8%) was crisis intervention (n=1 210; 31%). The number of male clients seeking counselling in major cities (n=945; 18.9%) was the third most sought after service (i.e., after court support). Such numbers were not evident amongst the female clients outside major cities for services other than court support.

Not included in the table is data indicating one transgender and one female transgender client required court support in a major city. Three male transgender clients, who perpetrated violence in outer regional areas, accessed service providers for court support (n=1) and crisis intervention (n=2).

Table 3 Primary type of service by geographic location

	Major City		Inner Regional Location		Outer Regional Location		Remote		Very Remote	
Type of Service	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Counselling	945	69	332	75	191	17	36	6	7	1
Court Support	3 863	738	2 355	436	2 093	494	189	56	28	4
Crisis Intervention	92	33	45	14	1210	30	8	6	0	0
Advocacy	12	2	6	6	138	8	34	26	0	0
Other	90	19	132	17	258	16	30	4	4	1
TOTAL	5 002	861	2870	548	3 890	565	297	98	39	6

NB – Inconsistencies in totals are due to the exclusion of incomplete cases in this part of the analysis [e.g., total of female clients in the study (n=2271) does not equal total number of cases included in this table n=2078)].

Conclusion

The data sample, collected between 1 January 2007 and 31 December 2009 by domestic and family violence prevention services contributing to the Domestic and Family Violence Database Collection, indicates that, with regard to perpetrator behaviour, it is primarily males engaging in perpetrator behaviours toward females. Of these perpetrator behaviours, the most common was the use of violence in a current spousal relationship, happening mostly in major cities. Clients who identified as being Australian recorded the highest number of new client matters relating to perpetrator behaviours, followed by clients identifying as Indigenous Australians (i.e., Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or both). The type of assistance provided by services most sought out by perpetrators was court support in major cities, inner regional locations then outer regional locations. Crisis intervention in outer regional areas was the fourth most sought after intervention, followed by counselling in major cities.

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Research seminar - Shame on who? An exploration of the constitution of women's shame within abusive intimate relationships

by Annie Webster, CDFVR

On September 28, more than 180 people attended CDFVR's research presentation *Shame on Who?* delivered by Dr Ang Jury from Palmerston in New Zealand. The presentation was delivered in Mackay and video-linked to an additional 11 sites across Queensland.

Ang's research was conducted as part of her doctoral thesis, and involved interviewing 25 women who had lived through abuse within their intimate relationships. The research was initially intended to elicit accounts of resilience, but instead revealed emotion-filled stories which centred on the women's experiences of shame, both actual and threatened. Data was gathered through a series of semi-structured face-to-face interviews which demonstrated the debilitating effect that shame has on women and the silence, isolation and dangerous private spaces women seek to protect themselves from its painful experience.

This research led Ang to explore the concept of shame – what it looks like, feels like and what causes it; and to work previously done by Thomas Scheff, who asserts that shame is the emotional sign of damage to the social bonds that define us as human. It instils a sense of failure and inadequacy, of being fundamentally flawed or wrong and provokes desire to disappear because we have offended the basic standard of humanness.

The questions that arose from Ang's research were: What lay beneath the blame? What social bonds were women under threat from? and; If shame is a signal of threat to social bonds, whose standards were women measuring themselves against? Ang used a range of case scenarios to demonstrate three identity types – those of mother, partner/wife and abuse victim. Each scenario was supported by strong gendered, power relationships and was centred within the dominant discourse of motherhood, family, marriage and gender. Notions that supported the sense of shame experienced by women in abusive relationships included the idea of relationship privacy which prevented intervention from external parties; the need for women in heterosexual relationships to have a partner to be considered whole; women holding themselves responsible for ensuring that the relationship was successful by constantly attempting to please their partner; and pursuit of the way marriage should be and the subsequent pursuit of the happy family image. These women were faced with the decision of maintaining the appearance of a happy cohesive family while enduring violence within their relationship; or abandoning the benefits of coupled life for safety and accepting the shame of a failed relationship.

Additionally, women were attempting to be 'good' wives and mothers within an environment of violence and abuse. All of the women in the study were conscious of the effect of exposure to violence and abuse on their children, adding to their sense of shame for not fulfilling their prescribed role as a mother - to care for and nurture their children. Again, the complexity of this situation was to either leave and remove their children from their father and the important father/child relationship; or stay and risk their children being exposed to the harmful influence of domestic violence.

Whilst most women chose not to identify with being a 'victim' all were aware of what was involved in 'being a victim' and conceptualised that status with descriptions such as being weak, helpless, not very intelligent or repeatedly 'choosing' abusive partners. By not acknowledging their victim status, women were less inclined to seek help and hence continued to deal with the situation on their own. This denial of their violent relationship enables them to avoid shame and stigma, but also precludes them from seeking help.

Ang encouraged her audience to pursue parallel work on issues of gender equity, gender roles and the mothering imperative when considering remedies for women subjected to domestic and family violence. She asserted that, whilst resilience is important, it should not be encouraged in improving the effects of abuse in the face of unjust and inequitable circumstances. By doing so we are behaving reactively to a situation which distracts us from providing women with social constructs that support non-shaming, realistic, equitable, relationships.

A copy of Dr Ang Jury's presentation is available at:
<http://www.noviolence.com.au/public/visitors/angjurypresentation.pdf>



In 2010, for the first time, the Queensland Domestic Violence Services Network (QDVSN) coordinated a series of events across Queensland as part of the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence. Each event highlighted the call for action to end violence against women.

The 16 Days Campaign is a global initiative that seeks to: raise awareness at the local, national and international levels regarding violence against women; strengthen local work; link local and global activism; provide a forum for dialogue and strategy-sharing; pressure governments to implement the commitments they have made in national and international legal instruments; and demonstrate the solidarity of activists around the world.

The annual 16 Days of Activism Campaign resulted from the first Women's Global Institute on Women, Violence and Human Rights, sponsored by the Center for Women's Global Leadership at Rutgers University in New Jersey. It is a forum involving women from 20 countries which was convened in June 1991. The Campaign is one that has been taken up by women's groups around the world in order to shed light on the problem and to make people aware that "Violence against women is perhaps the most shameful human rights violation" (former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan).

The dates chosen for the Campaign are November 25th, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women - Black Thursday, through to December 10th, which is the International Human Rights Day.

The 25th of November has been marked by activists campaigning against violence against women since 1981, initially to commemorate the three Mirabal sisters - Patria, Minerva and Maria Teresa - the political activists from the Dominican Republic who were viciously assassinated on 25th November 1960 by the henchmen of dictator Trujillo. In 1991, a group of Canadian men initiated the White Ribbon Campaign as a strategy specific to men uniting against violence against women by wearing white ribbons on the 25th of November.

In 1993, the United Nations' General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and in late 1999 designated the 25th of November the International Day against Violence against Women. The Assembly urged member states to organize activities on that day to raise awareness of, and oppose, violence against women.

This 16-day period also highlights other significant dates including November 29 - International Women Human Rights Defenders Day and December 1 - World AIDS Day. December 6 marks the Anniversary of the Montreal Massacre, when a lone male, Marc Lepine, shot dead 14 women engineering students because they were feminists studying in a traditional male area.

We need to assist our local communities to understand that all women are vulnerable to violence no matter their socio-economic status. We need to be a voice for those who cannot be heard.

THU



CDFVR Staff



ICR and WAVSS Staff

Lepine separated the men from the women before opening fire and screaming "I hate feminists". The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation broadcasted the event. "Almost immediately, the Montreal Massacre became a galvanizing force which mourning turned into outrage about all violence against women."

In 2010, the 25th of November fell on a Thursday, which links Thursdays in Black campaign initiated by Argentinean women demanding a world without rape and violence. The campaign has roots in such as Mothers of the Disappeared in Argentina, Black Sash in South Africa and the Women in Black movements in Bosnia and Israel. The Argentinean mothers who gather every Thursday in silence to mourn their loved ones under the military dictatorship, women who experienced the rape-death camps in war torn Bosnia, and women who opposed the occupation of the West Bank and the abuse of the Palestinian women.

THURSDAY IN BLACK



Wearing black on Thursday's indicates that you are tired of putting up with rape and violence in your community. It demonstrates a desire for a community where we can all walk safely without fear of being beaten up, verbally abused, raped, or being discriminated against due to your sexual orientation, political affiliation, gender or ethnicity.

“The 16 Days of Activism are about reminding everyone that the world will not know peace, development, or justice if women are violated.”

- Everjoice Win (Zimbabwe), 1991 WGLI Graduate

Members of the QDVSN believe that all of the campaigns referred to above have an important role to play in highlighting the injustice of violence against women and demanding action to end it. This year, the beginning of the 16 days of activism was marked by the 15 member organisations of the QDVSN calling for staff, colleagues, friends and acquaintances to wear black with a white ribbon as they go about their daily business.



The Australian Government has also called on Australian employers to show leadership in combating violence against women as part of White Ribbon Day. Kate Ellis, Minister for the Status of Women, announced \$1.1 million for a new White Ribbon Workplaces program. The White Ribbon Workplaces program will establish a national approach to creating long-term change in attitudes to violence and to implementing violence-prevention strategies through the workplace.

For further information on Australia's White Ribbon Day campaign and the White Ribbon Workplaces program, please visit:
www.whiteribbonday.org.au

For further information on the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, see:
www.un.org/depts/dhl/violence

For detail about the Montreal Massacre, see:
archives.cbc.ca/society/crime_justice/topics/398/

From left to right: Julie Hodge, Michael Keogh, Jesika Franko (Miller Harris Lawyers, family law practitioners)



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Perpetrator intervention

systems - Reviewing evaluated perpetrator intervention systems in California, USA.

by Renette Viljoen, CDFVR

Across the world, domestic and family violence is a serious public health and criminal justice problem (Tjaden & Thoennes 2000). Awareness, perception and documentation of domestic violence differs from country to country and from era to era, but the message is congruous in that violence against women and their children will not stop until perpetrators cease being violent (Chung, O'Leary & Hand 2006).

As stated by Australia's National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children in its report *Time for Action*¹, perpetrators must be held accountable for their use of violence and challenged to change their behaviour. However, in order for perpetrators to change their violent behaviour, they need access to remedial programs and support at the earliest possible opportunity, whether self-referred, court-mandated or referred in other ways.

Programs aimed at re-educating violent offenders now exist in the UK, Australia, North America and New Zealand. Australian and international research, however, shows that although rehabilitative programs can be effective in reducing recidivism (Howells, Heseltine, Sarre, Davey & Day 2004), service development has generally been ad hoc, poorly resourced and few programs have been comprehensively evaluated over the long term for their effectiveness in stopping men from being violent (Haynes, Simmons, Von Reibnitz & Wallace 1998).

In addressing the lack of research and to build the body of knowledge about the most successful methods of intervention and remediation, this article presents an overview of an evaluation of batterer (perpetrator) intervention systems in California, USA. The study, supported by the Judicial Council of California,¹ takes advantage of the fact that each jurisdiction in California manages its domestic violence caseload somewhat differently – much like the various states in Australia.

Furthermore, 'batterer intervention programs' (perpetrator intervention programs, PIPs) are subject to state law regarding the form and

content of their programs and, in the USA, must be certified annually by the county department of probation.

About the research

The study looked exclusively at men who committed domestic violence offenses against female partners in an effort to understand the justice system response to the largest proportion of the domestic violence caseload and to minimise variability within the sample. Federally funded and conducted by researchers at the Administrative Office of the courts' Office of Court Research, the study sought to identify variations in policies and practices across courts, probation departments, and PIPs that affect the likelihood of an offender completing the program and the probability of being re-arrested.

Drawing on a sample of nearly 1 500 offenders enrolled in 53 different perpetrator intervention programs across five jurisdictions (Los Angeles, Riverside, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, and Solano Counties), **it is the largest study of its kind ever conducted**. (MacLeod, Pi, Smith & Rose-Goodwin 2008)

The Program Content Survey (PCS) was developed to assess the substantive content of the PIPs participating in the study. The goal of the assessment was to provide the research team with information on the educational topics, coping skills, and teaching techniques that PIPs employ in their interventions with male offenders. On that basis, the PCS documents the full array of elements that any intervention program might incorporate into its educational treatment program with the expectation that no single PIP would cover all of these materials or techniques.

Since 1994, California law has required defendants who are convicted of a criminal domestic violence offence to attend a 52-week certified perpetrator intervention program as a condition of probation. The programs are structured courses designed to stop the use of physical, psychological or sexual abuse to gain or maintain control over a person such as a spouse or cohabitant. Many superior courts have adopted specialised procedures for handling these domestic violence cases, i.e. dedicated calendars and holding periodic review hearings with offenders.

Understanding the effects of perpetrator intervention systems on men who are convicted of domestic violence crimes requires that we understand differences across and within study jurisdictions that might influence the outcomes for men attending PIPs. According to Browne and Wildavsky (1983), by identifying and measuring system components more carefully, it is possible to link process evaluation with outcome analysis.

¹ The Judicial Council is the policymaking body of the California courts, the largest court system in the nation. Under the leadership of the Chief Justice and in accordance with the California Constitution, the council is responsible for ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice. The Administrative Office of the Courts carries out the official actions of the council and promotes leadership and excellence in court administration.

Findings

The results of the study indicated how the justice system can increase the likelihood that perpetrators will complete court-ordered education and training programs and not commit new acts of domestic violence either during or after attendance in the programs (MacLeod et al 2008).

The PIPs appeared to have incorporated multiple approaches to intervention with domestic violence offenders into their programs, integrating components of cognitive behavioural therapy,² the Duluth model³ and other methods that they determine are appropriate and effective. Across court jurisdictions, educational concepts commonly identified by the preceding models as important to successful intervention programs were frequently rated highly, including: addressing accountability and personal responsibility; beliefs and attitudes that provide the basis for domestic abuse; stress management and effective coping; power and control in abusive situations; management of anger and emotion; and understanding the effects of abuse. The findings indicated that program curriculums were consistent with legislative mandates.

However, offender rates of program completion varied across different PIPs; in part, it appeared, because the characteristics of men who are enrolled in different PIPs varies systematically across programs and therefore a weak correlation exists. In contrast, no statistical association exists between programs and an offender's likelihood of re-offense. For offenders who successfully completed the prescribed 52-week PIP, attitudes and beliefs showed small, positive changes along a number of dimensions including: taking greater personal responsibility; understanding the effect of abuse on others; and anger management.

Gathering detailed information on offender characteristics was a critical component of the study. The purpose was not so much to help increase understanding of domestic violence offenders (e.g., which characteristics contributed to their abusive behaviour or which set of risk or protective factors are associated with their different propensities for compliance), rather the need for offender profile data. This need arises from the non-experimental nature of the

study design in which study subjects recruited from different jurisdictions may exhibit different characteristics, and these characteristics may lead to different propensities for compliance independent of any system-level impacts that might exist. Offender profiles provided a means of rendering statistically more comparable study samples across the different jurisdictions.

The study can be seen as a foundation for improving the justice system response to domestic violence and for future research to untangle the complex relationships among the individual characteristics of men who commit domestic violence, the PIPs that are charged with treating these men, and the efforts of courts and departments of probation to hold offenders accountable and ensure victim safety.

Offender characteristics were grouped into 4 categories: (1) family relations (including relationship with the victim – wife or girlfriend and children, and living arrangements with them); (2) socioeconomic status (including income, employment, education, and race/ethnicity); (3) criminal history (constructed from California State Department of Justice arrest records and CAGE⁴ indicator of alcohol/drug abuse); and (4) indicators of abusive behaviour and conflicts with the victim (measured by the revised Conflict Tactics Scale 2 concerning the frequency of various forms of conflict in the past year).

The data revealed that the strongest predictors of outcomes were the individual characteristics of the offenders, not the programs in which they were enrolled or the characteristics of each court jurisdiction. The study found that the sample of men convicted of domestic violence offenses had low levels of educational attainment, were poor, had lengthy criminal records and the majority were Hispanic. Offenders, who were more educated, fully employed, had short criminal histories, and showed no clear signs of drug or alcohol dependence, were more likely to successfully complete perpetrator intervention programs and were least likely to be re-arrested.

“Screening mechanisms should seek, to the extent possible, to include needs assessment to assist in directing offenders to resources that might improve their chances of successfully completing the BIP and remaining violence free during and following their attendance in the program” (MacLeod et al 2008).

² Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is a psychotherapeutic approach that aims to solve problems concerning dysfunctional emotions, behaviors and cognitions through a goal-oriented, systematic procedure.

³ The Duluth Model is based on a strict “violence is patriarchal” model, and assumes that all domestic violence in the home and elsewhere is perpetrated by men on women victims. The model focuses on the men’s use of violence in abusive relationships, rather than on the behavior of all parties concerned. This helps the men to focus on changing their personal behavior in order to be nonviolent in any relationship. The Duluth Model originated the Duluth Power and Control Wheel.

⁴ CAGE is an acronym formed by taking the first letter of key words for each of the four questions of the assessment (felt like you should cut down on drinking or drug use; felt annoyed by others criticizing your drinking or drug use; felt guilty about drinking or drug use; ever had an eye opener to steady nerves or get rid of a hangover).

Implications for policy and research

- Because of the prominence of individual characteristics in predicting program completion and re-offence, enhanced risk and needs assessment at intake may improve offender treatment. In California, a penal code⁵ lays out detailed offender assessment requirements but limits it to offenders who are on formal probation. The general consensus is that the collection of information on basic risk and needs factors of offenders who are supervised by probation, would allow PIPs to tailor their treatment more narrowly.
- Indicators of risk for drug and alcohol abuse are strong predictors of non-completion of PIPs and therefore drug/alcohol treatment may be essential to help offenders end their abuse. As in the case of agencies in Australia, many intervention programs have limited resources and little leverage over offenders enrolled in their programs. The integration of voluntary programs with the legal and criminal justice system is ad hoc and, in general, poorly monitored (Haynes et al 1998). Hence, it may be useful for probation departments and the courts to consider how best to support the programs in requiring perpetrators at risk for substance abuse to attend some reasonable form of drug/alcohol treatment in conjunctions with their enrolment in a PIP.
- Considering enhanced risk and needs assessment combined with heightened attention to drug/alcohol abuse, suggests the justice system may need to engage in more differentiated case management with domestic violence offenders. This puts new emphasis on the fee structure. In California, the method of assessing and paying fees, all managed at the PIP level, poses a barrier to a differentiated treatment model in that a penal code mandates probation departments to evenly allocate referrals of indigent clients among approved programs. The effort to assign the right socioeconomic balance to different programs may undermine efforts to assign men to programs on the basis of the characteristics that put them most at risk for re-offense. Creating a more differentiated treatment model might require an exploration of alternative fee distribution and payment plans as there are not necessarily enough higher-income men available in the system to cross-subsidise the costs of the lower-income men

⁵ SECTION 1203.097(b)(1) *The probation department shall make an investigation and take into consideration the defendant's age, medical history, employment and service records, educational background, community and family ties, prior incidents of violence, police report, treatment history, if any, demonstrable motivation, and other mitigating factors in determining which batterer's program would be appropriate for the defendant. This information shall be provided to the batterer's program if it is requested. The probation department shall also determine which community programs the defendant would benefit from and which of those programs would accept the defendant. The probation department shall report its findings and recommendations to the court.*

in programs. Overall, the ideal would be for PIPs to have enough financial freedom to accept enrolments on the basis of service need, rather than considering a client's ability to pay.

- System intervention measures, such as probation contact, court review, or even attendance at a PIP, are all inherently limited by the variability in how these interventions occur across locations. Clearer specification of system intervention measures – whether probation contact is a face-to-face interview at the department of probation as opposed to a check-in by telephone, or whether the review at the trial court is in open court in front of a judge or handled by a courtroom clerk – will assist in distinguishing among different systems.
- In California, the challenge of interpreting outcomes given the variability across jurisdictions is compounded by variability across PIPs, therefore more information on PIPs is needed to understand and identify promising practices. Similarly, in Australia, many providers persist in their attempts to provide credible programs which address the critiques of perpetrator programs made by victims and victims' advocates in order to develop best practice.

Although this study captured measures of PIP priorities for teaching and training related to different elements of the intervention, the findings did not show sufficient variability to introduce the data into quantitative models to begin teasing out the effects these programs have on offender outcomes. In future, the information will need to be combined with independent measures to clearly understand the approach intervention programs are taking in their work with clients.

There is also a need for practitioner groups and/or organisations to learn more about PIPs in relation to their staffing levels and role differentiation, the training and professional experience levels of program staff, the supplementary services PIPs are able to provide clients directly or indirectly, and the resources these agencies have at their disposal to sustain their work with perpetrators.

The complexity of the issue requires significant changes to perpetrator program design and broader evaluation to understand what works effectively. This was recognised by the National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children in recommending that Australian Governments:

- Fund and deliver a perpetrator research agenda, including longitudinal research that has a particular focus on what changes problem behaviour, what maintains behaviour change, the utility of risk assessment tools, the effectiveness of various recidivism reduction strategies; and

takes account of different offender characteristics and cultures;

- Further develop their understanding of the cycle of violence and the intergenerational transmission of violence, undertake research to identify the impacts of daily trauma on the neurological development of children who are victims of sexual assault and domestic and family violence and the intersection of these impacts on their life-long ability to self-regulate and control their behaviour as adults; and
- Develop methods to evaluate perpetrator programs that are consistent with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. (2009 p. 143)

The immediate response from the Australian Government included a commitment of \$3 million “to support research on perpetrator treatment programs and the greater harmonisation of Federal and State and Territory laws. The perpetrator treatment research will be designed in consultation with the States and Territories and experts in the treatment field. In the longer term, such research will be conducted in partnership with the States and Territories, including through the National Centre of Excellence” (2009 p. 13).

Read the full report on http://www.ncdsv.org/images/JudCouncilCA_BIPsInCA_2008.pdf.

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Working with men who perpetrate domestic and family violence: A summary of practice standards for state funded programs

by Heather Nancarrow, CDFVR

Introduction

Domestic and family violence is serious and can have devastating, even lethal consequences. It is predominantly perpetrated by men against their female partners and has significant, harmful effects on children exposed to it. Therefore, work with men who perpetrate domestic and family violence is a risky business. Interventions are potentially dangerous for victims of domestic and family violence, their children, broader family members and associates and it is potentially dangerous for workers in services providing intervention. In doing this work there is a burden of responsibility on those delivering interventions for men who perpetrate domestic and family violence, and those funding such interventions, to guard against further violence towards victims and their children, and to guard against the risk of violence towards service providers and their associates. The Queensland Government, through the Department of Communities (the “Department”) has, like other state and territory governments, developed standards of practice for work with men who perpetrate domestic and family violence to minimise the risk of harm.

This article provides an overview of the practice framework within which state-funded programs for men who perpetrate such violence are expected to operate. The framework involves three key policy documents: 1) the State Government’s *Standards for Community Services*, which apply to agencies funded by the State to deliver community services, in general; 2) *Professional Practice Principles – Working with men who perpetrate domestic and family violence*; and 3) *Professional Practice Standards – Working with men who perpetrate domestic and family violence*. The standards relate to heterosexual, gay, bi-sexual and transgender men.

The major focus, in this relatively brief overview, will be on the Professional Practice Standards, compliance with which is required under the terms of funding agreements between the Department and agencies funded to deliver programs for men who perpetrate domestic and family violence. However, the article begins with a brief discussion of the Professional Practice Principles, which provides “a guide to many of the contextual or background issues relating to work with men who perpetrate domestic and family violence” (p.2).

Professional Practice Principles – Working with men who perpetrate domestic and family violence (“Practice Principles”)

In the opening paragraphs, the Professional Practice Principles document clearly articulates family violence as abusive behaviour which “attempts to or requires a person to change their actions, opinions or beliefs...(and)...and includes degradation, isolation, manipulation, coercion, threats, physical and sexual violence”(p.2). Safety, respect and accountability constitute the first of 12 principles identified in the document and are recurring themes across the set of principles. The principles of safety and respect relate to the men who perpetrate domestic and family violence as well as those who are affected by it. Accountability includes “contact with legal and statutory bodies in order that the relevant consequences for a man’s abusive behaviour are applied”(p.3). Safety is also the central feature of the principle “ethical practice”, which states that “the safety of those affected by the abuse must be the primary focus and broad context of service delivery”(p. 7); as well as the principle related to safety and risk assessment. Safety and accountability are both central themes of the principles related to agency reporting, collaborative inter-agency work and staff competencies.

The Practice Principles document emphasises the interface between programs for men who perpetrate domestic and family violence and the civil and criminal justice system, and warns against couples or family group counselling in the absence of sustained behaviour changes, as reported by those affected by the abuse. The principles also assert that group work is widely accepted as being preferable to individual counselling for men who perpetrate domestic and family violence. Individual counselling is considered acceptable only where there are significant obstacles to participating in group work, such as where there is no group available, or where the inclusion of a particular man would be unacceptably disruptive to the group.

Professional Practice Standards – Working with men who perpetrate domestic and family violence (“Practice Standards”)

Along with the Standards for Community Services and the individual agency’s service agreement with the Department of Communities, the Professional Practice Standards – Working with men who perpetrate domestic and family violence constitute the requirements of departmental funding for the delivery of programs for men who perpetrate domestic and family violence. Each standard is clearly stated followed by a statement on its intended outcome. The standards are set in a framework that provides benchmarks for services to identify: 1) unprofessional practices which compromise the aims and principles of work with men who perpetrate domestic and family violence

and are, therefore, *unacceptable*; 2) practices that are considered essential for safe and accountable work with men who perpetrate domestic and family violence; and 3) *optimal* standards of practice to which agencies should aspire. The annual assessment of service compliance and performance is the mechanism by which the Department ensures funded services are meeting the essential standards and which provides for remedial action with specified timeframes where necessary.

The standards cover four broad areas affecting practice. These are outlined below, with a particular emphasis on the essential standards.

1) Co-ordinated responses and referral pathways
Standard: *The service will proactively engage with government and non-government services in the community at the local and regional level.* The intended outcome of this standard is, primarily, that the actions of programs for perpetrators are transparent and accountable within the local community and particularly in regard to the safety and well-being of those affected by program participants. Essential standards require the development of referral networks and opportunities for program staff to participate, at least quarterly, in a collaborative, inter-agency response in the local community. Service management is also expected to participate in a coordinated response to domestic and family violence. The development of formal protocols for mandatory notification with statutory authorities such as the Queensland Police Service, the Department of Corrective Services and Child Safety Services are also required.

2) Program staff
Standard: *The service will employ appropriately skilled, qualified and trained staff and provide supervision and professional development.* The intended outcome is that the program is conducted professionally and in conjunction with any coordinated response to domestic and family violence within the community, and that the program staff are qualified and professional, accountable and “supported in the interests of staff retention”(p. 14). Of particular interest is the system of ranking program facilitators from Level 1 to Level 3 and the requirement that programs must be delivered by two program facilitators (one male and one female facilitator unless there are exceptional circumstances); one of whom must meet the Level 3 facilitator criteria and the second at least the Level 2 criteria. These criteria aim to ensure that only professional, skilled and experienced facilitators are doing this sensitive and dangerous work. All facilitators must have a demonstrated understanding of the gendered nature of domestic and family violence, the men’s behaviour change process, and the operation of the domestic and family violence legislation. A Level 1 facilitator must have observed a minimum of 32 hours of group work and a Level 2 requires this, plus a

Workplace Training and Assessment Certificate, one year of supervised direct service delivery complying with either the "Practice Standards" or the *Standards for working with women affected by domestic and family violence*, and extensive experience (prescribed in the standards document) in group facilitation. A Level 3 facilitator requires, all of the above and a minimum three-year tertiary qualification in a relevant discipline and two years' professional experience in counselling; (equivalent of the Swinburne Institute of TAFE Graduate Certificate of Social Science (Male Family Violence Group Facilitation)), or commitment to acquire this, and extensive experience in facilitating group work (prescribed in the standards document).

This standard also requires that professional supervision be provided to program staff by a senior practitioner or supervisor for a minimum one hour per fortnight, or once a month by an external supervisor if internal supervision is not available.

3) Overall program structure and operation

Standard: *The service will ensure the program is appropriately planned and accountable in accordance with current best practice interventions with men who perpetrate domestic and family violence.*

The intended outcome is integrated service delivery that meets standards of safety and accountability. There are two primary sub-sets of standards within this area of practice: a) program accountability, addressing clients' rights (the men in the program and those affected by their perpetration of domestic and family violence), safety and risk assessment, advocacy work and reporting to statutory authorities; and b) individual and group program practice (in take and assessment, post-intake individual assessment and group practice). Essential standards for safety and risk assessments include ongoing risk assessments from the victim's advocate, the program facilitator, any other service providers involved in inter-agency responses, the program participant's partner or former partner and the program participant's self-assessment. In regard to advocacy work, the standards document states that programs for men who perpetrate domestic and family violence will be funded only "where there is funding to the service for internal advocacy services or pre-existing funded programs to support and advocate on behalf of those who experience domestic and family violence by men participating in the program" (P. 25).

Intake and assessments must be done by a Level 3 facilitator or qualified staff member and post-intake work must not include relationship counselling. Information about a participant's involvement with the program must be shared with other professionals involved with individual work with the participant, to engage other professionals in the process of supporting behaviour change and holding the participant accountable.

4) Internal-external review and evaluation.

Standard: *The service will ensure evaluation is an integral part of service delivery through ongoing practices of planning, monitoring and review.*

The intended outcome is service planning that incorporates ongoing internal monitoring and review and external evaluation, with the results incorporated into revisions of the program. Essential standards include that evaluations of the group will focus on the program objectives (i.e. not how the men felt about participating in the program), and that performance measures are to include effectiveness (the delivery of sustainable benefits), access (including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other culturally and linguistically diverse groups), quality (compliance with practice standards including the achievement of clients rights), and accountability (meeting accountability requirements, particularly in relation to issues of safety for those experiencing abuse).

Discussion

The set of documents constituting the framework for ethical practice in working with perpetrators understandably sets high standards for government-funded services in Queensland. In particular, the rigorous requirements associated with qualifications and experience of program facilitators and their professional supervision, are commendable though probably daunting for many regions of the State aspiring to establish a program for men who have perpetrated domestic and family violence. The standards relating to program staff recruitment and selection are based on the Victorian No-To-Violence Men's Behaviour Change Group Work Minimum Standards, which have long been held up as best practice in Australia in this area of domestic and family violence prevention.

The current level of interest in the delivery of programs for men who perpetrate domestic and family violence, through the State-based Government Strategy *For our sons and daughters 2009-2014*, and the Australian Government's response to *Time for Action: The National Council's Plan for Australia to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children* is very high. There is much work to be done on better understanding the implications of necessarily rigorous standards for program delivery in rural and remote parts of the State, the overall results (or meta-evaluation) of individual program evaluations and many other issues requiring closer examination. CDFVR is currently working with members of its Advisory Group to further develop an appropriate program of research in this area.

References:

Department of Communities Professional Practice Principles – Working with men who perpetrate domestic and family violence Queensland Government. <http://www.communityservices.qld.gov.au/violenceprevention/publications/documents/professional-practice-principles.pdf>

(continues at bottom of page 18)

Research seminar – Educating young people about ethical and respectful relationships

by Leda Barnett, CDFVR

On Friday, October 29, Associate Professor Moira Carmody from the Centre for Educational Research at the University of Western Sydney presented the last of CDFVR's research seminars for 2010. The seminar, titled *Educating young people about ethical and respectful relationships*, outlined the work Moira has been doing with young people to find alternative ways to prevent sexual assault, pressured and coerced sex. Moira described the violence prevention context when starting her work in the late 1990's, the origins of the *Sex+ Ethics Violence Prevention Education Program* and the research that underpinned its development, implementation and evaluation. She also discussed the research undertaken in the development of the violence prevention educational program for use with young people and shared some experiences of the program's participants in NSW and New Zealand (the Queensland data was yet to be published).



In the late 1990's the violence prevention field was one where best practice in education was still being developed. At this time, education was primarily focussed on women's experiences of violence and addressing it within that framework. There was a need for the inclusion of men as allies in the campaign against violence, which highlighted the need to bring about cultural change and create a positive framework in ethical relationships. This conceptualised the theoretical underpinnings of *Sex+ Ethics Violence Prevention Education Program*.

"How do we know what's going on in the mind of other people?" was the question asked to orientate the audience to the conundrum young people face when embarking on sexual engagement with others while also ensuring safety. Safety, in the sense of consensual sexual activity between those engaged, is also extended to the ethical treatment of others. This notion of ethical engagement encompasses the understanding that all can engage in ethical conduct. When this has been explained and understood, it often ignites the responsibility within the individual to consider their stance in any scenario and how ethics evolves in the context of sexual encounters (i.e., expectations, negotiations, what is being consented to, etc.). For example, while it seems men often over interpret signals (i.e., reading more into non-verbal communication than is meant to be conveyed), the importance of clear communication cannot be overemphasised to avoid misunderstandings about what level of intimacy is mutually agreed.

The consensus amongst program participants has been that their introductory sex education had been orientated toward the mechanics, or 'plumbing', concerned with sexual organs and the biology of reproduction. Very little, if any, information was provided, or discussions held, in relation to the social or emotional aspects of sex or the prevention of sexual violence. The orientation of a risk discourse often resorted to incorporating a "just say no" approach, ultimately dismisses many young people's thirst to acquire the knowledge and skills associated with ethical sexual practice. With a strength-based model that facilitates the ability of young people to build ethical practices, rather than focus on stopping unethical behaviour, the program provides a decision making model based on balancing pleasure with danger - focusing on knowledge and skills. The program's framework is dynamic and can be reshaped with consideration of the needs of participants. This is one of the pertinent features, in fact a necessity, of the program. The focus remains that coercion and violence is not acceptable. The sexual activities that program participants engage in are of concern in the education process. Rather, the focus is on establishing skills for ethical engagement in sexual relationships and in challenging unethical behaviour. In regard to the latter, the program focuses on the notion of the 'ethical bystander', providing participants with knowledge and skills to safely intervene where they witness unethical sexual behaviour in others.

Moira reports that follow up evaluations indicate the program has an effective and lasting influence on participants. Survey results indicate that 4-5 months after having completed the program, 88 percent of the program participants reported using the ideas and 85 percent had used the skills gained through the program. The program *'Sex & Ethics: young people and ethical sex'* and *'Sex + Ethics: the sexual ethics education program for young people'* is available through Palgrave Macmillan. A five day training program is available for those interested in becoming an accredited trainer. More information is available at www.sexualethics.org.au and Moira can be contacted via email on m.carmody@uws.edu.au.

Workshops, Conferences and Date Claimers

31 January - 1 February 2011

Advancing Child and Family Policy Through Research Conference
Canberra, ACT

<http://cbe.anu.edu.au/schools/eco/EcoEvents/ACFPR/Advancing%20Child%20and%20Family%20Policy%20Through%20Research%20flyer.pdf>

13-14 February 2011

Reflections and Directions, the Social Work at the University of Melbourne's 70th Anniversary Colloquium
Melbourne, VIC

http://www.socialwork.unimelb.edu.au/files/socialwork/70th_Anniversary_Colloquium.pdf

16-18 February 2011

Nursing Network on Violence Against Women- Stopping Violence: Innovations & Partnerships for Sustainable Change
Auckland, NZ

<http://www.confer.co.nz/nnvawi/>

4-5 March 2011

Love, desire and obsession
Melbourne, VIC

http://aarc.org.au/the-news/event-flyers/doc_download/31-aarc-symposium-2011-qlove-desire-and-obsessionq

7-8 March 2011

Young people, risk and resilience: The challenges of alcohol, drugs and violence conference
Melbourne, VIC

<http://www.aic.gov.au/events/aic%20upcoming%20events/2011/vscn.aspx>

5-7 May, 2011

AIJA Child Protection Conference
Brisbane, QLD

<http://www.aija.org.au/Child%20Protection/Call%20for%20Papers.pdf>

12-14 May 2011 Fremantle, WA

26-27 May 2011 Brisbane, QLD

Positive schools 2011: Mental health and wellbeing
<http://www.positiveschools.com.au/>

17 May 2011 Adelaide, SA

20 May 2011 Melbourne, VIC

Positive schools 2011: A day with Jane Elliot – Beyond brown eyes, blue eyes

[http://www.positiveschools.com.au/2011/Forms/SA & VIC Delegate Information Package A Day with Jane Elliott.pdf](http://www.positiveschools.com.au/2011/Forms/SA%20VIC_Delegate_Information_Package_A_Day_with_Jane_Elliott.pdf)

30-31 May, 2011

CDFVR's Annual Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum

Mackay, QLD, <http://www.noviolence.com.au>

Measuring access to justice research study

Dr Rita Shackel (pictured) from the University of Sydney is working collaboratively with Tilburg University, The Netherlands, to establish the effectiveness of an international survey tool that assesses crime victims' experiences with the criminal justice process. They are seeking voluntary participants, who have been victims of crime in Australia, to fill out an anonymous questionnaire detailing what they thought of the criminal justice process as they experienced it.

If you work closely with victims of crime and are interested in assisting with the distribution of the Measuring Access to Justice (MA2J) survey, or would like to know more information, please contact either Dr Rita Shackel via email at rita.shackel@sydney.edu.au or by phone on 02 9351 0368, or email Noleen Grogan at nkgrogan@iinet.net.au.

You may also view the Participant Information Statement and survey online at:

http://sydney.edu.au/law/subjects/survey/shackel_survey.pdf.



(continues from page 16)

Department of Communities *Professional Practice Standards – Working with men who perpetrate domestic and family violence*. Queensland Government. <http://www.communityservices.qld.gov.au/violenceprevention/publications/documents/professional-practice-standards.pdf>

Department of Families *Practice Standards for working with women affected by domestic and family violence*. Queensland Government. http://www.communityservices.qld.gov.au/violenceprevention/publications/documents/pdf/practice_standards.pdf

Men's Behaviour Change Group Work 2006, *Minimum Standards and Quality Practice*. No To Violence (NTV) Male Family Violence Prevention Association, Inc., (NTV)

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We encourage readers to contribute to the CDFVRe@der. If you have any information or articles you wish to publish, please contact Centre staff.

HAVE YOUR CONTACT DETAILS CHANGED?

We have become aware that some recipients of the CDFVRe@der have relocated or changed contact details, including email address. To enable us to update our records and ensure that you receive our quarterly publication, please contact us at the listed phone, fax or email address with your change of details. Please be assured that the Centre does not release your details to any third parties without your permission.

If you would like to be included on, or removed from, the Centre's mailing list, please ring us on (07) 4940 7834.

The Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research (CDFVR) is located within the Institute for Health and Social Science Research, in the Faculty of Sciences, Engineering and Health at CQUniversity. It is physically located at CQUniversity's Mackay Campus.



The Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research receives defined term funding from the Queensland Department of Communities to undertake research and develop educational resources pertaining to domestic and family violence in Queensland.

Disclaimer: The Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research welcomes articles from guest contributors. Publication of the articles will be at the discretion of the Director of the Centre. Views expressed in published guest contributions are not necessarily the views of the Centre, CQUniversity or the Queensland Government. Whilst all reasonable care has been taken in the preparation of this publication, no liability is assumed for any errors or omissions.