

CDFVR@der

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Shifting the paradigm: the intersection of domestic violence, child maltreatment and child safety and wellbeing

Male peer support and violence against women

Project 18 – the engagement of father figures in child protection work

Amendments to domestic violence legislation and CDFVR's mobile app



Director's message

There appears to be a resurgence of interest in Queensland in bridging the gap between child protection and domestic violence theory and practice, probably triggered by the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry (see pages 3-7), the recommendations of which are currently being considered by the Queensland Government. Recent Queensland activities aimed at recognising the intersections of domestic and family violence and child protection, and enhancing collaboration across these sectors include a one day forum at Caboolture at the end of October, two cross-sector training workshops and a research seminar in mid-November, and a half day symposium to be convened in December. Each of these activities involved, in one way or another, collaboration between the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSDS) and the non-government sector as convenors and/or participants.

The Caboolture forum (see page 12) was primarily concerned with engagement of fathers, in general, in child protection work but included introductory comments on the engagement of fathers who perpetrate domestic violence. Cross-sector training workshops, focussed explicitly on holding perpetrators of domestic violence accountable in child protection work, were convened by CDFVR, in partnership with DCCSDS, on 11 and 12 November in Mackay and Brisbane, respectively. Each full-day training workshop was delivered by US-based trainer David Mandel, founder of the Safe and Together Model, to 50 government and community based managers in domestic violence and child protection related services. David also presented a CDFVR research seminar, broadcast to sites across the state and in Sydney and Melbourne, and participated in the production of a video "In conversation with David Mandel", both of which also concerned the engagement of fathers who perpetrate domestic violence in the child protection system. Bringing David to Australia was possible because of collaboration and cost-sharing between CDFVR and *No To Violence* in Victoria, where David also delivered training. I would especially like to thank Rodney Vlasis for approaching us with the proposed collaboration.

PeakCare Queensland Inc. and Griffith University's jointly convened half-day symposium, to be held in Brisbane on 12 December, is also targeted to non-government and government service providers and will explore cross-sector collaboration in child protection while addressing the impacts of domestic and family violence on all family members.

Initiatives aimed at cross-sectoral collaboration and consistent frameworks for addressing the protective needs of children in the context of domestic violence are not new to Queensland, although previous efforts have not been as chronologically concentrated as the initiatives referred to above. In the first two years of the



national Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (PADV 1997 - 2002), Queensland Government projects focussed on the development of best practice and cross-sector collaboration to address the protective needs of children and young people who have lived with domestic violence.

The first project resulted in a set of three books providing practice standards, models of service and an evaluation handbook. The second project involved the delivery of two-day workshops for child protection and domestic violence workers in six locations around the state. These projects were driven by the (then) Domestic Violence Policy Unit. This was followed in 2005 with the development of a Domestic Violence Practice Paper for statutory child protection staff (see CDFVR Newsletter Vol 4. No. 2 December 2005, driven by the Policy and Practice Unit, Department of Child Safety with a reference group of domestic violence and child protection practitioners.

Several years later, community-based Women's House Shelta convened a forum to facilitate cross-sectoral discussion about problems associated with child protection and domestic violence practice, and to identify solutions. The forum report identifies 10 problems and possible solutions. The first problem addressed is the "invisible man", referring to the focus on mothers in addressing child protection in domestic violence contexts, leaving the father/perpetrator free of scrutiny and responsibility for children's safety.

The engagement of fathers in the child protection system is a matter occupying the minds of practitioners internationally; engaging fathers who perpetrate domestic violence in the protection of children is even more vexed but it has been the subject of considerable and renewed attention in Queensland. One hopes that the coalescence of current initiatives advances the work that has gone before, capitalises on the Carmody Inquiry, and revolutionises approaches to protection of children in the context of domestic violence.

¹ *Domestic Violence and Child Protection: Best Practice from a Feminist Perspective*

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Centre news

Farewell Annie Webster

After nine years at CDFVR, Annie Webster has decided to call it a day and retire. Can you imagine? No, Annie is certainly not the retiring type! Most readers will have met Annie at least on the end of the phone, if not in person. It may have been while attending an annual Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum, or trouble shooting a hiccup with the Domestic and Family Violence Database data collection; maybe giving feedback on a draft fact sheet. Whatever your contact with Annie, it was no doubt a positive experience with a good outcome. That has always been our experience working with Annie; there was never a challenge too great and the standard pursued was never less than excellence. Annie's contributions to CDFVR and the sector have been many and varied. She has drawn on her considerable personal talents, such as photography and video-recording, as well as her professional skills to deliver innovations such as DVDs and online videos of research seminars, and conversations between practitioners and presenters, to support professional development. Annie will be greatly missed but she has left a wonderful legacy. Go well, Annie, our treasured friend and colleague!



Annie Webster



Colleen Gunning

Welcome Colleen Gunning

Colleen Gunning joins CDFVR after working in the education and health sectors. Her original study prepared her for teaching, and she went on to gain a Master of Education degree. Later Colleen completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Health Science, and Postgraduate Certificate in Health Impact Assessment. She has worked in primary, secondary and tertiary education settings, and on a range of public health issues, including mental health promotion, alcohol and other drugs and injury prevention. Colleen is particularly interested in how community coalitions can improve health, particularly through addressing the social determinants of wellbeing. She has worked with many community groups in the Mackay region in her previous roles with Queensland Health and has recently been working as a learning advisor with CQUniversity's Office of Indigenous Engagement Unit.

A commentary on *Taking responsibility: A roadmap for Queensland child protection, the report of the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry*

by Katrina Finn, CDFVR

The Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry (the Inquiry) was the result of growing concerns about the effectiveness of Queensland's responses to child protection. *Taking Responsibility: A Roadmap for Queensland Child Protection* (the Report) is a review of the entire child protection system; it builds on the work started in the Forde Inquiry 1999 and the CMC Inquiry in 2004; addresses gaps in the implementation of recommendations from the earlier inquiries; and provides a 'roadmap' for reform over the next decade. A full version of this report can be viewed at:

http://www.childprotectioninquiry.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0017/202625/QCPCI-FINAL-REPORT-web-version.pdf

The case for reform

A 'better safe than sorry' approach and other systemic issues are contributing to unnecessary demands on the system. Existing police policy is to make reports to child safety where at least one of the parties to a domestic violence incident has a child residing in their household. This practice adds substantial pressure at the investigation stage of the system and shifts responsibility onto tertiary responses.¹

In recent years tertiary child protection interventions in Queensland have substantially increased.² Queensland is proportionately overspending on tertiary responses, while underspending on the family support/intensive family support (secondary services) by approximately 50 per cent.³ Secondary services are important because the impact on young people⁴ from abuse and neglect establishes risk factors for their own parenting and helps to perpetuate an inter-generational cycle. Over-reliance on out-of-home care fails to support families in a way that would address downstream impact on health, education, employment outcomes, teenage pregnancy, substance use, mental illness, criminalisation; and effectively break the cycle of inter-generational child protection interventions (see figure 5.1 of the Report p.140). The impact of out-of-home care itself can also be devastating and is an additional risk factor for perpetuating the inter-generational cycle.

A 2007 Department of Child Safety (DCS) analysis⁵ of parents with children in the child protection system identified that 35 per cent of substantiated households had two or more incidents of domestic violence within the past year. Domestic violence advocates have serious concerns about the failure in child protection cases to appropriately respond to underlying issues of domestic violence. In some cases victims of violence (usually mothers) are given an ultimatum to leave the relationship (and their home) or risk having their child/ren removed. They are

made responsible for the violence and for the protection of their child/ren. If the victim of violence is identified as 'a parent willing and able to offer protection', no attempt is made to work with the perpetrator of the abuse and require them to address their abusive behaviour or to hold them accountable for their use of violence. Responding to the domestic violence is seen as a 'conflict of interest' and the domestic violence is invisible in the child protection response. In these cases, tertiary responses can be utilised against victims of domestic violence for a 'failure to protect'.

An approach that blames a mother's failure to protect her child from domestic violence is unlikely to address the perpetrator's violence, meaning that a violent cycle of domestic abuse is more likely to continue.⁶

A more effective response in these matters would be to assess the history of domestic violence, provide assistance to seek a domestic violence order and/or require the perpetrator to participate in a behaviour change program. The literature suggests (e.g. Humphreys 2007) that the protection of children is better achieved by the protection and support of their mother/carer. In addition, engaging with perpetrators of abuse is an important mechanism for assessing and responding to the risk to the young person.

The Inquiry also began the task of addressing Indigenous over-representation within the child protection system. Queensland has the highest percentage of the population of Indigenous people aged 0-17 years, at approximately seven per cent,⁷ yet 38 per cent of out-of-home care in Queensland is for Indigenous young people (figure 15.6 of the Report p.523).

The Report

The report endorses the concept that child protection is 'everybody's business' and addresses the current failings in the system – making recommendations for the development of a sustainable system. However, the devil is very much in the detail and the success of the recommendations, even if adopted in full by the Queensland Government, is very much dependent on evidence based program development to 'flesh out' many of the concepts in the report; and expertly managed cultural change and systems reform.

The Report endorses the Newman Government's commitment to support young people transitioning from care until aged 21. It is hoped that this commitment can be enshrined in

legislation as part of the reform process.⁸

Recommendations centre around mechanisms to reduce out-of-home care as a means of avoiding the current chicken and egg cycle whereby demands on out-of-home care drain resources that could otherwise fund secondary services, while the paucity of comprehensive and coordinated services leaves little more than a tertiary response. Broadly, recommendations address the following areas:

1. Introducing a differential response and improving tertiary responses to divert families from out-of-home care and improve existing out-of-home care options.
2. Development and resourcing of a comprehensive and coordinated secondary service system, including domestic violence, mental health, housing, health, disability and drug and alcohol services.⁹
3. Structural reform to improve leadership; whole-of-government accountability, responsibility and coordination; collaborative, region based responses; and oversight (see figure 12.1 of the Report p.449).
4. Government and non-government (NGO) sector and workforce development, including staged introduction of mandatory minimum qualifications in NGOs; and a coordinated framework for training aligned with Australian Qualification Training Framework.¹⁰
5. Reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Indigenous) young people in the child protection system.
6. Legislative and legal systems reform.

The child protection response

Under the recommendations, intake into the child protection system would be facilitated by a dual entry gateway, operated by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (the Department) and a community partner with departmental support (figure 15.5 of the Report p.523). Families that do not meet the threshold for government investigation would be diverted to a family service assessment or family violence response.

The implementation of the differential response requires accurate assessment at intake. With increased emphasis on diversion from tertiary responses, there is a risk that the pendulum will swing too far and that some cases where there is an unacceptable risk will not be identified. Any reforms must ensure that abuse and neglect cases can be properly assessed and adequate support, including necessary legal interventions, provided.

It is also important that the implementation of a differential response and changes to departmental casework practice ensure underlying issues, such as domestic violence, are identified and addressed. The response will rely on the development and coordination of secondary services and existing frameworks will need to be reconciled so that

the system as a whole can agree on underlying principles and speak a common language. We know, for example, that ensuring effective, coordinated responses to domestic violence will require prioritising victim safety, perpetrator accountability, and system accountability. Coordination of responses will require workers to assess and respond in different ways and there may be substantial resistance to change that will need to be managed.

The Report recommends the adoption of the *Signs of Safety*¹¹ model (or similar) to shift the Department's engagement with families to a strengths-based approach, aimed at keeping young people at home wherever possible. The model requires workers to identify signs of safety in the existing family environment that can be built on in the child safety response. The Report suggests the model would assist caseworkers to combine the use of professional judgement with the guidelines provided by the existing structured decision making model.

If the aim is to keep young people in their home, appropriate responses to domestic violence are critical to avoid the escalation of matters within the system and to effectively address the risks to the young person. The report does not propose how assessment and departmental casework should address the issue of domestic violence. In the implementation of any reforms, there is much work to be done to ensure that responses to domestic violence are recognised as enhancing the protection of children and adopted as part of the child protection framework. Western Australia has recently released a resource for child protection workers engaging with perpetrators and responding to domestic violence.¹² This resource and the *Safe & Together* Model,¹³ developed in the United States to improve responses to domestic violence within the child protection system, merit consideration in the development of the reforms for Queensland (see P.11).

The Report acknowledges the need for specific review and reform and recommends that an Indigenous child protection reform project be undertaken.

Reducing the over-representation of Indigenous families

The Report makes specific recommendations to improve child protection responses to Indigenous families. It proposes reviewing the level of practical and financial support for kinship and foster carers and simplifying assessment for kinship carers. Development of a 'shared practice' model to enhance the role of key Indigenous services (such as recognised entities and foster/kinship services) in the statutory process is also proposed. This could include a role in facilitating family group meetings, identifying and assessing kinship carers, developing cultural plans and transition-from-care plans. The Report identifies the need for regionally based

integration of Indigenous services to support the implementation of the differential response and, when necessary, provide appropriate family assessment or family violence responses as an alternative to departmental investigation. It also proposes that the role of the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP) be recast to provide greater sector and service development and support, including the development and implementation of service standards and appropriate governance and management support. The Report raises the importance of considering the unique needs of Queensland's 19 discrete, isolated Indigenous communities.¹⁴ It focuses on issues of service delivery in remote areas, provision of appropriate out-of-home care options for these communities and responses to violence and alcohol misuse.

In addition, the Report acknowledges the need for specific review and reform and recommends that an Indigenous child protection reform project be undertaken. It proposes that the project include consideration of sexual and reproductive health, mental health, parental education and support, financial and household management, family and community violence, and drug and alcohol abuse. A priority for the reform project is to improve access to sustained and coordinated, culturally appropriate support services which successfully engage with Indigenous communities.

Legislative and legal systems reform

The Report calls for a review of the *Child Protection Act 1999*¹⁵ and makes specific recommendations for reform of legal processes. If effectively implemented, it is hoped these recommendations could make a real difference to outcomes and the overall accountability of the system.

Without reform, the escalation of costs, intergenerational cycle of abuse and poor outcomes will continue.

Key substantive reforms include:

- Facilitating genuine participation by young people. The Report proposes enhanced mechanisms for the genuine views and wishes of young people to be considered in decision making, including requiring the views of young people to be provided to court, and refocusing the role of the child guardian to provide advocacy or assist a young person to take part in proceedings. In addition, it recommends improving guidance on the appointment of a separate representative and the role of representatives (e.g. meeting with young people, presenting direct evidence and seeking orders in the best interests of the child).
- Improving legal intervention by the Department. To improve professionalism and the efficacy of legal interventions by the Department, the report also recommends separating front line child protection casework

from the legal functions in the Department; and establishing the Director of Child Protection in the Department of Justice to determine the legal actions to be taken and conduct litigation. The Report also proposes the introduction of a continuing (up until trial) duty of disclosure on the Department; and a requirement for the Department to give affidavit evidence that reasonable efforts have been made to provide support to the family.¹⁶ These recommendations will ensure child protection litigation better reflects the state's responsibility to act as a 'model litigant'.¹⁷

- Improved court governance, structure and process, such as access to legal aid to enable all parties to be legally represented in key stages of the pre-court and court processes; introducing case management processes; better use of expert advice for the judiciary (such as cultural advice, child developmental issues, medical conditions); and introduction of a benchbook to assist the judiciary.
- Enabling courts to play a greater role in deciding who can be a party and in placement, contact, parental responsibility, and revocation of long term guardianship orders. It also proposes enabling the court to make directions to parents to undertake treatment, testing, programs or refrain from living at a particular address. This proposal will provide a mechanism for mandating attendance at programs such as substance abuse or domestic violence behaviour change programs (including those programs used for Voluntary Intervention Orders under the domestic violence legislation) and facilitate a direct response to underlying issues, such as domestic violence. This proposal sits well with provisions of the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012*, enabling the Childrens Court to make domestic violence orders.
- Improving consistency in reporting obligations and revoking the Queensland Police Service's (QPS) current mandatory reporting policy.

The Report also proposes changes to existing child death review processes. It recommends that child deaths and serious injuries be investigated by a specialist team in the Department where the child was known to the Department within last year, with review by a multidisciplinary, independent panel (p.425). Child death/injury reviews can provide an important mechanism for making continuous systemic improvements which may prevent future deaths/injuries. However, as noted by the 2010 Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Panel, the success of death review models is dependent on a number of factors. These include a focus on systemic failures rather than the actions of individuals and culpability, the scope of the review and political and administrative accountability to the recommendations. Further, the review must include autonomous evaluation of cases by a multidisciplinary panel which has appropriate Indigenous and NGO representation and access to relevant expertise as required.

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Conclusion

Without reform, the escalation of costs, inter-generational cycle of abuse and poor outcomes will continue. The recommendations in the Report propose wide-reaching and fundamental reforms to responses to some of the state's most vulnerable, children and young people. Whilst we still await the Government's response to the Report, it is hoped that the opportunity will be taken to introduce much needed structural and legal systems reforms; develop and support the secondary service system to provide a real alternative to tertiary intervention; and ensure that consistent responses to domestic violence can be utilised to help protect young people. The potential long term benefits to families and health, education and employment in this state demand that priority be given to child protection and secondary systems responses as a matter of urgency.

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¹QPS was the notifier in 37% of child protection intakes in the 2011-12 year and the next highest rate was health sources at 13% (figure 4.1 of the Report p. 85).

²From 2007-08 and 2011-12, children subject to substantiations decreased by 5%, while state interventions with children increased by 20% (out-of-home-care) to 71% (long-term orders) (Table 12.3 of the Report p.399).

³Based on Queensland's proportion of 0-17 year olds - 21% (see figure 15.1 of the Report p. 519).

⁴The term 'young people' is used in this article to refer to children and young people involved in the child protection system.

⁵Department of Child Safety 2009, Characteristics of parents involved in the Queensland child protection system report 6: summary of key findings, Queensland Government, Brisbane. (Cited at p.47 of the Report).

⁶Douglas, H, Walsh, T & Blore, K 2009, Mothers and the Child Protection System. University of Queensland, Queensland, p.56.

⁷The national average is 4.7%, with WA the next closest at 5.5% (Table 5.1 p.147).

⁸It is noted that WA, NSW, NT, ACT, TAS have legislated support to age 25.

⁹The expansion of the Helping Out Families program is suggested as a means of helping to achieve this.

¹⁰The Report recommends the abolition of the Commission for Children and Young People and the establishment of the Family and Child Council (to research, build an evidence base for best practice, build cross-sectoral capacity and monitor the system).

¹¹Signs of Safety was first introduced in Western Australia in 1993 and has since been adopted and developed in a number of overseas jurisdictions. Department for Child Protection 2011, The Signs of Safety Child Protection Practice Framework, Government of Western Australia, Perth.

¹²Department for Child Protection 2013. Perpetrator accountability in child Protection Practice: A resource for child protection workers about engaging and responding to perpetrators of family and domestic violence, Government of Western Australia, Perth. See also

<http://manuals.dcp.wa.gov.au/manuals/cpm/Pages/03FamilyandDomesticViolenceandPerpetratorAccountability.aspx> (viewed 21 October).

¹³David Mandel & Associates <http://endingviolence.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/The-Safe-and-Together%2%81-Model-Overview-2013-V.3.pdf> (viewed 22 October 2013).

¹⁴Communities such as Aurukun, Cherbourg, Doomadgee, Kowanyama, Woorabinda, Mornington, Palm and the Torres Strait Islands.

¹⁵Specific recommendations are made to amend key concepts in the Child Protection Act 1999, including: identifying relevant factors for determining the best interests of the child; changing 'a child in need of protection' to 'a child who has suffered significant harm, is suffering significant harm or is at an unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm'; and ensuring that 'the best interests of the child' must guide all administrative and judicial decisions.

¹⁶The Report proposes a new requirement: that the court must be satisfied before making an order that reasonable efforts have been made to provide support to the family.

¹⁷<http://www.justice.qld.gov.au/corporate/model-litigant-principles>

10th Annual Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum – *Warrior whispering*

by Annie Webster, CDFVR

On October 18, CDFVR met with its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reference group to discuss the direction that the 2014 Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum will take. Each forum theme is decided upon using participants' feedback from the previous year's forum. The most popular theme suggested for 2014 was 'Men – programs/support/parenting/healing'. With this theme in mind the reference group came up with the 2014 forum title of '*Warrior whispering*'.

Warrior whispering will be held on Wednesday May 7 and Thursday May 8, 2014 at the Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre, Alfred Street, Mackay. There will be 100 places available, made up of 80 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and 20 non-Indigenous people who work predominantly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Once again, the forum structure will leave plenty of time for participants to be part of the learning process by providing opportunities for information sharing and discussion, as well as networking with other agencies.

Early plans for the 2014 forum include:

Day one: Keynote speakers, a panel of four service providers discussing their specific areas relating to working with men; a 'global cafe' style of information sharing, with the option for participants to join one of 10 conversation groups; and a hard yarning session relating to topics discussed earlier in the day, where participants can discuss difficult issues in the safe environment of the forum.

Day two: Presentation on three specific programs currently being successfully delivered to Indigenous people. The three topic areas for these presentations are: *working with men*; *working with women*; and *working with families*. CDFVR called for expressions of interest (sent to everyone on the CDFVR contact database) from anyone working with a successful program in one of these areas to share its main benefits at the forum. The deadline for expressions of interest was November 26. Once a list of proposed programs is compiled, and based on feedback from this year's forum, our reference group will have the unenviable task of choosing from the expressions of interest three programs they believe will be most useful to forum participants.

Due to the rising costs of presenting the forum, registration fees have increased. Registration will be \$450 for Indigenous participants and \$500 for non-Indigenous participants. This fee includes registration, morning and afternoon teas, lunch on both days and the forum dinner. A forum t-shirt displaying the 2014 logo is also included in the registration fee.

In response to participant feedback karaoke will return to next year's forum celebratory dinner – so you all have plenty of time to start limbering up your voices. As it's our 10th (Qld) anniversary year anything is possible – even a CDFVR quartet! (so bring your ear plugs).

Further information about the forum will be emailed to our contact list as it becomes available. If you would like to be included on our contact database please register at:

<http://www.noviolence.com.au/resourceorders/resourceorderform.html>

Registration for the forum will open in February 2014 at www.noviolence.com.au.



L-R Heather Nancarrow, Director, CDFVR, discusses 2014 forum plans with reference group members Jackie Huggins, Shirley Slann and Charles Passi.

Male peer support and violence against women – Walter S DeKeseredy's research seminar

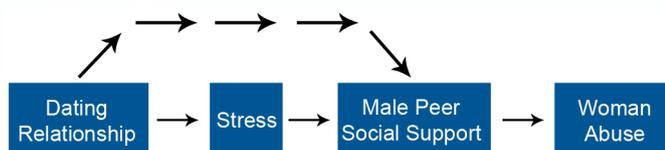
Reviewed by Annie Webster, CDFVR



Dr Walter S DeKeseredy

Dr Walter S DeKeseredy is Professor of Criminology at the University of Ontario Institute Of Technology, Canada. Walter agreed to present a research seminar for CDFVR titled *Male peer support & violence against women*, while he was in Australia in July to speak at a Queensland University of Technology Conference.

Some 25 years ago, reflecting on the literature which says that the robust determinants of any type of violence in society are age (particularly 18-24 year olds) and sex (male), Walter questioned if peer associations are linked to other types of crimes, why wouldn't they also apply to violence against women? After extensive research he has concluded that male peer support is the most powerful determinant of various types of abuse in universities/colleges, public housing estates, rural communities and other contexts, regardless of age or intimate relationship status. While men who have patriarchal attitudes and beliefs are not all abusive, they are more likely to be abusive if they are embedded in peer groups that also have patriarchal attitudes and who are able to encourage and justify abusive behaviour.



Walter explained how the term 'hooking up' which is currently used instead of the word 'dating' was an extremely dangerous culture for women because the 'hooking up' is controlled by men and is characterised by high levels of sexual assault. He spoke about how the 'stress' in the figure, above, refers to the stress that men experience when their perceived authority or idea of masculine entitlement is challenged by sexual rejection; or women who want to leave the relationship. Male peer support and influence (e.g. 'she's just a tease'; or a 'gold digger') provides justification for mistreatment of women by supporting abusive actions. His research found

that men who had this level of stress and were supported by male peers were more likely than men without peer support networks to commit violence against women. Walter explained, however, stress is not necessary for peer influence. The culture of men seeking a woman to take home after a night out with mates is related more to status among male peers, than desire for sexual contact.

Noting that men don't hang out together to promote abuse, Walter also observed the heavy influence of broader social forces such as easily accessible pornography with its violent, racist undertones, the common theme of which is rape. Walter challenged his audience to think about the powerful message for gender relations that pornography facilitates.

Drawing on his theory of male peer support, which he defines as *the attachment to male peers and the resources that these men provide which encourage and legitimate woman abuse*, Walter explained the higher rates of violence among working class families. His research with public housing tenants showed that working class men had a higher adherence to the ideology of familial patriarchy than middle class men and when they lost their jobs they felt economically as well as physically excluded because of the necessity to move to public housing. Unemployment provided a greater risk of mixing with other unemployed men – drinking, taking drugs and lamenting the loss of their masculine status. He said that cross cultural research shows that where men band together – sleep together, eat together and work together, there is a higher risk of violence against women. Walter said it was important to look at how economic factors that result in men banding together, such as in mining and oil industry communities, can translate to higher levels of violence against women.

Walter concluded his presentation by asking 'what is to be done?' He spoke about the reality of our technological era and suggested using Facebook, Twitter and other social media to get the message across to young people; taking the message to the street to actively engage communities and government leaders; boycotting motels and convention centres that offer pornography; encouraging well-meaning men to become active men within the violence against women movement; training on gender equity in schools; and families making time to talk to their youth and to model non-sexist behaviour. Finally, Walter stated that the most effective means of prevention are those that involve informal processes of social control – what we do as individuals, communities or social groups – a model which will ultimately have a stronger impact than the criminal justice system.

A video recording of Dr. Walter DeKeseredy's presentation is available at <http://www.noviolence.com.au/seminarvideos.html>

At the coal face.....

Stacey Taylor, South Burnett CTC

Tell us a little bit about yourself, South Burnett CTC, and your role there.

I am the Coordinator of CTC Connections and currently hold a Bachelor of Social Science (Major in Psychology) and am studying a Graduate Diploma in Psychology through Central Queensland University. I have nine years' experience working within Cherbourg in the fields of youth and domestic and family violence, through South Burnett CTC.

South Burnett CTC is a multi-faceted, community owned, not-for-profit organisation that continues to address the needs of disadvantaged people throughout the South Burnett and into our neighboring communities across a wide range of programs. CTC believes that everyone, no matter their circumstances, should have the support they need to fulfil their potential, achieve and aspire. CTC is made up of a number of core services, including employment services, youth and community services, foster and residential care services, disability services, child care and community housing.

CTC Connections currently delivers a range of programs focusing on youth and domestic and family violence. These programs include:

Wondin-dee – (translation – place of hope) funded by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services to provide specialised counselling services for child witnesses, victims and perpetrators of domestic and family violence.

Safe Haven – funded by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services to provide culturally appropriate integrated services to respond to the safety needs of children, young people and their families experiencing or witnessing family and domestic violence in Cherbourg.

Reconnect - funded by FACHSIA and uses community based early intervention services to bring about family reconciliation for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and their families. Reconnect helps these young people improve their level of engagement with family, work, education, training and their local community.

Volatile Substance Misuse (VSM) - funded through the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services and provides safety and support services to young people who engage or are at risk of engaging in the misuse of volatile substances and to reduce the incidence of and extent of harm associated with volatile substance issues in the Cherbourg community.

Tell us about the Indigenous family violence counselling team at South Burnett CTC.

Wondin-dee provides an information, counseling and support service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from Cherbourg who have either experienced or carried-out acts of family violence. The service ensures that the safety and wellbeing of people who have experienced or are at risk of family violence will always be prioritised when determining responses to community and individual needs.

Services are delivered utilising a strengths based approach that respectfully empowers individuals, groups and families to identify the positive resources and abilities they possess to assist them to deal with their own challenges.

Activities raise awareness whilst promoting and fostering the safety and well-being of those who have experienced family violence. Community activities and initiatives focus on reducing the tolerance of family and domestic violence as well as reducing the tolerance to violence as a response to conflict. Activities that aim to reduce the behaviors exhibited by people who perpetrate family violence are also held on a regular basis.

Wondin-dee consists of three counsellors who provide individual and group counselling to perpetrators, victims and child witnesses of domestic and family violence.

Les Stewart is our perpetrator counsellor. Les is a local elder of the Cherbourg community and has over 40 years' experience working in the fields of domestic and family violence, drug and alcohol and youth work. Les is currently studying towards his diploma in counselling and holds a diploma in youth work, mental health first aid, strengths based practice, yarning circles and mediation.

Elizabeth Kennell is our victims' counsellor. Elizabeth is from Woorabinda (Birrigubba people) and has over 20 years' experience working in the field of domestic and family violence. Elizabeth completed her diploma in counselling in 2012, holds a diploma in community services – child protection, and has trained in the delivery of the Tree of Life Program, yarning circles, suicide prevention, mental health first aid, mediation training and strength based practices

Paul Gray is our child witness counsellor – Paul is currently studying a diploma in counselling, holds a diploma of employment services, diploma of community services – youth work, Indigenous mental health first aid, yarning circles, suicide prevention, engaging difficult clients, blending art and narrative therapy and strength based practices. Paul has five years' experience working within the Cherbourg community in the field of employment services, youth work and domestic and family violence.

What are some of the pressures and challenges your Indigenous family violence counselling team face on a day to day basis?

Challenges faced on a daily basis vary between staff. All staff are faced with the pressure to work within the community context to combat the 'normalisation' of family violence within the community and are faced with similar challenges relating to initial engagement and maintaining client consistency throughout the support period. Often when working with individual clients, staff identify that in many cases clients are both victims and perpetrators of domestic and family violence which creates a complexity of support needs.

Les, through the perpetrator counsellor role,



L – R Stacey Taylor, Les Stewart, Elizabeth Kennell and Paul Gray

has at times found it difficult to engage with individuals who exhibit a 'what's in it for me' attitude to support. Generally people exhibiting this attitude fail to acknowledge their behaviour as exhibiting acts of domestic and family violence and are not ready or willing to create change through counselling in order to move forward in their lives.

Paul through the child witness counsellor role identifies challenges associated with the parents' understanding of the child witness counsellor role due to parents often feeling targeted and judged because of the behaviours their children are displaying as a result of being exposed to domestic and family violence.

How do you and your team meet these challenges?

Wondin-dee staff meet the daily challenges by maintaining a consistent professional approach to the delivery of counselling and support services to people within the Cherbourg community.

Wondin-dee has adopted the model of continuous improvement and will constantly review service delivery in line with latest research and best practices. Although this is not always specific to Indigenous communities, staff will always consider adapting identified strategies to fit within the context of service delivery within Cherbourg.

Over the years what have you and your team seen that makes you optimistic for a future free from domestic and family violence?

Wondin-dee staff remain optimistic for a future free of domestic and family violence and continue to work in partnership with other services within the Cherbourg community to achieve this. Cherbourg has a strong community network along

with dedicated community members who actively work to increase the awareness of domestic and family violence whilst reducing the tolerance of domestic and family violence within the community. Community events focusing on raising awareness of domestic and family violence are held annually including a community march during domestic violence prevention month, regular community engagement events, radio promotions, regular activities delivered throughout the schools and healthy relationship information provided through all group activities. During 2013 Wondin-dee in partnership with Safe Haven launched the BDVFREE Campaign throughout the whole community.

Wondin-dee staff have witnessed the reduced tolerance of domestic and family violence within the community through the increased number of self-referrals to the Wondin-dee service. This has generally consisted of women who have experienced domestic violence and who have identified a desire to deal with and overcome the trauma associated with domestic and family violence to recover and rebuild their life. More recently there has been an increase in the number of self-referrals by men who have identified that their behaviour is unacceptable and they are seeking assistance to change their behaviour.

Another reason for optimism is that Wondin-dee staff have observed an increase in the willingness of people to discuss issues relating to domestic and family violence. This has also been highlighted throughout the general community by an increase in reporting of domestic and family violence to police.

Shifting the paradigm: the intersection of domestic violence, child maltreatment and child safety and wellbeing – presented by David Mandel

by Annie Webster

Further to delivering workshops on the Safe and Together model in Mackay and Brisbane, David Mandel presented a research seminar at CQUniversity Brisbane Campus which linked to nine external sites across Queensland. While the workshops concentrated on providing participants with skills to meaningfully intervene with perpetrators of domestic violence; and to partner with domestic violence survivors around the safety and wellbeing of children, the research seminar focused on the influences that have shaped the model's development and gave a brief overview of the Safe and Together model and research supporting its value.

David's work with the Safe and Together model emanates from his history of working initially with perpetrators and then child welfare. It is grounded in his belief that good work with perpetrators is embedded in the connection between work done with men in general and domestic violence perpetrators specifically, resulting in the safety and wellbeing of children.

David explained that the fundamental starting point of the Safe and Together model was that working with men needed to be grounded in the lives of women and children in order for it to be safe. The direction of the model has been influenced by leaders in both the domestic violence and child safety sectors that encouraged a focus on women's empowerment and choices, toward a goal of safety, self determination and greater satisfaction in the lives of women and children. Other important factors that contributed to the development of the model include: making it relevant for other sectors by learning what each service needed to know to work with perpetrators in their specific field; a deep desire to understand, respect and value different sectors' confidential roles and the importance they play in families; a strong gender analysis related to different expectations of men and women and differing patterns of behaviour related to control and violence; and years of communicating with workers in the domestic violence and child safety system, as well as victims and advocates.

The Safe and Together model is a child centred model designed to support child safety agencies whose casework is heavily influenced by domestic violence. The model provides a set of practice tools enabling a structured conversation about decision-making which often inappropriately concentrates on victims and their choices, rather than the harmful behaviour of domestic violence perpetrators that puts children in danger. One of the skills learned in the Safe and Together program is to 'pivot' from the mother's 'failure to protect' and focus on the behaviour of the domestic violence perpetrator, while still supporting the non-offending victim of domestic violence. Within this context there is an understanding that it is the perpetrator's actions that drive child safety concerns, enabling relationship building with victims. The model provides workers with language on how to talk to perpetrators about their behaviours and responsibilities as a parent, establish a partnership with the victim of domestic violence, document case records to give a greater understanding of the violence being experienced by the victim and productively discuss the case in cross sectoral meetings with the goal of improving outcomes for children and families.

Data collected about the efficacy of this training model shows that the removal of children because of domestic violence as a percentage of removals overall (Bay and Gulf Counties, Florida) has decreased from 20.6 per cent in 2012 to 9.1 per cent in 2013 post Safe and Together training. In Jacksonville, Florida, the data collected between November 2007 and July 2010 indicated a decrease of approximately 70 per cent in neglect petitions and 50 per cent in child removals as a result of significant Safe and Together model training in that region.

David explained that one of the core elements of the Safe and Together model is to focus on domestic violence perpetrator behaviour, not the victim's decision-making. He said that when examining domestic violence it is important to be able to draw a straight line from the perpetrator's choice to the impact on the children. David advised service providers to clearly articulate to the victim that the perpetrator is 100 per cent responsible for his use of violence. When they can do that they are clearer in their work with the perpetrator and able to provide him with support and promote behaviour change, while at the same time strengthening the relationship with the victim – leading to safer outcomes for children.

A YouTube recording of David Mandel's presentation will be available at <http://www.noviolence.com.au/seminarvideos.html> in January, 2014.



David Mandel

Project 18 – the engagement of father figures in child protection work

by Steve Lock, Senior Practitioner in Child Safety (Gympie, North Coast Region)

Article 18 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child refers to the responsibilities of both parents to care for their children, and for both parents to be supported to do so. In Queensland over 50% of children in state care have no connection with their fathers (CREATE, 2013).

Project 18

Project 18 was named at a practice conference in Caboolture on 30 October 2013 attended by 150 participants from government and non-government agencies. It promotes the engagement of father figures – within the context of safe and positive relationships with their children. Its framework emerged from front line child safety work in the North Coast Region. Caseworkers have recognised their under-performance in engaging men (Scourfield et al, 2012) and acknowledged the un-fairness of mothers alone being expected to protect children (Lapierre, 2008). Project 18 asserts that fathers take responsibility particularly in cases where their violence is the problem (Featherstone, 2007).

Project 18 recognises that children have a right to a relationship with their father and that this relationship has many potential benefits for their welfare (Zanoni, 2013). However this right is only ascendant and meaningful in a climate of safety and non-violence (Ferguson, 2012).

Fathers and their children – three different discourses

Child protection workers face the challenge of managing three ways of thinking, talking and working in relation to the child-father connection.

Discourse	Identity	Question	Central focus	Goals of intervention
Father at risk	Perpetrator	Are mother and child safe?	Violence or abuse	Stop abuse
Father as parent	Parent who might make a positive contribution	What kind of experience does child have with father?	Child	Positive safe connection between child and father
Father as excluded parent	Father disadvantaged and excluded	Is father given equal rights and opportunity to parent?	Father	Father has equal opportunity to be a positive parent

Project 18 – central principles

The Project 18 approach aims to embrace the priorities in each discourse:

- Children have a right to a safe and positive connection with both parents;
- Fathers should be expected and given opportunity to take responsibility;
- Professional assessment and support involves consultation with children, mothers and other agencies.

An important influence for Project 18 is ‘The Strength to Change’ (Stanley, 2012) model, an approach to working with men who have been violent to their partner. It taps into the intrinsic motivation of men to be seen positively in the eyes of their children, emphasising their identity as a father who may contribute to his children’s welfare. Evaluation of the model has indicated improved parenting and a related reduction in violence. Emphasis is on their identity as a father who may have a contribution to make to the welfare of their children. Evaluation of the model in a two year follow up period has indicated improved parenting and a related reduction in violence.

Child safety – practice and outcomes

The Project 18 approach manifests as persistent attempts to engage father figures at all points of the child protection system; making sure men have an opportunity to contribute and to take responsibility. Challenges range from fathers being unknown, not available, not motivated or not utilised, to being avoidant, defensive, anxious or aggressive.

At Gympie Child Safety centre ‘reasonable’ engagement of father figures has increased from 20-30% in 2011 to 70% in September 2013. Similar progress is being made across the North Coast Region. Most importantly reviews have shown that engagement of father figures has been related to improved outcomes for children. Many fathers have made important changes in their parenting approach. In all cases ending violence has been asserted as a central fact in being a ‘good father’.

Project 18 will continue to consult with domestic violence services and develop practice guidance in this critical area of work. This will include raising awareness and promoting learning and training opportunities.

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CDFVR recently spoke to Susan Beattie about her new role as Principal Researcher & Co-ordinator, Domestic & Family Violence Death Review Unit, Office of the State Coroner, Department of Justice & Attorney General.



Susan Beattie

Who/what is the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Unit (DFVDRU)?

In Queensland, coroners are responsible for investigating reportable deaths in accordance with the *Coroners Act 2003*. A reportable death includes deaths where the identity of the deceased is unknown, the death occurred in suspicious circumstances

or where the death was violent or unnatural (such as accidents, falls, suicides and drug overdoses). It also covers deaths identified as health care related, where a 'cause of death' certificate has not been issued as well as deaths that have occurred in care, in custody or as a result of police operations.

What is the role of the coroner?

When a death is reported to the coroner, they are responsible for investigating the death and making findings about the identity of the deceased person, the circumstances of their death (when, how and where they died) and the medical cause of death. If an inquest is held the coroner is able to make recommendations aimed at preventing deaths in similar circumstances in the future.

What is your role?

The Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Unit (DFVDRU) provides assistance to coroners in the investigation of homicides, murder suicides and suicides identified as being related to domestic and family violence. In Queensland, approximately 40% of all homicides are estimated to occur within an intimate partner or family relationship. In contrast to a police investigation which is focused on establishing whether a criminal offence has been committed, the function of the coroner is to examine the cause and circumstances of the death. The DFVDRU assists in this role by ensuring that information about the broader context within which the death occurred is gathered and examined. The DFVDRU assists with identifying any systemic shortcomings and with formulating preventive recommendations for those matters that proceed to inquest.

Deaths are referred to the DFVDRU for review based on an assessment of whether the death

involved domestic and family violence as defined by the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012*; which includes intimate partner, family and informal care relationships.

As the Principal Researcher and Coordinator of the DFVDRU, my primary role is to provide advice and assistance to coroners in the investigation of domestic and family violence related deaths. I also have responsibility for maintaining a data base on these types of deaths and for undertaking research in relation to domestic and family violence that may be used to contextualise and inform coronial findings and recommendations.

Why was the Domestic and Family violence Death Review Unit set up?

As a result of recommendations from the Report of the *Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Panel* released in 2010, the DFVDRU was established as a trial to provide support to coroners in the investigation of domestic and family violence related deaths. As an initiative of the Queensland Government's Strategy to reduce domestic and family violence, the panel recommended the establishment of an ongoing death review process to be located within the Office of the State Coroner.

"In Qld approximately 40% of all homicides are estimated to occur within an intimate partner or family relationship".

Last year, with the support of the Queensland Police Service and the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services the unit became permanent. The establishment and integration of this unit within the broader coronial process ensures that the context and circumstances of domestic and family violence related deaths are examined.

What is the process for reviewing domestic and family violence related deaths?

In conducting reviews of relevant deaths, the DFVDRU considers a range of factors including the circumstances of the incident, interactions with services, potential points of intervention and the nature and history of the relationship between the deceased and the perpetrator. Under the *Coroners Act 2003* coroners have wide powers of investigation, with the capacity to request additional reports, statements or information regarding the death to inform their findings. In the case of domestic and family violence death reviews, this may include accessing information from doctors, hospitals, police, community services, the courts and other witnesses.

“.....CDFVR has been funded as part of their state based activities to provide assistance with the death review process”.

How does the Queensland DFVDRU compare to death review processes in other jurisdictions?

Domestic and family violence death review mechanisms are based on the premise that these fatalities are rarely without warning and are generally preceded by violent or abusive incidents indicating a heightened risk of future harm. It is because of these indicators that these types of deaths are considered some of the most preventable. Similar to domestic and family violence death review mechanisms internationally, coronial investigations in Queensland do not focus on laying blame or assigning liability for a death but instead are focused on investigating the circumstances of the death such as when, where and how the person died.

Domestic and family violence death reviews examine contact that the deceased and perpetrator may have had with services for the purposes of improving systems and preventing future deaths. So for example they may look at whether the deceased sought treatment through an emergency department or general practitioner as a result of their injuries or contact they may have had with the police and courts in relation to their experience of domestic violence. These types of mechanisms also look at the identification of risk factors that may indicate an increased risk of lethality in a relationship; particularly in regards to intimate partner homicides. For example threats to kill, prior non fatal strangulation, controlling behaviour by the perpetrator and previous assaults with a weapon may indicate a heightened risk of harm for the aggrieved.

Being based in the Office of the State Coroner, the DFVDRU has the capacity to review both open and closed cases whereas many death reviews mechanisms may only review closed cases which may delay the review by years. The structure of the DFVDRU is somewhat unique as it is integrated within the broader coronial investigation process whereas in other models, domestic and family violence related deaths are reviewed by a team of nominated representatives from government and nongovernment agencies.

Although not having a dedicated expert review panel, the Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research (CDFVR) have been funded as part of their state based activities to provide assistance with the death review process. This includes the facilitation of an advisory panel to provide expert advice to the coroner in the identification and investigation of domestic and family violence related deaths.

How often does the DFVDRU report and to whom?

In addition to internal reporting responsibilities, the DFVDRU reports to the relevant coroner who has jurisdiction over the area in which the person died; with the exception of deaths in custody and deaths that have occurred as a result of police operations. These matters are investigated by either the State Coroner or the Deputy State Coroner.

What power does the DFVDRU/Coroner have regarding the implementation of recommendations for system change?

Under the *Coroners Act 2003*, inquests may be held for a number of reasons including if the death occurred in custody or during police operations, if the Attorney-General or the State Coroner orders an inquest to be held or if the coroner determines that it is within the public interest to hold an inquest. To determine the latter, the coroner may consider whether there is substantial doubt about the cause and circumstances of the death, as well as whether holding an inquest may assist in preventing future deaths or may uncover systemic issues which affect public health and safety.

“Under the Coroners Act 2003 coroners have wide powers of investigation, with the capacity to request additional reports, statements or information regarding the death to inform their findings”.

How are systems/agencies held accountable for implementing recommendations made by the coroner?

When a matter proceeds to inquest a coroner has the power to make recommendations aimed at preventing deaths in the future, which is an important part of the modern coronial system. In 2008, to enhance the death prevention role of the coroner, the Queensland Government introduced an administrative process for monitoring responses to coronial recommendations involving government agencies. This involves public sector agencies reporting to the Attorney-General about the implementation of coronial recommendations through the compilation of an annual report. The publication of responses in this manner acts as an important feedback mechanism for coroners and increases the likelihood that agencies will give them due consideration. Reports can be accessed at the Department of Justice and Attorney-General website under the ‘Reports’ section: <http://www.justice.qld.gov.au/corporate/general-publications>

Amendments to domestic violence legislation and CDFVR's mobile app

by Heather Nancarrow, CDFVR

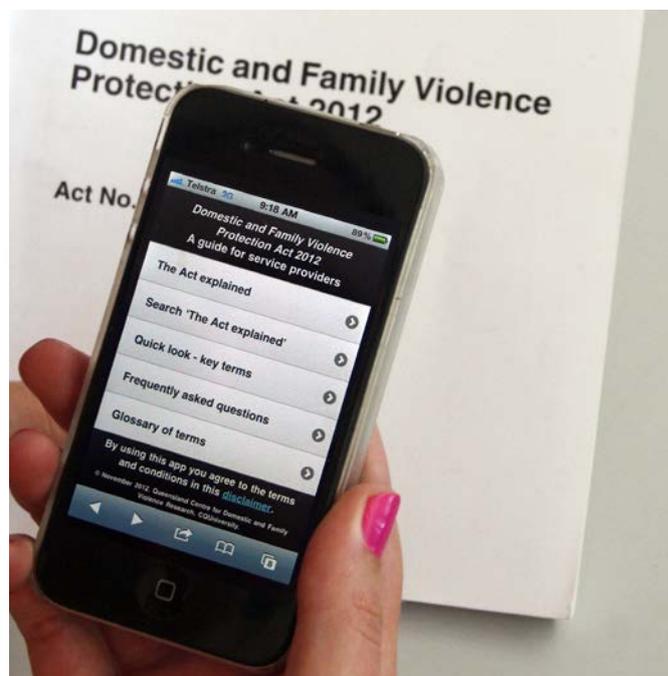
CDFVR's mobile app DV Act Facts will be updated early next year to reflect amendments to the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012*, to commence on a date to be fixed by proclamation. The app is a tool for appropriately qualified domestic and family violence support workers assisting clients with access to the provisions of the domestic violence legislation. It includes a set of frequently asked questions and search facilities to enable quick access to the explanation of specific sections of the Act, and to key terms.

The legislative amendments which need to be incorporated into the app arise from the *Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2013*, passed by the Queensland Parliament on 29 August 2013. They relate to two key issues in the administration of the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012*. First, provisions are inserted to resolve uncertainty about which domestic violence order is enforceable in circumstances where there are two orders related to the same aggrieved and respondent, in existence at the same time. Second, provision is made for the application of domestic and family violence protection rules of court. This reflects changes to the *Magistrates Courts Act 1921* providing authority for the creation of stand-alone rules of court for proceedings under the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012*. The relevant amendments to the *Magistrates Courts Act 1921* were also included in the *Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2013*, referred to above, and are also to commence on a date to be fixed by proclamation.

Resolving uncertainty about which of two orders is enforceable

Currently, section 48 of the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012*, provides for the court to make a temporary order when considering an application to vary a domestic violence order, if deemed necessary. If the application being considered is for a variation of a temporary protection order the court *may* cancel the original (temporary order) and make a new temporary protection order. It says nothing about the cancellation of an existing final domestic violence order. It is currently possible for a final order and a temporary order, or two temporary orders, to be in effect at the same time.

The amendment of section 48 makes it clear that if a court considering an application to vary a final or temporary domestic violence order makes a temporary order, the original order is suspended pending a final decision on the application to



vary. Therefore, only one order is in effect at any given time. Under the amended section 48 the suspension of the original order commences when the respondent becomes aware of the temporary order. The suspension ends when the original order is either reinstated (because the application to vary was unsuccessful) and the respondent is aware of the outcome, or a new order incorporating the variation is made and the respondent becomes aware of that new order.

Domestic and family violence protection rules of court

Court practice and procedure under the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012* is currently governed by certain rules under the *Uniform Civil Procedure Rules 1999*, so long as a rule to be applied is not inconsistent with the Act. The *Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2013* adds a new section 57C (Rule-making power) to the *Magistrates Courts Act 1921* which allows the Governor in Council, with the consent of the Chief Magistrate, to make specific Domestic and Family Violence Protection Rules. These rules will replace the *Uniform Civil Procedure Rules 1999* in governing the court's practice and procedure (except appeals) under the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012*. Consequently, section 142 of the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012* has been amended so that the new rules apply and reference to the previous rules is removed. The power under section 193 of the Act to make regulations continues.

The Domestic and Family Violence Protection Rules are currently being drafted. The launch of CDFVR's updated app will coincide with the commencement of the amended legislation and rules. Advice of the commencement date will be provided on CDFVR's website when known.

New resources available

'In conversation' video - Kim Pate, Executive Director of the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies and part-time law lecturer at Ottawa Law School, Canada and Debbie Kilroy, CEO Sisters Inside



Kim Pate and Debbie Kilroy

Kim Pate's job as executive director of the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies is with women who are marginalised, victimised, criminalised and institutionalised – particularly women who have used force in a reactionary manner. Her position at the Ottawa Law School centres on teaching prison law and defending battered women on trial. Her conversation with well known advocate for the implementation and monitoring of human rights within women's prisons, Debbie Kilroy, enables a sharing of practice knowledge and provides sage advice for service providers in the domestic violence and sexual assault sectors. Some of the issues discussed include:

- The term 'Battered Woman Syndrome' and how it can pathologise women and characterise as unreasonable women's response to violence, instead of focusing on the unreasonable violence that women experience.
- The 'de-gendering' of domestic violence protection laws – and the subsequent backlash.
- The problems in Canada with the claim that women are 'becoming more or equally violent as men'.
- Laws of self defence, provocation and the recent partial defences for victims who kill, which result in women in Australia often choosing to plead guilty to manslaughter rather than be re-traumatised in the witness box.
- Opportunities to intervene when women are charged and going to court on domestic violence and/or sexual assault charges.
- How the domestic violence and sexual assault sector in Australia can work together on some of the broader systemic issues in cases which involve their clients.

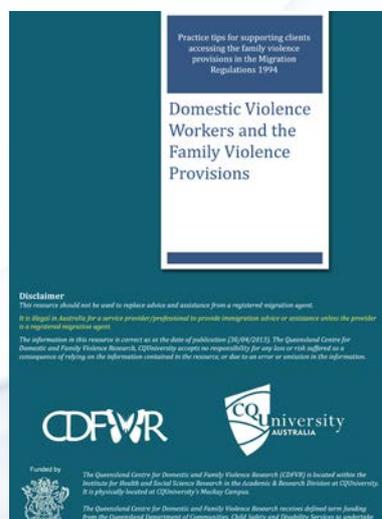
This recording can be viewed at <http://www.noviolence.com.au/seminarvideos.html>

Practice tips for supporting clients accessing the family violence provisions in the Migration Regulations 1994

A suite of new CDFVR resources to support professionals assisting clients with applications under the family violence provisions in the *Migration Regulations 1994* was launched in Brisbane on 21st August.

There are three resources available:

1. A brochure that maps the role of domestic violence support workers in supporting clients and their Migration Agents, through the legal process, which includes practice tips and defines key concepts;
2. An A3 poster version of the resource for domestic violence support workers; and
3. An A3 poster of the legal process for Migration Agents.



These resources support the rollout of training delivered by the Refugee and Immigration Legal Service (RAILS) for domestic violence support workers across the state. CDFVR would like to thank staff of RAILS, the Immigrant Women's Support Service, Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service and Ipswich

Women's Centre against Domestic Violence for assistance in the development of the resources.

Hard copies of the brochure are available for Queensland services to order at <http://www.noviolence.com.au/resourceorders/resourceorderform.html>. Print ready versions of the suite of resources are also available for download.

COMING SOON Orders and breaches resource

CDFVR is in the process of developing an eight page resource which will explain Domestic Violence Orders (DVOs) and breaches of DVOs. It is aimed at both clients seeking assistance at domestic violence associated services and practitioners who provide information to them. The development of this resource has been assisted by practitioners who work in domestic violence services in Queensland who provided questions frequently asked by clients navigating the legal system and personal challenges associated with being subjected to domestic and family violence on an ongoing basis. CDFVR would also like to thank its 14-member advisory group for their valued input to this resource.

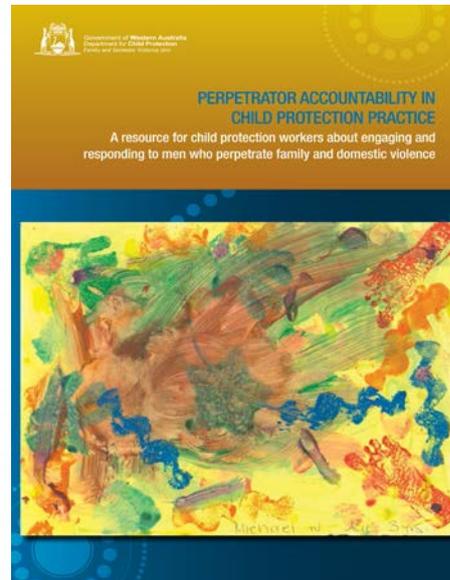
An overview of *Perpetrator accountability in child protection practice: A resource for child protection workers about engaging and responding to perpetrators of family violence*

by Heather Nancarrow, CDFVR

The correlation of child abuse and men's abuse of their female partners is irrefutable; yet, in general and in spite of various efforts for change, policy and service system responses have for more than three decades responded to these phenomena as if they are mutually exclusive. The paradigm shift required to effectively and justly protect children in domestic violence contexts will involve new practice frameworks, knowledge and skills for practitioners working with children, those working with adult victims of domestic violence and those working with the perpetrators of domestic violence and child abuse.

This year the Western Australian Government's Department for Child Protection (Family and Domestic Violence Unit) published *Perpetrator accountability in child protection practice: A resource for child protection workers about engaging and responding to perpetrators of family violence*. As the name implies the resource is designed to assist child protection workers who "need safe, ethical ways to minimise risk to children and adult victims exposed to family and domestic violence ..." (p.5). This resource complements Western Australia's child protection casework practice manual and supports the implementation of its Family and Domestic Violence Policy 2012, Policy on Assessment and Investigation Processes and Signs of Safety Child Protection Policy. Its contents are organised around three major sections: 1) foundations; 2) women's and children's safety as the context for working toward perpetrator accountability; and 3) holding men accountable within child protection practice. Each section includes discussion of the key issues followed by relevant practice tips, many of which relate directly back to the Signs of Safety Child Protection Framework. The resource also provides case studies and reflective questions to consolidate learning.

Section 1 is introductory in nature but draws attention to the importance of a gender analysis, a child focus, safety as the over-riding principle, men's responsibility for their violence and the importance of systemic responses. In particular, it emphasises the need for ongoing risk assessment and states "your engagement with any man must be underpinned by conscious and continual attention to the safety of his child and (ex) partner" (p. 11). Section 2 discusses a child's



experience of being mothered, and of being fathered, in a context where their father is abusive toward their mother. Importantly it also contextualises choices abused women make, including why women might stay in an abusive relationship; and it discusses

and provides practice tips on honouring points of resistance to violence. This is the beginning of discussion of strategies and tips for building collaborative partnerships with mothers in the protection of children, without making them responsible for men's violence. Section 2 also provides knowledge and skills for assessing, monitoring and managing risk, including realistic expectations of outcomes in men's behaviour change work.

Section 3 deals with probably the most challenging aspect of perpetrator accountability in child protection practice; engaging men who perpetrate family and domestic violence. It explores the benefits and objectives of such engagement and the role of a child protection worker in the process. It features risks associated with engaging men who perpetrate family and domestic violence, including unwitting collusion with the perpetrator, effectively contributing to further and potentially increased risk to women and children. The resource provides strategies for risk management, assessment, case management and referral. It concludes with a section on engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men.

While the policy context in Queensland may differ from that in Western Australia, the principles, values and key elements of practice contained in this excellent resource are relevant to any context where safe and ethical practice to minimise risk to children and adult victims of domestic violence is sought. It has set a benchmark for post-Carmody child protection and family and domestic violence policy and practice in Queensland.

Reference: Department of Child Protection (2013) *Perpetrator accountability in child protection practice: A resource for child protection workers about engaging and responding to perpetrators of family violence*. Perth, WA. Western Australian Government. Available at: <http://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/CrisisAndEmergency/FDV/Documents/Perpetrator%20Accountability%20in%20Child%20Protection%20Practice.pdf>

Conferences and date claimers

Conferences

19-21 Feb, 2014

Helping Families Change Conference 2013
Sydney, NSW

<http://helpingfamilieschange.org/>

31 March-1 April, 2014

Child Aware Approaches Conference 2014
Melbourne, Vic

<http://www.childaware.org.au/index.asp?IntCatId=14>

28-30 July, 2014

Leading Practice Family Work Conference 2014
Rooty Hill, Sydney, NSW

<http://leadingpractice.org.au/>

30 July-1 August, 2014

13th Australian Institute of Family Studies
Conference – **Call for papers now open**
Melbourne Convention Centre, Melbourne, Vic

<http://conference.aifs.gov.au/>

Training and Workshops

3 February 2014 & 10 February 2014

Therapeutic skills for working with adults who
were sexually abused in childhood
Hindmarsh, SA

<http://www.rasa.org.au/courses/professional-training/>

12-14 Feb, 2014 & 18-20 June, 2014

Drumbeat 2014 tour- PD training for working
with 'at risk' youth and adults.

Brisbane, Qld

(for dates in other states call 02 4921 8686)

www.newcastle.edu.au/drumbeat

17-18 March, 2014

Marumali Journey of Healing Workshop for non-
Aboriginal Service Providers

<http://www.marumali.com.au/workshop-formats#h1>

20-21 March, 2014

DV-alert (accredited training)

Hobart, Tasmania

<http://atdc.org.au/2013/09/lifeline-free-accredited-domestic-violence-response-training-in-tasmania-2/>

Phone: Lifeline 02 62159418

Webinars

12 Dec, 2013 2:30pm-3pm EST

Child Support: Basics

Presented by Alira Morey Women's Legal Service,
NSW

For more information and to obtain link-in
details visit <https://attendeegotowebinar.com/register/5402536498419764738>

10th Annual Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum

Warrior whispering

**Wednesday May 7 and Thursday May 8, 2014
Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre
Alfred Street Mackay**

Registrations available online mid-February 2014 at

www.noviolence.com.au

**For more information contact Colleen Gunning at 4940 7838 or
email c.gunning@cqu.edu.au**

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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.

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